December 2023

Re: Exemplars of School Attendance Strategies and Initiatives

Dear Principal,

As we come to the end of the first term, we would like to acknowledge the hard work of schools in relation to the attendance, participation and retention of students. We are aware of the tremendous efforts put into promoting a positive attendance culture and creating a welcoming school environment.

The first three of our webinar series have taken place and offer key messages that can be shared with the school community and parent/guardians to support attendance. TESS in partnership with the Dept of Education have developed suggestions and examples of school-wide attendance strategies and attendance initiatives for your consideration. Please see attached documents.
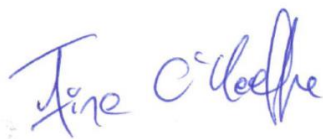
We would love to hear about the approaches running in your school and would welcome updates, photographs and videos. If you are happy to share these with us and with other schools, please send them to tessattendancecampaign@tusla.ie. We would be delighted to post these on the TESS website. All submissions will be acknowledged, and you will receive a digital medal for your school website/social media pages.

As part of this campaign and in collaboration with education partners, TESS is launching a **National Poster Competition** in January 2024, the winning entries will be used to inform the design of a series of national posters. The competition will run on a qualifying-round basis, from local to regional and finally, national. Further details will issue after the Christmas break.

We thank you for your continued engagement with the attendance campaign. We hope you are enjoying the webinar series, and we look forward to hearing about your approaches and seeing your students' posters.

Be sure to watch our next webinar on Tuesday, 20th February, at 2.30pm, which focuses on building a connection and sense of belonging with students and families and promoting schools as safe places.

Kind regards,

Áine O'Keeffe

(Director, Tusla Education Support Service)