

To: Indiana School Superintendents, Administrators and Attendance Officers

From: Robin LeClaire, Director of School Improvement  
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Date: July 26, 2019

Subject: Chronic Absenteeism Supports

Last year, nearly five million students were chronically absent from school, meaning these students missed close to a month of school. The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is dedicated to reducing this number by interrupting this pattern and cultivating habits of good attendance starting in pre-school, so children have the opportunity to learn and succeed. In July, IDOE will release a new toolkit to help schools address chronic absenteeism. The toolkit provides ready-made materials and proactive approaches teachers, administrators, staff, and community partners can use for outreach to families. In addition, this toolkit provides resources schools can use to assess their own attendance practices and guide improvement.

As stated in Indiana’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, “Indiana hopes to take a proactive approach to chronic absenteeism by incorporating it into the statewide accountability system as an indicator of school quality and student success.” **I.C. 20-18-2-2.6** requires school corporations and schools to identify contributing factors to absenteeism and to develop chronic absence reduction plans. A school/school corporation must include the number of students who are habitually truant in the school corporation's annual performance report. A school/school corporation given a “B” letter grade or lower must include an attendance goal in the school's improvement plan.

Please visit our [website](#) to find newly created resources to support schools in addressing chronic absenteeism.

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