



Whole School Strategies that Encourage Attendance

Schools want to create a climate that promotes positive, trusting relationships between students and staff, engages students in their education, and identifies and removes barriers to attendance. This document outlines some school wide strategies that can help establish this kind of climate around attendance. It is only a partial list of ideas and resources that schools can use to create a learning environment for all students that will promote regular attendance and engagement. KSDE would be happy to provide technical assistance to districts regarding attendance policies, data, interventions, or early warning systems. If you have resources that you would like to share, I would be happy to add them to the list and share them with the other districts to help address chronic absenteeism in Kansas.

School Climate

- [Kansas Safe & Supportive Schools Continuum – School Climate Model](#)
- [Cultivating a School Wide Culture of Attendance](#) – from Attendance Works
- [Creating a Local Toolkit](#) – from Attendance Works
- All students have a positive, trusting relationship with at least 1 adult in the building
 - [Don't Quit on Me: What Young People Who Left School Say About the Power of Relationships](#)
 - [Reducing Chronic Absenteeism through PEOPLE: Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement](#)
- Consistent rules
 - Analyze policies and procedures to make sure that all students, parents and staff know what it means to be tardy, absent, what constitutes excused and unexcused absences, and that all policies are enforced consistently
- Make sure students, parents and staff understand the importance of regular attendance and the school's expectations regarding attendance
 - [Get Schooled](#) – visual aid to illustrate how absences add up, and the potential impact
- Recognize and reward good and improving attendance
 - [School-wide attendance incentives](#) by Attendance Works
- Offer before and after school programs
 - [Kansas Afterschool Grants](#)
- Make students feel welcome and create a reason for students to come to school
 - Greet students at the door – set the tone by starting the day with a positive interaction
 - Increased opportunities for extracurricular and co-curricular involvement
 - Provide enrichment activities for students such as field trips, assemblies, and dances
- Grade level transition teams
 - Purpose is not to “warn” next grade level teacher about certain students, but to make sure that any and all supports that students need are in place from day 1
- Reflecting on School Climate
 - [Kansas School Climate Survey](#)

Health and Safety

- Bullying prevention
 - [Take a Stand, Lend a Hand – Anti-Bullying Resources](#)
 - [Kansas Safe Schools Resource Center](#)
- Social, emotional and character education
 - [KSDE Social, Emotional and Character Development](#)
- Mental health services (substance abuse prevention, conflict resolution and peer mediation, anger management, coping skills for students of divorce/family conflict/substance abuse)
 - [School Mental Health: A Resource for Kansas School Communities](#)
 - [Resource Mapping in Schools and School Districts: A Resource Guide](#)
 - [Evidence-Informed Interventions](#)
 - [Interconnecting School and Community Mental Health Systems to Foster Trauma-Sensitive School Communities](#)
 - [Mental Health Resources](#) – from TASN
 - [Accommodations to Help the Anxious Child at School](#)
- Conflict resolution practices
 - [Social Development](#) – developing skills that establish and maintain positive relationships and enable communication with others in various settings and situations.
 - [Personal Development](#) – developing skills that help students identify, understand and effectively manage their thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
 - [Character Development](#) – developing skills to help students identify, define and live in accordance with core principles that aid in effective problem solving and responsible decision-making.
- Stress the importance of nutrition, physical activity, physical education, and wellness
 - [Healthy Kansas Schools Website](#)
 - [School Nutrition Programs](#)
 - [School Wellness Policies](#)
 - [Child & Adult Care Food Program](#)
 - [Eat Smart, Play Hard](#)
 - [Body Venture – K-5 educational exhibit](#)
 - [Summer Food Service Program](#)
 - [Farm to School](#)
 - [KSDE Team Nutrition Website](#)
- Create a school health and wellness committee
- Work with local agencies to emphasize, and if possible facilitate, flu shots, dental checkups, asthma management plans, lice management plans, services for those with chronic medical conditions
- Healthy Hands Program – emphasize hand washing to help prevent the spread of cold, flu, etc.
- Clothing drives for winter clothes, coats, shoes, hats, gloves, etc.
 - Can be a service-learning project, but also helps removes a barrier for attendance for some students in the cold winter months
- Make nutrition guidelines for foods available on campus – help students to make good choices regarding nutrition

