

In Foothills School Division we all play a part contributing to building a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

To ensure all students are engaged and successful learners, every day in school counts. Attendance is an essential ingredient to academic success.

School absence adds up. Non-attendance is a significant early indicator that your child may be at risk for not completing high school. Chronic absence is defined as missing 10% or more of school for any reason. Poor attendance is not just about unexcused absences or children willfully skipping school – excused absences can affect performance, too.

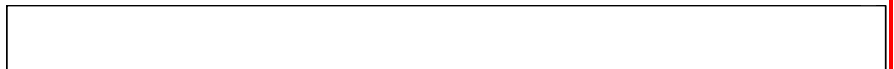
Research from the Every Student Counts: Keeping Kids in School Report indicates that students with attendance challenges typically do not:

- *feel safe*
- *have positive connections or relationships with others*
- *feel that they belong and/or*
- *make the effort to attend school regularly*

(Alberta Education; Spring 2014)

School strategies to create a Culture of Attendance include:

- ✓ Recognizing Good and Improved Attendance
- ✓ Engaging Students and Parents
- ✓ Monitoring Attendance Data and Practice
- ✓ Providing Personalized Early Support
- ✓ Responding to Barriers



Parent strategies to create a Culture of Attendance include:

- ✓ Show interest in your child's schooling by talking with their teachers, helping with homework and overtly encourage them to do well at school. Having regular contact between home and school will help to discourage absenteeism with an early detection system in place before attendance becomes chronic
- ✓ Reduce technology distractions at home that make getting to school challenging
- ✓ Avoid booking trips during school days wherever possible

- ✓ Encourage a healthy lifestyle including good eating and sleeping routines
- ✓ Keep open the line of communication talking directly to your child when problems arise for ideas about how things could work better for them at school
- ✓ Monitor transportation to ensure there are not concerns around taking the bus, walking, or riding to school
- ✓ Encourage your child to join clubs or activities of interest at school to encourage school connection
- ✓ Support your child with clear goals for themselves regarding school and future making the connection between your child's current school experience and their future

<https://education.alberta.ca/attendance/attendance-toolkit/>



Support is Available

If you are experiencing difficulty in having your child attend regularly, there are supports in place for you. Contact your child's teacher, administrator or Family School Liaison Counsellor. They can provide you with strategies and supports to encourage attendance and ensure your child has a successful year at school! So welcome back to school!