

# LEVERAGING SPORTS TEAMS TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE



Sports stars – whether professional athletes or college standouts – can be great role models for promoting better attendance. Athletes can deliver a powerful message about attendance and persistence. If your community doesn't have a professional sports team, think about minor league teams or even high school athletes. They can deliver the message:

- Success takes hard work. Players show up for practice every day to be the best they can be. Students need to show up for school every day.
- It's tempting to take a day off here or there, but the best players know that persistence is key to performance.

## Strategies for using sports stars:

### 1. Broad messaging

- » Public Service Announcements: Work with local TV or radio stations to tape a PSA with a star athlete emphasizing the importance of going to school every day.
- » Wake up-calls: Tape a wake-up call with a sports star and share it on student cell phones.
- » Billboards: Create a billboard featuring a sports star and conveying your district's attendance message.

### 2. School visits

- » Invite players to a back-to-school assembly promoting good attendance.
- » Arrange for a player to be "Principal for the Day" at a school with improved attendance. Consider a contest among schools with the winning school receiving the visit from a sports star.
- » Ask teams to provide jerseys or tickets as incentives for good attendance.

### 3. Game time

- » Broadcast your school district's attendance message on the Jumbo-tron
- » Ask the team to provide game tickets as raffle prizes for students with improved attendance
- » Ask the team to invite students with the most improved attendance to a half-time passing or shooting contest.
- » Ask the team to announce the names of students with perfect attendance for the month at a game.



Magic Johnson taped this PSA for a New York City attendance initiative.



NFL running back Marshawn Lynch taped a video with Oakland, Calif. students.



The Baltimore Ravens visited the local elementary school with the biggest drop in chronic absence.



[Get Schooled](#) runs attendance contests for middle and high schools every fall and spring. Tie a sports team into your contest.