



BAYONNE BOARD OF EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
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SUPERINTENDENT

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Dear Parents / Guardians of Students in Grade Eight,

The Bayonne School System, at both the elementary and high school level, has fostered a comprehensive curriculum that is both rigorous and challenging. We provide our students with a safe learning environment where they are taught the skills needed to succeed in a competitive and increasingly demanding global economy. We have high expectations (Board Policy 5200 – Attendance) for all our students, but in order for them to succeed academically, they must be in school.

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 per cent of a school year as a result of unexcused and excused absences. Research has shown that attendance affects **standardized test scores, academic achievement, graduation, and dropout rates.** Chronic absenteeism has been identified as the single most important indicator of **dropping out** of school before graduation (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Students in grade eight, who continually miss school are more likely to fall behind in their academic development. In these middle grades, our adolescent learners continue to strengthen their foundation in language arts and math. However, at this stage in their academic development, they are learning to read, comprehend, and most importantly, analyze increasingly complex texts. Developing these high-level, critical thinking skills is key to future academic success in high school as we prepare our students to be college and career ready. Being chronically absent in grade eight is directly associated with **lower grade performance** in grade nine. Students with too many absences are more likely to **fall behind** and **struggle academically.** A child does need to stay home when they are truly sick. However, avoid scheduling routine medical appointments during the school day or extended trips while school is in session. ***Excessive absences at any grade level, whether they are excused or unexcused, can significantly affect a child’s achievement and puts them academically at-risk.***

School is a place for learning, but it is also a place for making new friendships, discovering new interests, and an environment where children are encouraged to reach their full academic potential, building their confidence and self-esteem. These positive experiences play an integral role not only in a child’s long-term academic success in school but also in their chosen career. Whether your child is in grade eight, or in high school, making sure they attend school regularly lets them know the value you place on education and reinforces their understanding that school is important. I ask that you make sure your children are able to attend school every day.

Sincerely,

Patricia L. McGeehan, Ed.D.
 Superintendent of Schools

Our signatures indicate that we have read this notice regarding the importance of excellent attendance at school and we will work together with the school community (principal, teachers, counselors, and school nurse) to minimize the amount of days absent.

Parent / Guardian Signature _____ Date _____
 Student Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for making sure that your child is in school and on time daily – for the benefit of your child’s future and of the school! Please return this form to your school principal. Thank you for your support and continued cooperation.