

attendance

IN THE EARLY GRADES

Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year - about 18 days a year or just two days every month. Chronic absenteeism in TK, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year.

Consistent attendance is key to building the foundational skills that you can learn more about in this handout. These skills set the stage for future learning. When students miss school, they miss out on vital learning experiences that can be difficult to make up. Thank you for helping your child build strong habits that will support their success now and in the years to come!



what they learn

Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

1. **Social Skills and Emotional Growth:** Learning to share, take turns, and understand emotions in themselves and others.
2. **Basic Literacy Skills:** Exposure to letters, sounds, and early reading concepts, like identifying their name and simple words.
3. **Fine and Gross Motor Skills:** Developing hand-eye coordination through activities like coloring, cutting, and basic movement games.
4. **Routines and Self-Regulation:** Learning classroom routines, following instructions, and beginning to develop self-control.
5. **Developing a Love for Learning:** Engaging in fun, hands-on activities that inspire curiosity and a positive attitude toward school.

Kindergarten

1. **Alphabet and Phonemic Awareness:** Learning and recognizing letters and sounds, which are the essential building blocks for reading.
2. **Counting and Number Sense:** Understanding numbers, counting up to 20, and beginning simple addition and subtraction.
3. **Reading Readiness:** Learning sight words, identifying rhymes, and understanding that letters form words and words form sentences.
4. **Building Independence:** Practicing self-help skills (like tying shoes, following multi-step instructions) and increasing focus.
5. **Exploration of the World:** Basic science and social studies concepts that foster curiosity and understanding of their environment.

1st Grade

1. **Reading Fluency and Comprehension:** Transitioning from learning to read to reading to learn, including understanding story elements.
2. **Math Foundations:** Mastering basic addition and subtraction, learning number patterns, and beginning place value.
3. **Writing Basics:** Writing sentences, using capital letters and punctuation, and developing ideas in writing.
4. **Problem-Solving Skills:** Engaging in simple problem-solving activities to enhance critical thinking.
5. **Social and Emotional Skills:** Strengthening friendships, understanding social rules, and building empathy.

2nd Grade

1. **Strengthening Reading Skills:** Reading more complex texts with improved fluency and comprehension, expanding vocabulary.
2. **Math Concepts:** Developing an understanding of addition and subtraction with regrouping, place value, and an introduction to simple multiplication.
3. **Writing Development:** Writing short paragraphs, improving spelling and grammar, and beginning to organize thoughts coherently.
4. **Independent Learning:** Learning how to work more independently, complete tasks with less help, and manage time.
5. **Understanding Responsibility:** Gaining a sense of personal responsibility for their learning, behavior, and classroom contributions.

why it matters

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills (along with many others) and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.

Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent (missing just two days a month, each month) in Kindergarten and 1st grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.

Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?



64%

of kids with good attendance in K and 1st (missed 9 or fewer days both years)



43%

of kids with at-risk attendance in K and 1st (missed more than 9 days both years)



41%

of kids chronically absent in K or 1st (missed 18 or more days one year)



17%

of kids chronically absent in K and 1st (missed 18 or more days both years)



Learn more at rcsdk8.org/every-day-matters