SEAT 03

THE SEAT SERIES · HANDOUT A · SEAT CARD: DO THIS MONDAY

Teachers · Grades 3-5

Building the Habit of Showing Up

How do I help upper-elementary students want to be here every day?



THREE MOVES FOR THIS WEEK

☐ Recognize improvement

Low cost

Celebrate growth in attendance, not only perfect records, with stickers and punch cards.

☐ Peer jobs

Cost: $0

Give each student a class role that others count on.

☐ Morning meeting

Cost: $0

Open the day with a short circle where every child is greeted and heard.

THREE QUESTIONS FOR A STUDENT CHECK-IN

1. What is the best part of your school day?
2. Is there a time at school that feels hard?
3. Who is someone here you like to be with?

CLASSIFY BEFORE YOU CONSEQUENCE

Avoidance
Peer conflict and a hard recess. Change the unsafe window.

Withdrawal
Older siblings in charge of mornings. Check the routine.

Refusal
Worry about tests or performance. Partner with the counselor.

Truancy
Uncommon. Look for the reason behind the choice.

AVOID THESE MISSTEPS

- x Rewarding only perfect attendance, which discourages students with health needs
- x Public charts that shame absent students
- x Treating peer conflict as a discipline issue only

HOW YOU WILL KNOW IT WORKS

Leading: Students with a named peer role
Lagging: Grade 3 to 5 chronic absence

Evidence: Gentle-Genitty, Bowen, Kearney, Jackson & Lashbrook (2024), The Role of Health in Schools, Ch. 4, Rowman & Littlefield; Gentle-Genitty, Keppens & Kearney (2025), Contemporary School Psychology 29(1), 213-220.

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