

## **The Importance of Attendance**

Junior High students usually begin each new school year with excitement and enthusiasm – even if they don't show it to adults. The anticipation of new classes, new friendships, and renewing old friendships provides real motivation for daily attendance during those first few weeks. Unfortunately, after a brief time, some students become careless about regular attendance. Missing a few classes or a full day becomes inconsequential to some. And, once the habit of being late to class or skipping school begins, it can be a very hard habit to break.

Attendance is critical because one needs to be in class to learn. So much of the learning that happens at NJH is through discussion, hands-on projects, labs and group work. The teaching-learning process builds upon itself: Each lesson is based upon lessons that preceded it. Just as we can never regain a moment of wasted time, the child who misses a day of school also misses a day of education that cannot be retrieved.

Additionally research shows that children who attend school regularly are more likely to be successful later in their lives. If young people don't develop good study and attendance habits now, when will they?

### **What can I do to help?**

As a parent/guardian, teach your child that you value education and then enforce your expectations around grades and attendance. Help your son/daughter develop good study and work habits and give praise when you notice success. Get to know your child's friends as they have more influence at this time of life than you do. If you have the time, get personally involved in school activities, go to sporting events, attend plays and concerts and volunteer. If you can't make it to school, there's lots of ways to know what's going on at NJH such as:

- Read the Hopkins News: <http://www.hopkinsschools.org>
- Check Infinite Campus regularly for absences and grades
- Attend parent/teacher conferences twice a year
- Call the school if you think your child has been skipping school
- Call the school if you need assistance. Remember, "it takes a village . . ."
- If the school calls you, do not cover up to get your child off the hook. You are only modeling that there are no consequences for breaking rules. Remember that teenagers need parents/guardians who care enough to enforce rules and are available to provide help when needed.

*Remember that teaching children to value education and to be accountable for their behavior is doing them a lifelong favor!*