



Berlin Intermediate School

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Mr. Ryan M. Cowder
Principal

Mrs. Jennifer B. Garton
Assistant Principal

Dr. David M. Gell
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Dear Parent/Guardian:

One of our strategic focuses again next year will be to increase our student attendance rate. For the past two school years we have received a rating on our student attendance that in turn affects our overall school rating under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy is very clear in stating that a student must not miss more than 10% (18 days) of the school year. Attendance and punctuality in school plays a major role in a student's academic success and in formulating a habit for professional success later in life.

I understand that family trips prove to be very valuable experiences for family harmony and often times provide educational opportunities as well. Our Board of Education has approved a calendar for school year 2019-20 that allows more time for those experiences than ever before. I am urging families to use the calendar provided on our school website as a planning tool for any trips next year in an attempt to minimize the time that a child may miss school.

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. 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!!

Clearly going to school regularly matters!

We don't want our students to fall behind in school and get discouraged. Please ensure that your child attends school every day and arrives on time. 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 your children go to school every day unless they are truly sick.
- Avoid scheduling vacations or appointments when school is in session.
- 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. We want your child to be successful in school! If you have any questions or need more information, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Ryan M. Cowder
Principal

An Arts Immersion School

