



# SPRUCEWOOD SENTINEL

## SEPTEMBER 2016

"Autumn...the year's last, loveliest smile." — William Cullen Bryant

### Make Every Day Count: Boost School Attendance

Dear Parents,

To stay on track in school, students need to be present every day. Missing 18 or more days of school in a year puts a child's high school graduation at risk, according to AbsencesAddUp.org, a national chronic absenteeism prevention campaign. Being absent for just two days every month of the school year can put a child behind academically. Students with regular attendance are more likely to read well by third grade and score higher on tests. They also tend to be more engaged in school and feel better about themselves. Put your child on the path to success with these attendance strategies.

**Make school a priority.** Every absence (excused or not), can impact a child's academic achievement. Think carefully about scheduling family vacations during the school year. Talk to your child about how important their education is. Make daily routines for homework and waking up on time for school. Maintain communication with teachers and keep an eye on your child's academic progress. If your child seems disconnected from school or is prone to missing class, try signing him or her up for an after-school activity. A report by the University of Minnesota found that students in an after-school activity attended 18 more days of school and missed nine fewer than their peers. Sprucewood will have the Mad Scientist Program, Techniteers and community junior golf. Check the Community Ed brochure for after-school activity ideas.

**Make a plan.** If your schedule or transportation situation makes getting your child to school a challenge, ask for assistance. Make a carpool or transportation plan with other parents or family members. There are several daycares in the area that take students early in the morning and bring them to school.

**Report In.** If an absence or early dismissal is unavoidable, please contact Sprucewood with a phone call. Absences should also have a written note to be excused. If your family's religious observances fall on school days, let teachers know early in the year which days your child will miss. We will contact you when your child has frequent, unexcused absences to discuss regular school attendance.

**Carefully weigh sick days.** If your child is sick, talk with your health care provider to determine whether they should stay home from school. If the doctor or nurse recommends that your child stay home, find out exactly how long and on what conditions he or she can return to class (for example, after 24 hours of antibiotics). Before keeping your children home, make sure they aren't faking symptoms. Regularly feigning sickness may be a sign that your child is anxious about facing a challenge at school, such as bullying. If such is the case please set up an appointment with the principal, Mrs. Jones or the school psychologist, Ms. Bennett.

**Help students complete assignments.** When your child has to miss school, make arrangements with teachers to pick up a packet of make-up work. Ensure that your child follows through, and be available to explain concepts or monitor their work. If your child's absence will be lengthy (for surgery, for instance), alert teachers as soon as you know and pick up assignments as the days go on. Students who will be out sick for more than 10 school days in a row qualify for home and hospital services which provides for two hours of tutoring per week.

**Tardies count too.** Elementary school is the perfect time to set good habits with children about getting up and being at school on time. Although we would like you to get students to school on-time, they do not have supervision at school and on the playground until 8:40 am. **Please do not drop your children off for school early.** Some students enter early at 7:45 am for Orchestra. Students eating breakfast may come into the building at 8:20 am. Teachers and staff use this early morning time to prepare for the day. Additionally, Sprucewood staff contract time does not begin until 7:55 am. If you need before school care, please check with one of the daycare centers in the area.

Thank you!!

Mrs. Jones, Principal

## Web Resources for attendance:

**Absences Add Up** offers a list of reasons why kids might miss school, and offers solutions for parents looking to keep their kids learning.

[www.absencesaddup.com/reasons-why-kids-miss-school](http://www.absencesaddup.com/reasons-why-kids-miss-school)

This infographic, **How Sick is Too Sick fo School?**, can help families decide which symptoms should keep students at home.

<http://bit.ly/2cuqbvG>

**Traffic Safety**- A big thanks to parents for keeping our students safe!! The parking lot traffic has been quite respectful this year. Would you explain traffic patterns to any adults who might be helping you, such as grandparents? Please remember we are not allowed to block the area near the dumpsters because we need space for emergency vehicles and buses. Cars may not block the road trying to get in. Our staff really does appreciate the adults who are kind, patient and model safe driving behavior.

## PTA CORNER

We just finished up with our Membership Drive, and we are excited to announce that we met our goal! Anybody can join PTA...parents, grandparents, and businesses. Membership is only \$6.00. By joining PTA, you will be a member of the largest child advocacy network in the United States. Joining does not commit you to volunteer hours, it simply shows you care and helps give our school a voice in both local and national PTA. If you would still like to join please contact Tess Hortin @ [thortin@comcast.net](mailto:thortin@comcast.net).

All **Reflections** entries are due Friday, October 7. Please turn in submissions with an entry form and artist statement to the main office. All forms are available online at [www.utahpta.org/reflections](http://www.utahpta.org/reflections). Extra forms are also available in Mr. Hale's classroom.



It's that time again -- school is back in session, and our teachers need our help!

By clipping **Box Tops, Labels for Education, and Tyson Project A+ labels**, we can help earn money for our kids' classrooms! It's not hard -- even the kids can do it! They get excited about our Box Tops contests and they love to help, especially when they know it is directly benefiting them! Help your family get in the habit of looking for Box Tops, Labels for Education, and Tyson Project A+ labels on packages before they are recycled. Throwing away these little gems is like throwing money in the garbage. We will be having a contest for which class collects the most in September and October... so get started!

Also, thanks to General Mills and Walmart, every Walmart-exclusive Box Tops certificate that we clip and collect until Nov. 2, 2016 earns our school a chance to be one of 20 winners of 50,000 Bonus Box Tops -- that would be \$5000 for our classrooms! So look for General Mills products when you are shopping at Walmart... but they are at all other grocery stores as well!

With your help, we can make a difference for our school.

**THANKS FOR ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT!!**

