Welcome to the 2021-2022 School Year!

As we embark on this school year with great optimism and hope, we know that you, your colleagues, students and families have been through so much this past year and a half. As we continue to face uncertainty and challenges, we truly appreciate your ability to adapt and continuing to work through these tough times. We want you to know we are here to partner with you, your students and families to offer support, where we can, in increasing attendance for your students.

The SAM program will be taking referrals as in years past. We asked that you work with us to ensure that your students have all the learning materials, technology, and transportation necessary to attend school. We ask you, as school partners, to problem solve any barriers to attendance prior to referring students to SAM.

Updates about SAM for this year

1. SAM team will not be conducting in-person first step Informational Meetings. We will again be referring families to watch our attendance video instead. If families are having technology issues, please have them reach out to our office and we can work with them on an individual basis. Here is a link to the video. <https://youtu.be/WaJnKOD2cZU>
2. Unlike last year, we are not asking families to repeat the first step, Informational Meetings. If a family has already been referred to attend Step 1 in previous school years, then you don’t need to send in another referral for Step 1. If the student’s attendance has not improved and they have 10 or more unexcused absences for the current school year, they can be referred directly to Step 2, SART Meeting. If you are unsure if a family has previously been referred for Step 1, please submit the referral and our office can make that determination. If the family has already been referred, our office may decline the Step 1 referral.
3. If a student previously was referred for a SART meeting last year, and they have 10 or more unexcused absences for the current school year, please still make the referral for Step 2. We understand this is a very challenging time for students and families and so we want to make sure we have the ability to engage with them prior to any court involvement.
4. SARTs will be scheduled via Zoom (or another online platform) with student, parent(s)/guardian(s), Ramsey County Social Services, and school personnel.
5. We will again be partnering with Ramsey County Social Services to offer services to students and families throughout the SAM process.
6. Court may be utilized only after all other attempts on reengaging the student and family have not been successful.

Please know we are available to answer your questions and concerns as we all navigate this school year. We appreciate your continued partnership to increase attendance and assist and support students and families in connecting to resources.

Wishing you the very best this school year,

Ramsey County School Attendance Matters Team