



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

Missing School = Missing Out

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS IN SCHOOL
EVERYDAY

Why must I send my child to school?

The Compulsory School Attendance Law states all children who have attained or will attain the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year; and shall include any child who has attained or will attain the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 and has enrolled in a full-day public school kindergarten program.

Why must your child attend school regularly?

Regular attendance will:

- Give your child the best possible start in life
- Help your child to keep up with school work
- Reduce the opportunity for your child to be drawn into anti-social or criminal activities

What does regular attendance mean?

Regular attendance means that your child must:

- Attend school every day unless there are *justified reasons
- Arrive at school on time
- Obey the school rules

*Includes illness, days of religious observance and leave approved by the district Superintendent or his/her designee

What can parents do to help their child's school attendance?

- Start the habits of regular school attendance at an early age
- Call the school if the child is going to be absent
- Remember that your child must not be kept away from school for reasons such as:
 - Watching after others at home
 - Taking care of the house
 - Visiting family members
 - Taking long weekends
 - Shopping trips
 - Birthday treats

What do you do if your child is ill?

- Contact the school as early as you can on the first day of absence (call the school office or send a note).
- When your child returns to school, send a note to the school giving the reason for your child's absence. Remember to sign and date the note.

What happens if the school refers your child to the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement?

- If your child misses five unexcused days, the school attendance officer will call or write to arrange an appointment to meet with you.
- Any parent, guardian or custodian of a child that misses 12 unexcused days from school may be subject to a \$1,000.00 fine, up to one year in jail, or both.

For more information contact 601.359.3178