

# HOW TO... Know Where to Start

## THIS SHOWS HOW TO:

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|--|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.1: Create positive school climate. | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.1: Support "Success Mentors." | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.1: Communicate with families.         | <input type="checkbox"/> 4.1: Host the weekly Student Success Summit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.2: Implement a tiered attendance plan.        | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.2: Offer incentives.          | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2: Partner with community.            | <input type="checkbox"/> 4.2: Use attendance data.                   |
|  |  | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.3: Connect to Task Force initiatives. |  |

## THE BASICS

You may expect to be asked: "Indicate the overall goals and objectives that your school has established in order to improve attendance." You may be ready to answer: incentives, awards and recognition for good attendance; phone calls, conferences with parents...

Instead, think about how you would answer this:

*Identify and describe those school functions that will be modified to support the school's effort to meet your projected attendance goal. In other words, what new activities and practices will be introduced to improve attendance?*

Changes in your school's absenteeism trends will require making changes in your school. The principal's focus on the issue of absenteeism is the starting place for these changes.

The *Every Student, Every Day Principal's Guide* outlines anticipated changes. Where do you want to start...

- New practices to build a positive climate in the school, engaging all staff in the effort.
- New instructional and extracurricular programs to keep students engaged and meet academic needs.
- New approaches for differentiating attendance interventions, much like for academic support.
- Matching students with Success Mentors for personalized outreach and encouragement.
- Revised routines for communicating with families, and using community partners to help.

No matter what initial changes a school decides to pursue, each principal must convene a team –the Student Success Summit Team–to meet weekly to review the stated goals and analyze attendance data.

The school will also assign a designated point. There will be communication throughout the year from the Task Force with new opportunities for incentives, data tools, and invitations to participate in related projects.

## HERE'S WHAT HAS BEEN TRIED

- All communications to parents and students always stress good attendance: school website, monthly parent newsletters, grade newsletters, and teacher newsletters.
- Share attendance data with students: TVs in hallways displaying attendance by grade.
- Incorporate attendance, in addition to behavior, into PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports).
- Plan weekly themes to promote school involvement.
- Decrease numbers of chronically absent students as a PPR goal.
- We need to create program/options: students don't want to come to school with much younger students or if they lack enough credits. That's an attendance issue.
- Teachers as success mentors catch "low hanging fruit," students who would come to school more often if someone greeted them warmly each day.
- Give Parent Coordinators a written outline how to support school goals.