

# WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new school year! I am so excited that your child is attending one of the outstanding schools within the Ocean Springs School District.

My name is Jennifer Chesney. I am employed with the Mississippi Department of Education through the Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement and Dropout Prevention. Your child's school attendance is my focus.

As the parent or guardian, we would like to encourage you to help us maintain regular school attendance for your child. There is clear correlation between good attendance and academic achievement. Your child needs to be at school to fully maximize his/her educational opportunities.

The Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law requires regular school attendance for every child who has attained the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year. It shall include any child who has attained or will attained the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 and has enrolled in a full day public school kindergarten program.

You may ask, "How many absences are too many?" Well, missing 10%, or more than two days a month, can impact a child's learning and establish attendance habits that are hard to break. We know and understand some absences may be unavoidable due to illness or other unplanned reasons. For these reasons, please make sure you familiarize yourself with your child's school attendance policy related to the allowable number of unexcused absences and time limitations required for submitting excuses. If your child is late, checked out early or absent, please submit a parent or doctor's excuse. You are allowed two (2) parent excuses per nine weeks, which must be submitted to the designated person at the school office no later than the day your child returns to school. You are allowed unlimited medical excuses, but please know that any excuse must be turned in to the designated person at the school office within two (2) days of your child's absence. Five (5), ten (10), or twelve (12)+ unexcused absences will be reported to the school attendance officer, so please turn in your excuses!

With you as the parent/guardian working with me, as the School Attendance Officer, we can ensure your child's attendance needs are met. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's attendance, please feel free to reach out to me using the contact information below.

**It's going to be a great year!**

Sincerely,

Jennifer Chesney

School Attendance Officer, Jackson County

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MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement  
2022-2023 School Year