



# Shaler Area Middle School

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Shannon M. Howard, Ed.D.  
Principal

Mitchell Shaw, M.Ed.  
Assistant Principal

August 29, 2025

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Attending school has a huge impact on student success. Shaler Area Middle School is promoting School Attendance Awareness Month in September 2025. *Did you know that absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year?*

We realize some absences are for health or other reasons. But when students are absent they can fall far behind in what they learn. Excused and unexcused absences mean missing classroom learning time.

### Some Attendance Tips:

- Make sure your children keep a regular bedtime and have a morning routine.
- Turn off all electronics, including TVs, phones and tablets, at bedtime.
- Make sure clothes and backpacks are ready the night before.
- Check with our school nurse or office staff if you are not sure about when to keep your child at home due to illness.
- Avoid scheduling vacations or doctor's appointments when school is in session.
- Talk to teachers and counselors if your student feels anxious about school.
- Develop back up plans. Call on a family member, neighbor or another parent to take your student to school if you are having trouble.

Please let us know how we can best support you and your child so that they can show up for school on time every day!

Sincerely,

Shannon M. Howard, Ed.D.  
Principal

Kathy Newport, MSW  
School Social Worker