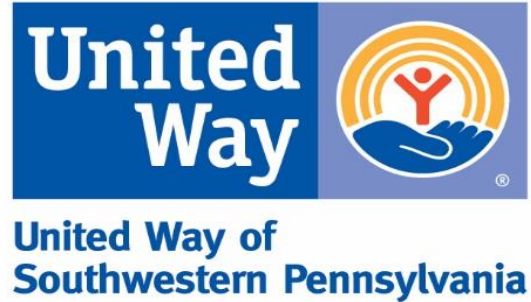


## Mini Grant to Improve Attendance



**United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania** leads and mobilizes the caring power of individuals, the business community and organizations to help local people in need measurably improve their lives. United Way creates long-lasting change for the betterment of our community.

The role of the United Way's **Be There Campaign** is to convene community partners and connect key stakeholders to school attendance work. [Be There](#) connects schools, out-of-school-time providers, and communities with materials and ideas that reinforce the importance of school attendance through positive messaging.

## **Mini Grant Options:**

### **General Attendance Intervention Grant**

To implement attendance interventions with students served (amount dependent on number of students being served: \$500-800).

### **Important Dates:**

**Proposal due:** Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

**If your organization/school receives funds for the General Attendance Incentive Grant:**

**Funding awarded:** January 1, 2017

**Mid-year evaluation due:** Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup> 2017

**End-of-year evaluation due:** Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017

### **To Apply:**

Complete the application here:

<https://www.tfaforms.com/434241>

## Grant Purpose:

There are around 6.5 million students across the country who are chronically absent – missing 10% or more of the school year. Multiple years of chronic absence—as early as Pre-K—is a forewarning of academic trouble. By 6th grade, chronic absence is an indicator that a student may drop out of high school. Research tells us that students who finish high school have fewer health risks, are more successful, and tend to have higher salaries. We strive to help them get there.

The Be There mini-grants give schools and communities the support they need to take an intentional, proactive approach to make sure kids have consistent attendance, setting them up for success that can last a lifetime.

## Strategies:

For the past 3 years, Be There has partnered with schools and community groups to develop relevant strategies to address chronic absenteeism. Read on for tips on developing your proposal and plans for attendance activities, and you can also...

- Visit [the website](#) where you can find the Attendance Challenge Toolkit.
- Email Be There Campaign Coordinator, Jenna Baron, for more ideas: [Jenna.Baron@uwac.org](mailto:Jenna.Baron@uwac.org)

## What can attendance activities look like at your school or program?

Every school has a different culture and may develop unique strategies for improving student attendance. The Be There mini-grants give capacity to set these ideas in motion. In the past, Be There partner schools have...

- Planned monthly attendance challenges, asking students to show up for 30 days straight to win a desirable prize.
- Planned a school v. school or grade v. grade attendance competition, with a field trip or large activity available for the winning group
- Coordinated a homeroom attendance competition, challenging students to track their attendance and hold each other accountable for being there. The homeroom with the best attendance was awarded with a pizza or ice cream party.
- Invited families for an awards ceremony and raffle off gift cards for parents of children with perfect and improved attendance.
- Nominated “Be There Ambassadors” – students who serve as leaders in efforts to create a positive culture of attendance.



*A parent volunteer at Brashear High School (Pittsburgh, PA), and students she inspired to serve as “Be There Ambassadors.” As Be There Ambassadors, students are champions of attendance by organizing events and activities to boost morale and improve their classmates’ attendance.*

*Attendance challenges are one of the most commonly used strategies to improve attendance. Read on to learn more!*

## **Attendance Challenge Basics:**

*An attendance challenge is an opportunity to challenge students to come to school every day for a set period of time and reward them for their achievement.*

- Set criteria and a time frame for students to meet attendance goals, e.g. perfect attendance for 30 days.
- Designate the week before the challenge as a “hype week” and promote the challenge
- Choose and continuously promote a reward to motivate student participation, e.g. dress down day, pizza party.
- Track attendance data and remind students to stay motivated.
- Celebrate winners and encourage others for the next attendance activity.

For more ideas, visit our website and download the [Attendance Challenge Toolkit](#).