



Rowan County Schools

Superintendent: Michael Rowe

Assistant Superintendent: Julia Rawlings

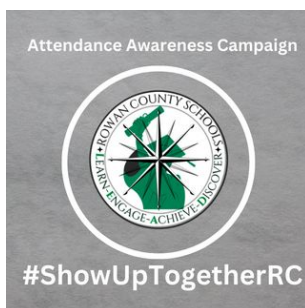
August 15, 2023

Dear Community Service Provider,

Since you are a service provider for students in the Rowan County School District, I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself as the new Director of Pupil Personnel and ask for your support with battling chronic absenteeism in our county. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% of school days for any reason, excused or unexcused and is a major concern for students across the nation. With chronic absenteeism rates skyrocketing nationwide since the global pandemic from 16% in 2019 to more than 33% in 2022, we are seeing a wide increase in the Rowan County School District as well. Students who are chronically absent are at a greater risk of not graduating from high school and falling behind. In order to battle this epidemic, it will take partnerships between the community and school district.

We've heard that "it takes a village to raise a child," and that is so true. As someone who provides medical, mental health, dental, optometry, or public services to students in our district, I respectfully ask for your help in our Attendance Awareness Campaign. The number one reason students miss school is for illness or appointments in a provider's office. It is important for families to take their children to appointments regularly. I would never ask that they not do that. However, I am asking for your help in providing excuses back to school. Please indicate on your excuse the "time in" and "time out" of the office as well as an expected return to school date. This will help our attendance staff determine whether the absence should count for a whole day or half day excuse. We want to encourage families to return their student to school after an appointment, when feasible, of course. Using a provider's note for a routine appointment should not keep a student out of school the entire day.

As community partners we can make a difference for the students of Rowan County. Thank you for partnering with us to bring awareness to school attendance. We appreciate the services you provide to our students and families. If I can be of assistance to you in any way please don't hesitate to reach out.



Respectfully,

Denine Sergent
Director of Pupil Personnel

Board Of Education Members:

Chairman: Rick Whelan,

Vice Chairwoman: Brenda Stamm

Jennifer Anderson, Scott Davison, Jeff Patrick



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