



IMPROVING ATTENDANCE

(INNOVATION CODE - SKM/18/06)

Students' attendance has remained a consistent challenge in government schools in India. Despite being enrolled in the school, many students frequently miss their classes due to which government schools continue to fare poorly in the learning outcomes. With gaps in their academic understanding of fundamental concepts, eventually such children drop out of school, or their parents prefer to send them to private institutions. To reverse this trend, the innovation 'Improving Attendance' presents child-centric ways of not only motivating the students to attend school, but also of providing them continuous support so they are not deviated from their focus on education.

Names of the innovators

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Benefits of this innovation

- ◆ Students feel more accountable towards their education, and their attendance and enrolment increases.
- ◆ Positive, healthy competition fosters between students and their curriculum knowledge increases.
- ◆ Students work together to improve each other's daily attendance, and even absentee students get to catch up with the classwork done on the day.

Impact areas

Improve student enrolment and reduce drop-out rate and absenteeism.

Summary

If regular attendance of students is a critical issue in your school, teachers can use this innovation. The ideas presented here are focused on encouraging students to attend school through reward and recognition at individual level and through their friends. The approach is to reach out to students and extend continued motivation to them inside and outside the school. For successfully carrying out the activities given below, it is important to plan ahead and keep up the effort for at least 6 months continuously. No specific TLMs are required.

Activities for classroom

1. My Attendance, My Responsibility

Introduction: One way to solve frequent absenteeism is to ask all students to take the responsibility of maintaining their individual attendance, which encourages them to be more accountable for their choice of coming or not coming to school. In addition, students are also required to explain the reason for being absent from school in the morning assembly. This sends out the message to them and their parents that daily attendance of every student

is of utmost value to the teachers/school.

Classroom Application: Teachers who have been using this or similar ways to make students more accountable towards attendance, are seeing much improvement. Moreover, the teachers are able to know the reason for a child's frequent absence and can take action to address the real underlying issues.

Planning: The teacher should inform the class of implementing this method beforehand so that students start taking their attendance and studies seriously. Parents can also be included in this exercise as they can counsel their children about the benefits of attending the school.

Preparation: Take a new notebook and on top of each page, write the name of one student, in the order of their roll numbers. This is their individual attendance record.

Implementation: To start this exercise in your class/school, follow these four steps:

◆ **Self Attendance** — Students maintain their attendance themselves. They record the date and reason of absence on the page assigned to them in the attendance record notebook. At the end of the week, teacher applauds students with no entries or least entries on their pages.

◆ **Assembly Reporting** — Everyday during morning assembly, all students who were absent on the previous day are required to explain the reason for not attending school. Not wanting to appear on stage for the same frequently, most students attend school daily.

◆ **Evaluation** — At the end of the month, teacher asks students to go through their pages in the attendance record notebook and identify the main reason for the absences and if they can be avoided this month. Teacher must also take note of any serious/recurrent issues a child is facing and help her/him address that. For instance, if his parents discourage him, then teacher must counsel them. Or if the child is frequently ill, his food and hygiene habits should be reviewed.

◆ **Recognition** — Children with 100 percent attendance throughout the month are applauded in the morning assembly. Their parents can also be invited to thank them for their effort in ensuring the child's regularity to school and for understanding the importance of education.



2. Profiling

Introduction: Children are highly influenced by their friends and classmates. If their friendship can be channelised to inspire and motivate each other towards specific goals, sometimes even the most difficult students can undergo a 360 degree turnaround in their attitude and aptitude. In the innovative practice of Profiling, students take up the responsibility of ensuring each other's regular attendance in class, as well as other academic and co-scholastic areas, by maintaining their friends' profiles.

Classroom Application: This practice not only improves attendance but also the learning outcomes of students and academic results of the school. It can be done with students of any class, any age.

Planning/Preparation: Explain the importance of attending the school regularly. Form pairs/groups of students depending on their compatibility and give them the responsibility to monitor each other's attendance in school.

Implementation: This activity can be made a permanent class practice in two ways:

◆ In groups

- Groups of 3-4 students each are formed, along with a group leader.

- The leader comes to school on time and encourages his group members too to come on time. In case a student in the group is absent, the leader finds the reason for his absence and records it in his/her profile.

- This way student's attendance improves and teachers are aware of the reasons for the absent students. Time taken for attendance also decreases.

◆ In pairs

- After forming pairs, the teacher asks students to meet each other at a common point every morning and come to school together.

- If one of the students in the pair is absent, then the other one tells the teacher the reason of his/her absence from school.

- The student who is present, later on visits the house of the one who was absent and shares the classwork and encourages him/her to complete it and come to school the next day.

- All instances of absence and the reason are also

recorded in the student's profile by his/her partner.

◆ How to maintain a peer's profile?

- Each child is assigned 5 marks at the beginning of the year, and throughout the year, each student strives not to lose any marks due to absence from school.

- For every 3 absents marked, the child's partner/group leader deducts 1 mark in his/her profile, along with recording the reason for absence.

- If students improve and become punctual, the partner/group leader assigns him/her bonus marks in his/her profile.

Sample attendance sheet			
Date of Absence	Reason	Marks deducted	Total Marks (= 5-x)

How to fill this Attendance sheet?

Give 5 marks to each student in advance. 1 mark is deducted for a student for every three absences. To save their marks, students will try to come daily. In case a student's marks go down to zero, it becomes necessary to present the student to the principal.

Note: The practice of maintaining each other's profile can also be expanded to maintain records for other important student performance areas, basis the school's challenges. For example, discipline, cleanliness, hygiene, homework submission, and PTM attendance of parents.

Sample uniform sheet			
Date	Reason for not being in proper uniform (or unclean uniform)	Marks deducted	Total Marks (= 5-x)

How to fill this Uniform sheet?

Give 5 marks to each student in advance. Teacher deducts 1/2 mark for students in case they do not come in proper school uniform. In case a student's marks go down to zero, it becomes necessary to present the student to the principal.

Similar tables can be added to a student's profile on discipline, homework, etc. ■