

Building a Culture of Attendance

Low Lift Tips to Start the Year

Hello and welcome back! Our team at OSPI has curated the attendance resources that are especially helpful right now in these first few weeks of school. Individually, these actions are minimal lifts, collectively they will start to build a foundation towards strong attendance and engagement.

Our focus is on **Building a Culture of Attendance**. What does this mean? A culture of attendance is when a school universally communicates to families and students about the importance of attendance, why we want students to attend, how they will benefit when they attend, and the support they will receive when they experience barriers to attending.

A Culture of Attendance includes these key features:

- Students and families know that your school community values attendance and why.
- The school provides messaging in a supportive and welcoming tone, is strengths-based, avoids shaming and punitive approaches, and embodies the OSPI Attendance Guiding Principles.
- Students and families feel welcome and feel a sense of belonging at your school.
- Students and families know how to call in an absence and ask for support.
- The school provides messaging through multiple methods and venues, throughout the year (at back-to school events, letters, flyers, social media, personal phone calls, etc.) in families home languages.
- Parents and students know school and district policies and what to expect from the district when students are absent.
- Regular recognition of good and improved attendance.

To start or enhance your efforts towards building a Culture of Attendance, we've included key attendance resources to share with families, attendance awareness resources, and a few other essential places to focus your efforts at the beginning of the year (such as adjusting your withdrawal policies to support student engagement and identifying last year's chronically absent students).

We hope you have a great start to the year, and our team looks forward to connecting with you and hearing your feedback on how we can better support you.

- *Krissy Johnson, Assistant Director of Attendance and Engagement, OSPI*