Monitor the Data

- Create a school team that regularly reviews attendance data for trends for all students and which are in need of more intensive interventions
 - [School Attendance Team](#)
 - [School Attendance Teams: Tips for Effectiveness](#) – from Attendance Works
- Decide what data you already have, and which you might want to track in order to increase engagement and decrease absences (tardies, early releases, late AM arrivals, nurse's office visits, restroom visits, etc.)
 - [Use Chronic Absence Data to Determine Need for Additional Supports Toolkit](#) – from Attendance Works
- Identify barriers to attendance and take steps to remove those barriers for students
 - [Barriers to Attendance](#)
 - [Barriers with potential actions to counter barriers](#)
- [Tips for Administrators, Teachers, and Families: How to Share Data Effectively](#)

Engaging and Meaningful Curriculum

- Intentional development and use of the Individual Plans of Study (IPS) to drive student course selection and experiences
 - [Individual Plans of Study \(IPS\)](#) – KSDE
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities
 - [KSDE Career and Technical Education Home Page](#)
 - [CTE Table of Contents](#)
 - [Career Clusters and Pathways](#)
 - [Senate Bill 155](#)
- Service-learning
 - [What is service learning?](#)
 - [Civic Engagement](#) – KSDE website
 - [10 Mostly Instructional Practices to Improve Civic Engagement in Any Classroom](#)
 - [Guide to creating meaningful service learning projects](#)
 - [Service-Learning: A Dropout Prevention Strategy and MORE!](#)
 - [Types of Service Learning](#)
 - [Learning to Give](#) – Service learning lessons, programs and ideas
 - [Service Learning Ideas](#)
- Work-based learning
 - Work-based learning program to enhance student learning with actual job site experiences and facilitate the transition from school to work
- Authentic experiences for students (Project Based Learning, hands-on learning, real-world issues, etc.)
 - [Project-based Learning Project](#) Search – The Buck Institute for Education

Parental Engagement

- [Working Together: A Family Engagement Resource for Kansas Educators](#)
- [Engaging All Families – from Kansas Parent Information Resource Center](#)
- Back to school nights – engage students and guardians early by building relationships and defining expectations
- Incentives for parents who attend parent-teacher conferences
 - Make childcare available free of charge
 - Door prizes for attendees
- Call when students miss school to express concern
- Explain to parents how to report an absence
- Practices in place to deal with language or cultural barriers
 - [How well is your School Bridging Racial, Class and Cultural Differences?](#)
 - [Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections?](#)
- Communication with guardians regarding positive behaviors and improvement
 - [Family Engagement Survey](#)
- Grade level transition meetings
 - [Supports for Transitions](#)
- Distribute school information at extracurricular activities that may have more attendance
- Professional development for staff on how to engage families
 - [Beyond the Building: A Facilitation Guide for School, Family and Community Connections](#)
 - [Working Systemically in Action: Engaging Family & Community](#)
 - [Organizing Family & Community Connections with Schools: How Do School Staff Build Meaningful Relationships with All Stakeholders?](#)
- Commitment to graduate ceremonies – freshmen walk across the stage and sign a commitment to graduate banner... hang it up to remind students of their pledge to finish HS
- Hopes and Dreams Activity – parents write down their hopes and dreams for their child and post them around the school. Allows students and school personnel to see that all parents have hopes and dreams for their students (students could also post their own hopes and dreams)
- Parent Resources
 - [Growing Graduates](#)
 - [Bullying: What Families Need to Know](#)
 - [Attendance Matters: Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early](#)
 - [Attendance Matters: Keeping your Child on Track in Middle and High School](#)
 - [Youth Suicide Awareness for Families](#)
 - [Help your Child Succeed with Homework](#)



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