

WEST RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Make Every Day Count!

Dear Parents,

Our goal is to ensure that every student attends school regularly. We want every student to come to school excited about learning. Your child is an important member of the West Ridge School Community. Please help us make every day count!

In order to learn, students need to be at school. “Making up work” never replicates the learning that happens with the teacher in the classroom. A child’s attendance at school builds responsibility. It also shows that you, as the parent, value the learning that takes place in school. **Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student’s academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school.** Routines and expectations regarding good attendance begin at a very young age. As children grow older and more independent, families still play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and in life.

We realize some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. But, we also know that when students miss too much school— regardless of the reason – it can cause them to fall behind academically. Your child is less likely to succeed if he or she is **chronically absent**—which means missing 18 or more days over the course of an entire school year. Research shows:

- Children chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade.
- By 6th grade, chronic absence is a proven early warning sign for students at risk for dropping out of school.
- By 9th grade good attendance can predict graduation rates even better than 8th grade test scores.

Absences can add up quickly. A child is chronically absent if he or she misses just two days every month!! I will begin sending home letters to parents of chronically absent students so that you can keep track of your child’s absences.

Clearly going to school regularly matters!

Please ensure that your child attends school every day and arrives on time.

We don’t want your child to fall behind in school and get discouraged. Here are a few practical tips to help support regular attendance:

- Make sure your children keep a regular bedtime and establish a morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Ensure that your children go to school every day unless they are truly sick.
- Avoid scheduling vacations (long or short) when school is in session.
- Avoid scheduling doctor’s appointments during school. If they do have an appointment please bring them to school before the appointment and return to school after the appointment.
- Talk to teachers and counselors for advice if your children feel anxious about going to school.
- Develop back up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, neighbor, or another parent to take your child to school.

Let us know how we can best support you and your children so that they can show up for school on time every day. Also, please don’t forget to call school and send in a note when your child is ill. Thank you. We want your child to be successful in school! If you have any questions or need more information please contact me.

Sincerely,

Christine McCaffery
Principal