



August 17, 2017

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This year we are encouraging all students to show their Cardinal Pride with our Jefferson Pride Challenge Five initiative. This will challenge students to reach a building wide yearly goal for attendance and behavior. To successfully finish the Jefferson Pride Challenge Five initiative, students must not have more than five days absent during the year (excused or unexcused) and five or fewer behavior referrals for the year (including warnings). Students successfully completing the Jefferson Pride Challenge Five program will be recognized and provided with a special treat at the end of the school year. Please encourage your child to "Strive for Less than Five!" September is attendance awareness month. Our first challenge will be to not miss a day during the month of September. Every day counts!

Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and in life. 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 academically. 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 your child 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 doctor's appointments when school is in session.

The logo for Coldwater Community Schools features a stylized white 'C' shape that is partially filled with red and black. The top half of the 'C' is red, and the bottom half is black. The text 'Coldwater Community Schools' is written in a bold, red, sans-serif font across the middle of the 'C' shape.

Coldwater Community Schools

- 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.

Research shows us that absences add up. That's as true for kindergartners as it is for 12th graders. It's as true for excused absences as it is for unexcused absences. We know there will be days when your child will miss school, especially when they're sick. But we know that nationwide, as many as 7.5 million students miss 10 percent of the school year? That's 135 million days of missed school – and missed opportunities. And research shows us it also marks the point when students start to fall behind academically because they have missed too many days.

So this September, for Attendance Awareness Month, let's work together as a community – school and business leaders, parents, students, teachers, doctors, neighbors – to get all kids to school – on time, every day.

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 at (517) 279-5970.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Terry Boguth', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Principal, Jefferson Elementary