

HOW TO...

Be Creative with Attendance Incentives for Middle School

THIS SHOWS HOW TO:

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| <input 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 checked="" 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

Keeping middle school students on track academically is a big factor in maintaining good attendance. Students will want to be in a place where they experience success. At one school, the principal expects all classroom teachers to give a packet of work to students returning to school after an absence. In other schools, Success Mentors agreed to come in early and provide homework support from 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM. The students like to have the quiet space to do their work and so they arrive on time.

As much as middle school students might appear to shrug it off, Success Mentors tell us it is still important to share praise: "Thanks for showing up! I appreciate seeing you."

To encourage all students, find new ways to distribute incentives. For example, Success Mentors hand out raffle tickets during the morning welcome. Only those who show up on time receive a ticket. Students write their names on the back and drop it in a box outside of the principal's office. There are weekly drawings. Students decorated the raffle ticket container! At another school, every student who comes to class on time gets a ticket and at the end of the day the principal picks one ticket to get a prize.

Building an incentives plan that work for your students, and that your school can maintain is the goal. Keep in mind, for the short term, there are some incentives available through the Task Force:

- Certificates from the Mayor.
- VIP tours of City Hall.
- Good news postcards to be mailed home to celebrate improved attendance or other good news.
- Letter from the Mayor congratulating your school for participating in the *Every Student, Every Day* Campaign. (*This can be used by the school to solicit support from local businesses and community leaders*).
- SkyRide Tickets.

HERE'S WHAT HAS BEEN TRIED

In order to keep 8th graders coming to school right through the end of the school year, they are planning to hold back giving out yearbooks until after final exams in June.

The school gives a trophy to the class, in each grade, each month, with the best attendance.

The school has a breakfast program in which students with 100% attendance each month, or improved attendance, get to eat breakfast with the principal.

Success Mentors suggested the following items as rewards: flash drives, boxes of colored markers, cute pencil cases with pens and pencils in them, pretty spiral note books, and phone cards.