



# **Department of Education & Workforce**

**Lesson Three: The role of teachers in attendance**

# OVERALL TRAINING OBJECTIVES

**The focus of the Teaching Attendance curriculum is to support school staff in addressing chronic absence and improving academic outcomes.**

# Six Sessions



- Lesson One: What is chronic absence and why does it matter?
- Lesson Two: Shift to prevention and early intervention
- **Lesson Three: The role of teachers in attendance**
- Lesson Four: Understanding why students are absent
- Lesson Five: Effective communication with students and families
- Lesson Six: A Whole School Approach: Relationships Matter

# Learning Objectives

**By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:**

- Identify ways to create a sense of belonging with students and families to improve student engagement and attendance.

# Video: What Teachers can do to Make a Difference



<https://youtu.be/Fifkkc1upwo>

# Strategies to Create Belonging

- I. Create and institute welcoming rituals and traditions
- II. Get to know students and their parents/caregivers
- III. Value and celebrate students and their community
- IV. Engage students and families all year

# Create and Institute Welcoming Rituals and Traditions

The activities occur all year and could include:

- Morning welcome to assist with the transition to school (effective for K through high school).
- Greet ***all*** students by their names in a positive/friendly manner.
- Celebrate good and improved attendance (not just perfect attendance).

**What are some examples of welcoming rituals and traditions that we have at our school or that you've seen used elsewhere?** (popcorn)

# Get To Know Students and Their Parents/Caregivers

The activities could include:

- Personalized outreach to learn something about students and/or families such as:
  - What motivates them
  - What are their interests
  - What are their cultural norms and traditions, etc.
- Parent/teacher conferences to learn more about student's strengths and challenges.
- Personalized invitation to families of chronically absent students for special school events.

**What would you add?**

# Value and Celebrate Students and Their Community

When students are connected and engaged to their learning they are more likely to attend school. Examples include:

- Celebrate and incorporate the students' cultures and traditions in your classroom.
- Connect the curriculum to students' lived experiences.
- Create opportunities for student voice and leadership-for all students.

**What can you add?**

# Engage Students and Families All Year

- Welcome students back when they return to school after being absent and let them know they were missed.
- Send a positive email, text, or postcard to the family/caregiver about their student once or twice a year.
- Communicate with families about the expectations for daily bell-to-bell attendance and timely returns from school holidays/breaks.
- Create opportunities for parent voice and leadership to support classroom learning and/or school activities.

**What can you add?**

# Small Group Discussion

**Purpose:** Identify specific actions teachers and school staff can take to create belonging in the classroom and school.

Divide into groups of four and discuss the following questions:

- Why do you think connecting students with a caring adult at school helps them be more likely to attend?
- What are some examples of classroom and school activities that create a sense of belonging for students and families?
- What is one thing you would like to do?

# Large Group Discussion

**Each group provides a summary of the group discussion for the following question:**

- What are some approaches to building relationships in the classroom and school that were shared in your group?
- What can you do to increase student and family sense of belonging in the classroom or in the school?

# Key Messages

- Teachers are critical to creating a sense of belonging for students.
- When students experience a sense of belonging they are more likely to be engaged and attend regularly.
- Recognize families as essential partners by positively engaging them to improve student attendance.

# Potential Ideas to Implement

- Create a welcoming ritual in the classroom or in the school.
- Reach out to students for personalized positive contact.
- Create opportunities for student voice and leadership.

# Resources

- [Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Attendance Support](#)
- [Attendance Works](#)
- Edutopia videos on:  
[Starting Each Class With a Warm Welcome](#)  
[Making Connections With Greetings at the Door](#)