



**OLD NAVY**

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## **Old Navy, Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, Chancellor Joel I. Klein, Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor John Feinblatt and Mets Player Jose Reyes Give New York Students a New Wardrobe Fit for the Classroom to Reward Attendance**

### ***300 New York City Public School Students Shopped for Free at Old Navy and Received a Winter Coat for Their Commitment to Excellent Attendance During the First Six Weeks of School***

NEW YORK CITY, (November 5, 2010) - To encourage school attendance among New York City Public School students, Old Navy – with the help of Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, Chancellor Joel I. Klein, the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor John Feinblatt, and New York Mets shortstop Jose Reyes – gave 300 students a shopping experience to remember yesterday as part of their Attendance Drive initiative.

The students who participated in yesterday's event are from several schools participating in the Mayor's citywide pilot program addressing chronic absenteeism and truancy. Each student signed and recited an official Attendance Pledge and received a new winter coat and \$50 gift card to purchase new school clothes at Old Navy's flagship store on 34<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan.

"Student test scores, attendance and drop out rates have steadily improved over the past eight years, as has the quality of a New York City public school education," said Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein. "These interagency collaborations, combined with support from committed partners like Old Navy, will take us one step closer to ensuring that all students have the chance to take advantage of what our schools are offering."

While attendance rates have improved at NYC public schools, approximately one out of every five New York City school students missed one month or more of school last year. Research shows that three out of four students who are chronically absent in the sixth grade never graduate from high school. Furthermore, the first six weeks of the school year have been identified as the most crucial weeks for establishing strong attendance yearlong.

"When we learned that one of the reasons for low attendance is embarrassment from wearing the same clothes repeatedly, we decided to step in with our Attendance Drive initiative," said Amy Curtis-McIntyre, senior vice president, marketing, Old Navy. "Rewarding students who show their commitment to attending school is a humbling experience. Old Navy is proud to participate in a program that helps keep students



engaged in their education. Empowering today's students and young people is essential for a positive future," added Curtis-McIntyre.

The Old Navy Attendance Drive was created to motivate students to attend class, inspire them with memorable mentor moments featuring role models such as Mets player Jose Reyes, and reward them for improving attendance with clothes they're eager to wear to school. Yesterday, the 300 students got to meet Reyes, who stressed the importance of attending school every day, encouraged students to adhere to their pledge and handed out autographed items.

After Mayor Bloomberg launched a Task Force on Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism in June 2010, Old Navy joined forces with the Mayor's office to amplify the first-ever citywide effort to reduce these problems in public schools. The 300 students who participated earned their spot by competing to establish the most improved and best overall attendance, from the first day of school through the end of October.

"We are focusing on attendance because making sure students are in school every day is an investment in their health, educational well-being and future success," said Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott.

"Today's event celebrates the importance of attendance for hundreds of students who have shown their commitment to learning and succeeding at school. By honoring these students today, and throughout the year, Old Navy has helped reinforce the message of Mayor's Bloomberg's attendance campaign: Every Student, Every Day," said Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor John Feinblatt.

The Attendance Drive event was the fourth in a series that took place in school districts across the country this Fall. Since late August, Old Navy has hosted Attendance Drive events at stores in Dallas, Chicago and Los Angeles, encouraging attendance and awarding shopping sprees to more than 900 students, from kindergarten through eighth grade. Each event has consisted of "mentor moments" led by school principals or administration officials prior to the students reciting the Attendance Pledge aloud, before commencing their \$50 shopping sprees.

Old Navy plans to extend its Attendance Drive initiative by issuing another challenge to students, inviting them to demonstrate perfect attendance through the end of the school year. For store locations, please visit [www.oldnavy.com](http://www.oldnavy.com).

### **About the Task Force**

Mayor Bloomberg announced the Mayor's Interagency Task Force on Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism, and Engaging At-Risk Students at School on June 10, 2010. As the first-ever citywide campaign to reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy in city schools, the Task Force uses a comprehensive strategy that calls on all city stakeholders to participate in tackling this problem. The campaign launched this fall in 25 selected elementary, middle and high schools throughout the five boroughs. Truancy and absenteeism are a complex problem that can only be solved through strategic interagency collaboration, and the cooperation of philanthropies, non-profits and the private sector. Already, over 100 individuals from various organizations have joined the effort by serving as full-time "Success Mentors" for students at selected schools to help the students improve their attendance.

### **About Old Navy**

Old Navy originated in 1994 and quickly became one of the world's most successful brands, offering customers the latest fashion at great prices. Today, the brand continues to offer on-trend apparel and irresistible basics for adults and children at a surprising value. And, best of all, Old Navy brings it all to customers in a fun, energizing shopping environment.

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