



## Attendance & Truancy Among Virginia Students

# Session Eight

### *Recognizing Good and Improved Attendance*

#### **Presentation Description**

Module eight offers tools and tips for recognizing good and improved attendance.

#### **Participant Goals**

- Educators will learn how to recognize and reward good and improved attendance, not just perfect attendance.
- Educators will learn the importance of having a school-wide approach to attendance incentives.
- Educators will learn tips for establishing low-cost and no-cost incentives.

#### **Facilitation**

Have the participants review the module and reflections. Each reflection is designed to help participants further their understanding and learning of key concepts, frameworks, and strategies for reducing chronic absence.



*We treat people the way we want to be treated. We make sure the children feel like they matter, and the families feel like they matter.”*

- **Terry Paton**, Principal Franklin Square Elementary / Middle School, *Baltimore MD*



10/21/21

## Attendance & Truancy Among Virginia Students

### Module 8: Recognizing Good and Improved Attendance

#### The Purpose

- This PowerPoint serves as No. 8 in a series of modules designed to equip Virginia school divisions to reduce truancy and absenteeism.
- This module identifies the strategies for recognizing good and improved attendance including the use of incentives.

#### Virginia Absenteeism & Truancy Professional Development Series

1. Understanding Chronic Absenteeism
2. Learning What Works to Reduce Chronic Absence
3. Establishing School Attendance Teams
4. Using Data to Drive Action
5. Messaging Attendance
6. Integrating Attendance In Parent Engagement
7. Utilizing Parent-Teacher Conferences to Talk with Families about Attendance
8. Recognizing Good and Improved Attendance
9. Providing Personalized Early Outreach
10. Identifying barriers
11. Creating opportunities for peer learning
12. Engaging Community Partners
13. State Attendance Laws and Regulations

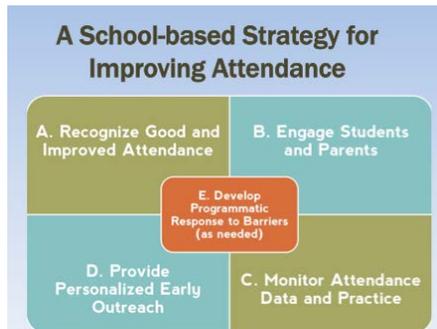
### Warm Up - Reflection One

Think about your school's culture: Are you emphasizing the importance of attendance in positive ways? Are you noticing when students are absent? Jot down any approaches or strategies your school uses.

#### Warm Up Notes

## Reflection Two

What does your school do to recognize attendance on a weekly or monthly basis? Are you rewarding timeliness?



### Principles for Recognizing Attendance

Schools & community partners can reinforce a culture of attendance by:

- Recognizing good and improved attendance, not just perfect attendance
- Measuring attendance at regular intervals, not just at year's end
- Rewarding timeliness not, just showing up



### Reflection Notes

## Reflection Three

What sort of incentives is your school or division using to recognize good and improved attendance? In what ways does your school already publicly recognize students or families who have the most improved attendance? What else might your school do to notice students and families that have the most improved attendance? Which do you think would work best given your student population and community? \*Additional information can be found on the last page of this guide

### Best Practices for Using Incentives

- Incentives should be part of a comprehensive approach to foster a culture of attendance
- Incentives should accompany a deeper commitment to student and family engagement.
- Friendly competition among classes or schools can motivate students to attend regularly
- Low-cost or no-cost rewards can be just as effective as fancy prizes.
- Information for parents and rewards acknowledging them for their child's improvement can engage families.

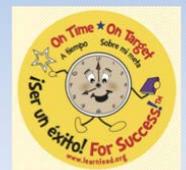
### Use Attendance Displays



Displays showing attendance rates by classroom or grade can inspire students to show up everyday and let them know the school values attendance.

### Engage Students in Tracking Their Own Attendance

As early as preschool, students can keep track of their own absences using stickers and gold stars. Some teachers find attendance tracking has the added advantage of teaching math skills.



### Reflection Notes

## Reflection Four

What does your school or district do to promote good attendance? Would that approach work with your student population. How can you engage community partners to provide recognition and rewards?

### Create Contests Among Students

- Create friendly competition among classrooms or grades. Classes can compete for most improved or highest attendance in a certain time frame (i.e. a month or a quarter)
- Challenge classes to take a "classroom selfie," and reward the class that has the most students present.

#### GET SCHOOLED

Get Schooled sponsors nationwide attendance competitions for middle & high school students.

### Find the Right Reward

- Ask students what would motivate them
- Come up with small, low-cost rewards.
- Offer special privileges
- Use assemblies or newsletters to recognize students
- Plan a special meal or pizza party for the winning classroom or students

#### What you can do for free

For younger students

- Extra recess
- Lunch with teacher

For older students

- 10 points on final exam
- Attendance certificate to show employers

### Reflection Notes

\*Additional information can be found on the last page of this guide

## Summary Reflection 1 - 4

Is recognizing good and improved attendance a regular practice in our school? What sort of recognition to student receive? Does it extend to families? What does our school offer as incentives for good and improved attendance? Which community partners can help?

### Reflection Notes

## Summary Reflection 5

Are we doing enough to convey that attendance matters in our school?

Reflection Notes



## Summary Reflection 6

How can recognize and reward good and improve attendance?

Reflection Notes



## Summary Reflection 7

How can we engage families and community partners?

Reflection Notes



# Learn More

Before moving on with the additional modules, we would like to encourage you to learn more about this issue. Specifically, please consider reading/viewing:

- Establishing School-wide Attendance Incentives: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/incentives.pdf>
- Attendance Challenge Toolkit: [http://unitedwaypittsburgh.org/bethereresources/beThere\\_attendanceChallenge\\_toolkit.pdf](http://unitedwaypittsburgh.org/bethereresources/beThere_attendanceChallenge_toolkit.pdf)
- Leveraging Sports Stars handout: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Sports-One-Pager-4-6.pdf>
- Get Schooled website: <https://getschooled.com/dashboard/>

## **Action Step:**

**Develop a plan for how you will recognize and reward good attendance.**

## **Consider using:**

**Attendance displays**

**Student tracking**

**Competitions**

**Rewards**