



Update from the Superintendent

To: Parents and Guardians
From: Mark McQueen, Superintendent
Date: March 1, 2024

As we continue navigating the lasting challenges presented by the pandemic, we must come together as a community to address a matter of utmost importance - regular school attendance.

Nationwide, the issue of school attendance has become more pronounced since the COVID-19 pandemic, and Bay County is no exception. Many families adjusted to remote learning and work during the pandemic and faced challenges adjusting to face-to-face routines. While this is completely understandable, we have shifted back to face-to-face learning, and we desperately need ALL of our students to be in school on time and every day. Nationwide, attendance issues have more than doubled in our post-pandemic years, and we also see that here. **Approximately 25-30 percent of our students qualify as chronically absent. This is an alarming statistic that we cannot afford to overlook.**

Regular attendance is the cornerstone of a successful education. Students who miss school or are habitually late lose valuable learning opportunities and disrupt learning. Our faculty members pour everything they have into designing engaging, hands-on learning activities, and no “makeup work” can truly make up for the educational moments lost when students are absent. Unsurprisingly, the cumulative effect of absenteeism can have a lasting impact on a child's academic progress and overall success.

Our dedicated Bay District Schools Team of Teams is tirelessly working to ensure every student receives the best possible education, but we cannot do it alone. We need your support to tackle this attendance challenge head-on. That's why we are launching our attendance campaign, #MarchIntoSuccess, next month.

We understand that various factors may contribute to attendance issues, and we want to emphasize that we are here to help. If your family faces challenges that hinder regular attendance, please don't hesitate to contact your child's school. Our team is ready to assist and provide support to help you overcome obstacles impeding your child's attendance.

Join us in the #MarchIntoSuccess campaign by committing to prioritize on-time, regular attendance for the remainder of the school year. Every day counts, and every missed opportunity is a step away from academic success. Let's work together as a united front to ensure that our students are present, engaged, and ready to learn. Your active participation makes a significant difference in our children's educational experience.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to the success of our students. Together, we can ensure that every child in Bay District Schools has the opportunity to thrive.

Wishing you a successful #MarchIntoSuccess!