


Principal's SPOTLIGHT



STRIVE FOR <5



One of the most common questions that parents ask me is “what can I do as a parent to increase my child’s academic success?” You may think that the answer is highly specific based on that student’s skills and strengths, but it’s actually a very simple answer. My response to this question is: “Ensure that your student is in attendance at school every day.” The most helpful thing that you can do as a parent is to ensure that your student attends every one of their classes at Hoffman Estates High School every single day. That’s the simple truth. Encouraging good attendance is also one of the most powerful ways that you can prepare your student for success in life after high school. We all want to set up good patterns of behavior for future college and career success.

You likely already know that research tells us that when you make school attendance a priority for your family, your student will have higher academic achievement, feel a stronger sense of community at school, have the opportunity to participate in engaging instructional activities, and have higher levels of social-emotional health. What you may not know is how detrimental even a few absences a month can be to your student’s success. There have been thousands of scientific studies completed on the importance of attendance, and the results are clear: having an absence rate of 10% or more is what educators define as the ‘breaking point.’ If your student misses more than 10%, or eighteen school days, during a school year, we see strong negative effects in their academic performance and social-emotional health. What may surprise you is that many parents don’t know that their students miss this much school, or don’t worry about it. If your student misses two days of school a month, they will accumulate 18 days of absence during our school year. Last year, almost 300 HEHS students missed 18 school days or more. These students are labeled ‘chronic absentees’ by the Illinois State Board of Education.

We need your help. As we begin a new semester and a new year, we would like to closely partner with you to ensure that your student is in our classrooms as much as possible. In fact, we have a slogan and a goal for our work together. Our goal is that all HEHS students miss less than five days during this semester. Our slogan is “Strive for <5” (strive for less than five). We are asking you to commit to collaborating with our school staff in the following ways:

1. Ensuring that your student is in school every day.
2. Committing to our ‘Strive for <5’ campaign.
3. Continually monitoring the Infinite Campus portal for attendance and grade information.
4. Working together with our attendance task force if your student struggles with attendance.

There is good news! Last year, almost 300 HEHS students missed less than 1 day during the entire school year! In addition to our ‘Strive for <5’ campaign, we will also be implementing an attendance recognition program that seeks to provide positive reinforcement to students who have, or develop, improved attendance habits during the course of the school year.