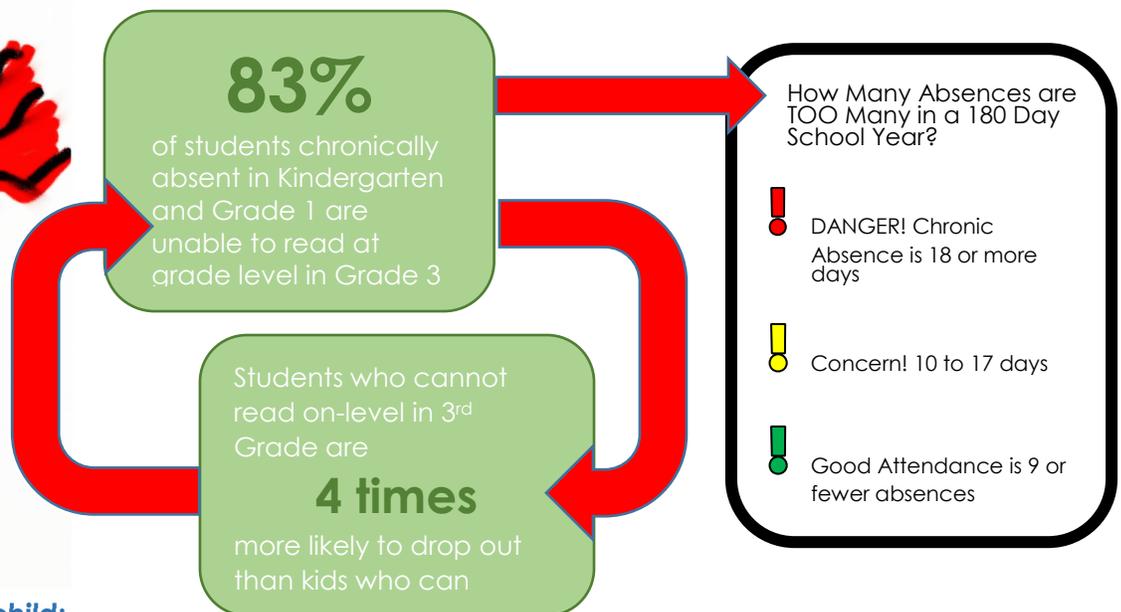


# Why Attendance Matters

**What it is:** School attendance can have a major impact on school success, especially when learning to read. Students who miss too much school are said to be chronically absent.

**What it's not:** Sending your child to school when they are sick.

**Why it's important:** Students who miss 10% of the school year face real challenges learning to read. That's just two days each month or about 18 days during a school year. Some parents falsely believe that if their child completes the homework they will be "caught up" but the child is missing **hours** of critical instruction each day they are absent and can easily fall behind their peers. Even missing a day or two every few weeks can put a child behind! Aim for nine or fewer absences each school year.



## Ways to help your child:

- Set regular bedtimes and morning routines so getting to school on time becomes easier.
- Lay out clothes and backpacks the night before.
- Don't let your child stay home unless they are truly sick. Keep in mind that a headache or stomach ache can be signs that your child is worried or anxious about something and missing more school can make that worse. Talk to the school if this seems to be happening.
- Talk to your child about how important it is to go to school each day.
- Avoid getting your child to school late. Being tardy, or late, can lead to increased absences in the future.
- Develop a back-up plan with a friend or neighbor for a way to get your child to school if something comes up.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended family trips during the school year.