

## ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Students who miss more than 10% of school days in one year are considered chronically absent. Almost one of every four high school students in Oregon missed that much (in rural areas, it's even higher). The state has the highest rate of chronic absenteeism in the nation.

Students miss school for a variety of reasons: illness, doctor's appointments, vacations, or skipping classes because of lack of interest or success. Regardless of the reason, the effects are real.



### Why Does It Matter?

- Studies show that missing school can be linked directly to reading poorly, failing at math and flunking too many credits to graduate.
- In a Utah study, chronic absence in ANY ONE YEAR between grades 8-12 makes students 7.5 times more likely to drop out.
- Chronic absence is a key indicator of delinquency and future failure.
- A study of 21,000 students in Illinois found that absenteeism, not standardized test scores, could be used to pinpoint which students would fail multiple classes in freshman year — and which would earn a diploma. Once freshmen missed 10 percent of school days, their odds of graduating dropped below 40 percent.

### What You Can Do

Insist on regular, prompt attendance and reward your student's good behavior. Encourage your student to get involved at school with a club or activity, and talk to the school about other positive intervention programs.

Sources: [Practical Leadership](#); [The Oregonian](#)

## DID YOU KNOW?

Student engagement in school decreases each year from 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades, which plays a role in student attendance.

## COLLEGE MYTHS (AND REALITIES)

**MYTH:** College classes don't take attendance, so students can skip class.

**REALITY:** It is true that many college classes don't take attendance, although that is starting to change with increased use of "clickers" – technology that polls an entire class, no matter the size. However, going to class is critical to learn and review material and ask questions. And remind your student that's why she is in college – to learn in class!

## PARENT CHECKLIST

- Insist on regular, prompt attendance at school and reward good attendance.** Make sure your student gets adequate sleep so he will be awake and on-time for school. Don't allow your student to stay home unless they are truly sick, and make sure your student is not skipping classes. Reward your student for regularly attending and passing classes, rather than punishing him for skipping classes.
- Encourage your student to get involved.** Students who are more engaged with school clubs and activities are more likely to attend regularly. Help your student explore activities such as sports, school government, or clubs.
- Talk to the school.** If attendance is still an issue, talk to the school counselor or administrators about additional ways to improve attendance, including asking them to call you directly, offer rewards at the class or school level, or other positive intervention programs.

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs and is a federally-funded program that helps rural, low-income middle and high schools prepare students for education after high school.

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**COLLEGE.** It's not a dream, it's a plan.