



Rochester City
School District
Rochester, NY

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Fall Term, Issue 1

RCSD Attendance Newsletter

September Blitz in Review

Of the 145 homes that were visited during the blitz taking place on September 13, we were able to make contact with 44 families (for an overall contact rate of 30%). Additionally, we determined that we are uncertain of residencies for 44 of our students, which is up from 24 in the previous month. The main reason for elementary school absences was transportation, and for those in secondary schools it was social/emotional reasons.

Parents/guardians told us that, in particular, their children are in need of transportation, and psychologists/social workers to address mental health concerns. Additionally, it is imperative that we find the many missing families, and follow up on why some families say that their children have been coming to school yet have been getting marked absent.



Would you like Freddy the Frog to visit your school?

The frog is on the move! If your school would like a visit from Freddy for a school-sponsored event or just for fun, please email VISTA fellow Melissa at melissa.szurgyi@rcsdk12.org and let her know. Hop to it!

New this year: Home-School Assistants

The attendance department has hired 19 new employees since August to serve as home-school assistants (HSAs), with another four starting in the coming weeks. These HSAs report directly to Betsy Hoffer, Attendance Department Associate Director, and each one is assigned to two to three schools.

Specifically, the role of the HSA is to be in daily communication with chronically absent students and their families, and ensure that all of their contact information is up-to-date. Through home visits and phone calls, the HSAs will help make sure all RCSD students are accounted for, and that all students are given the services needed to keep them in school regularly.

Did you know?

- NYS ranks #6 in the country on AttendanceWorks's list of "schools with high or extreme CA", with 45% of its schools reporting high or extreme CA. 21.4% of students in NY are chronically absent. D.C. has the worst case of chronic absenteeism at 31%, while Kansas has the least amount of it, at 12%.
- Last year, 34% of RCSD students were chronically absent, meaning that they missed at least 20% of school days (or 36 days out of a 180-day school year).
- According to Attendance Works, being in high school, a special education program/school, an impoverished area, or a city are all risk factors for chronic absenteeism. (<http://www.attendanceworks.org/>)
- Research shows that when parents are more involved in their kids' schooling, they are less likely to be chronically absent.



Spotlight on EnCompass: Resources for Learning

EnCompass: Resources for Learning is a program operating under the Education Success Foundation in order to provide academic services to students in need of support. As stated on their website, "EnCompass strives to foster meaningful experiences for young people using academics and learning as a platform for development and growth". EnCompass aims to better students' lives on a holistic level, with academic learning as an avenue for growth in many areas.

EnCompass has existing partnerships with schools #17, #33, #39, and East High. For elementary students, it offers after-school learning, summer learning, and daytime intervention for addressing language challenges. Here, they've found that 92% of their students improved social-emotionally and 71% of students improved in reading. They also offer programs for high schools, including daytime intervention, compressed credit recovery, and regents prep, and have found that 75% of students show growth in developmental assets. Lastly, EnCompass offers a Reinvesting in Youth (RIY) model, a program for youth ages 11-17 who are at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system. RIY consists of 6-8 months of holistic programming and assessment at regular intervals, with summer learning also being an option. Ninety-three percent of students involved in RIY avoided re-involvement with the justice system.

If you're interested in more information on EnCompass, visit their website at <http://educationsuccessnetwork.org/>, or contact Heather Krenzer at hkrenzer@e-success.org or 585-730-1362.



Back-to-School Tips!



- Keep a regular bedtime and morning routine. Make sure clothes and backpacks are ready the night before.
- Turn off all electronics (TVs, phones, tablets) at bedtime.
- Talk to your child about how (s)he feels about school, to ensure (s)he isn't facing any problems. Talk to teachers or counselors for advice if the child has any anxieties towards coming to school.
- Avoid medical appointments, trips while school is in session.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up.
- Keep a chart recording your child's attendance at home. Establish a goal for attendance. If that goal is reached, reward your child (an extra hour of TV, going for ice cream, etc.)

Upcoming Blitz

The next Attendance Blitz will be held on Thursday, October 11 at 9:00 AM at Central Office, Conference Room 3A. The following schools will be blitzed:

- #8 Roberto Clemente
- #9 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- #10 Dr. Walter Cooper Academy
- #12 James P.B. Duffy
- #28 Henry Hudson
- #29 Adlai E. Stevenson
- #33 John James Audubon
- #34 Dr. Louis A. Cerulli
- #35 Pinnacle
- #39 Andrew J. Townson
- NE College Prep HS at Frederick Douglass
- NW College Prep HS at Frederick Douglass

Come join us for the blitz and help make a difference for our students!