SEAT 05

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

Teachers · Grades 9-12

When Showing Up Has to Lead Somewhere

How do I keep high school students coming when school feels disconnected from their future?



THREE MOVES FOR THIS WEEK

☐ Name the destination

Cost: $0

Link one unit each month to a local job or credential students can picture.

☐ Ask about work

Cost: $0

Ask students directly whether jobs or family duties collide with school.

☐ One mentor connection

Partner

Invite a working professional into class for a pathway with high absence.

A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE ROAD AHEAD

1. What do you want to be doing two years from now?
2. Which class feels most connected to that?
3. Does work or family ever make it hard to be here?
4. Who could help you see that path more clearly?

CLASSIFY BEFORE YOU CONSEQUENCE

Withdrawal
Work shifts, sibling care, rent. Ask about schedules and flex options.

Avoidance
A class or peer group that feels hostile. Change the setting.

Refusal
Anxiety and depression rise in the teen years. Connect to care.

Truancy
Choice-driven. Show the destination before the consequence.

AVOID THESE MISSTEPS

- x Treating a pathway's existence as student engagement with it
- x Assuming working students do not care about school
- x Waiting until senior year to make the destination visible

HOW YOU WILL KNOW IT WORKS

Leading: Students who can name a goal linked to a class
Lagging: Grade 10 to 12 chronic absence

Evidence: Schools Spared, Children Punished, Ch. 9 (DeShawn, composite case); BLS, The Economics Daily (Aug 26, 2026); WICHE, Knocking at the College Door, 11th ed. (2024); Schools Spared, Ch. 9.

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