

The Hornet's Buzz

Jackson Township Elementary

August 2024

Dear Parents,

August 30, 2024

We have had a great start to the 2024-2025 school year! Open House was successful – it was great to see everyone come visit their classrooms and meet their teachers. This helped make our first day of school go smooth. We enjoyed seeing smiles and general excitement displayed by our students as they entered the building.

I am sure that your child's teacher has explained classroom expectations concerning homework. Students are provided time during class to complete, or at the very least, get most of the work completed. There may be times when work needs to be finished at home and brought back the next day. There may also be times when projects are assigned to be completed at home. In any case, ***children need the help***

of those who care for them in order to be successful. We have that covered for the six hours we have them at school. When they come home, please work with them. Studies have shown that just spending time reading with your child can improve their likelihood of being successful in school. Reading to or having students read at least 20 minutes per day can have a huge payoff down the road. Furthermore, daily practice of math facts will help tons as well! Student success in reading and math are very important and we appreciate you helping us help your children.

I encourage you to look in your child's agenda, backpack, and school folders nightly. Aside from emails and telephone calls, the agendas are our main forms of communication with you regarding important events, assignments, etc., happening at Jackson Township. If you are capable of receiving text messages, I encourage you to contact your child's teacher about signing up to receive communications through the Remind App. We also maintain a school website, which can be found at:

<https://www.clay.k12.in.us/Domain/1053>. In addition to the website, we maintain a Facebook Group Page, which can be accessed at: <https://www.facebook.com/JacksonTownshipHornets/>. Last, Clay Community Schools uses School Messenger to send out important information via email, text messages, and phone calls. We will use this as well. We make every effort to keep you informed.

To close and to also continue with my series called, "Attendance Matters," I encourage you to read the article from Attendance Works called, "Truancy vs. Chronic Absence." As you know, regular school attendance is not only needed, it is required by the state of Indiana. Schools are required to track attendance and to work with families who have students who are chronically absent. The bottom line is that to be successful in school, a child needs to be in school to receive direct instruction from a great teacher – like every one of the Jackson Township Elementary teachers!

Thank you for a great start to the 2024-2025 school year!

Sincerely,
Brad Ennen
JTE Principal



JTE bleachers full during Open House!

As the concept of chronic absenteeism gains traction across the country, some people are under the mistaken impression that it's just a politically correct way of saying truancy. Educators, policymakers and journalists often use the words interchangeably, describing the same, old problem with the same, old solution.

In fact, the two terms describe different aspects of our absenteeism problem and require different approaches to bringing students back to school every day.

First, let's take truancy, a term that generally refers to unexcused absences. In the past, federal law required states to track truancy but left it to states to come up with the definition. California schools have tracked the number of students who are truant which is defined as missing three days without a valid excuse or are late three times to class by 30 minutes. In contrast, in Maryland, schools have monitored habitual truancy, defined as missing 20% of the school year (which is 38 days in a 180 day school year).

With its focus on unexcused absences, truancy naturally leads to a focus on compliance with the rules. Students are missing school without an excuse, skipping school and violating mandatory attendance requirements. Fixing the problem becomes a question of ensuring compliance, often left to front-office administrators, and in the most severe cases, to the legal system. Policymakers often recommend punitive consequences for truancy — such as suspensions, jail time and fines — for children and parents. Some communities and courts have devised effective approaches to reducing truancy, but in other places, punitive efforts are pushing students out of school.

Chronic absenteeism, on the other hand, incorporates all absences: excused, unexcused and suspensions. The focus is on the academic consequences of this lost instructional time and on preventing absences before students miss so much school that they fall behind. It recognizes that students miss school for many understandable issues such as asthma or homelessness or unreliable transportation, for which a punitive response is not appropriate. But what helps is working with families to share the importance of attendance and to fix the underlying problems that lead to absenteeism.

Given this broader focus, addressing chronic absenteeism becomes an issue for the entire community. Medical providers can help address health challenges; transit and housing agencies can resolve other barriers to attendance; volunteers from businesses and faith communities can mentor students and support families. These approaches can also reduce truancy.

Like truancy, chronic absence has no common definition, though many researchers and schools monitor how many students are missing 10 percent or more of the school year. That's about two days a month, or 18 days in most school districts. The U.S. Education Department's Office of Civil Rights this spring will release data showing how many students miss 15 or more days.

This data represents the first time that many schools and districts will know how many students are missing so much school that they are falling behind academically. What's the right response to this new information? Rather than launching a punitive crackdown, educators and community partners should use the opportunity to dig deep into their numbers to determine who is missing too much school and why. Taking a data informed, non-punitive approach that draws upon insights from students, families, teachers and community partners is what leads to strategies that can improve attendance and achievement.

Truancy Vs. Chronic Absence

TRUANCY

- Counts only unexcused absences
- Emphasizes compliance with school rules
- Relies on legal & administrative solutions

VS.

CHRONIC ABSENCE

- Counts all absences: excused, unexcused & suspensions
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Uses community-based, positive strategies

Dates to Remember

Aug 16 - Trash Bag Fundraiser Kick Off
Sept 2 - No School! - Labor Day
Sept 3 - End of Trash Bag Fundraiser
Sept 12 - PTO meeting at 3pm
Sept 17 - School Pictures
Sept 17- Lions Club Vision Exam K,1,3,5
Sept 23 - No School! - Teacher Inservice
Sept 24 - 5th Grade VIP Day

Character Qualities

Punctuality. Punctuality means on time, prompt; acting at the right time.

Responsibility. Responsibility means to carry out a duty or task carefully and thoroughly.

Respect for Teacher- Respect for teachers means to feel or show empathy for the feelings and rights of teachers.

Self-Control- Self Control means the control of your actions and emotions.

Patience- Patience means the power to wait calmly without complaining.



Look for weekly
News from The Principal's Desk
On the Jackson Township Elementary website

Parent/Teacher Organization

Jackson Township PTO would love to have you as a Parent Volunteer! We have many opportunities for you to help enrich your child's education.

- Create flyer
- Donate an hour of time
- Contact businesses for donations at Carnival time
- Serve food

Your time is appreciated no matter what you decide to do!

Connect with PTO on Remind.

A

If you have a smartphone, get push notifications.

On your iPhone or Android phone, open your web browser and go to the following link:

rmd.at/jtepto

Follow the instructions to sign up for Remind. You'll be prompted to download the mobile app.

The screenshot shows a smartphone screen with a Remind notification. At the top, it says "rmd.at/jtepto". Below that is a button that says "Join JTE PTO". Underneath the button are two input fields: "Full Name" with the placeholder text "First and Last Name", and "Phone Number or Email Address" with the placeholder text "(555) 555-5555".

B

If you don't have a smartphone, get text notifications.

Text the message @jtepto to the number 81010.

If you're having trouble with 81010, try texting @jtepto to (810) 250-7858.

** Standard text message rates apply.*

The screenshot shows a text message on a smartphone. The "To" field contains the number "81010". The "Message" field contains the text "@jtepto".

Don't have a mobile phone? Go to rmd.at/jtepto on a desktop computer to sign up for email notifications.

Megan Moran - PTO President