bright futures begin with good school attendance

Dear Families:

Let's get our children off to a good start! Help your children build a habit of good attendance so they can be successful. Children who get to school each day have a better chance of learning and succeeding. Missing just a few days of school a month can hurt children's ability to read, learn math, and even graduate.   In fact, missing only 3 days during the first month of school can place children at risk of school failure.

Some of the tips below may help as you get your children ready for school.

For young children:
- Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.
- Introduce your child to teachers and classmates before school starts to help the transition.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required shots.
- Allow your child to stay home only when truly sick—complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- Get advice from teachers, school counselors or other parents if your child seems anxious about going to school—this can help your child feel more comfortable and excited about learning.

For older children:
- Talk with your child about acceptable and unacceptable behavior and grades.
- Think about situations your child may face and talk about ways to handle these situations before they occur.
- Ask your child how you can help.
- Encourage your child to be active in school by joining clubs or participating in sports.
- Teach your child how to ask for help.
- Know the school's attendance policy and the time school starts.
- Know your child's friends.

Sincerely,