

# Promoting Attendance

Regardless of whether you are conducting a parent teacher conference, paying a home visit or making a phone call home, you can find ways to use this interaction to help parents understand the importance of attendance and what it means for how they support the school success of their child. Below are some suggestions.

1. Prior to meeting with or talking with the parent/guardian, take a look at the student's attendance record. Calculate the percent of days missed in school through the grading period. Note whether the student has
  - Satisfactory attendance (misses 5% or less of class)
  - Chronic absence (misses 10% or more of class)
  - Severe chronic absence (missing 20% or more of class)
2. Offer positive reinforcement to those students and families with satisfactory or better attendance.
3. For those who are chronically absent, plan to discuss the importance of attendance and find out parents' perspectives what is contributing to the excessive absences. Ask parents/guardians both what makes it difficult to get to school. Find out if they can think of any positive examples of activities or supports that made it easier to get their child to school (whether that is, for example, an engaging classroom activity or when family members or friends are available to help drive or walk their child to school). Discuss what would help to reduce the level of absences. Help them understand how absences – even if excused – can harm their child's ability to learn and succeed in school.

If appropriate, consider referring the family to 2-1-1 to help the family obtain extra social and economic supports. 2-1-1 is an information and referral line supported by local United Ways in many communities across the United States.

4. Consider visiting our webpage at [www.spotsylvania.k12.va.us](http://www.spotsylvania.k12.va.us) to view additional information regarding school attendance.

