



Sacramento City Unified School District

Proclamation of September as Attendance Awareness Month

WHEREAS good attendance and engagement is even more essential to student achievement and graduation because of the lost opportunities to learning that have occurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic,

WHEREAS recording and monitoring attendance daily and for different types of learning opportunities (virtual, in-person or a blend) is essential to identifying when students begin to miss too much school,

WHEREAS taking a positive problem-solving approach to reducing absenteeism requires expanding attendance data to include reviewing chronic absence prior to school closure, availability of working contact information for families, access to technology and most importantly positive relationships,

WHEREAS promoting attendance requires noticing - as soon as possible - when students are starting to miss too much school in order to engage students and families, identify and offer needed support and early intervention resources,

WHEREAS ensuring an equal opportunity to learn requires using data to detect inequitable patterns of absenteeism by school, grade, and student population,

WHEREAS research conducted prior to Covid-19 indicates that monitoring when students miss 10% of learning opportunities in a month, or multiple days in a week, can help to identify students and families as well as schools in need of outreach and additional support,

WHEREAS improving attendance and reducing absenteeism takes schools, families and community partners working together to identify and address factors contributing to students missing school, particularly a lack of digital access, mental and physical health services, access to basic economic supports including food and housing, or in some cases, the absence of engaging curriculum or biased approaches to school discipline,

WHEREAS partnering with students and families to monitor attendance as well as understand and address barriers to attendance requires building and sustaining caring relationships and regular communications in the home language spoken by families,

WHEREAS the critical role that families play in supporting student learning is even more essential when school is offered through distance learning,



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WHEREAS reducing absenteeism requires taking a public health approach that begins with prevention and early intervention, and adopting trauma-informed approaches rather than responding with punitive action,

WHEREAS the impact of absenteeism expands the achievement gap that separates students living in low-income communities and many students of color (Black, Hispanic, Latinx, Native American and Pacific Islanders) from their peers, particularly if they don't have resources to make up for lost learning time and face systemic barriers to showing up, which have been further exacerbated by the economic and health impacts of Covid-19,

WHEREAS schools and districts must do more to track, calculate and share the data on how many students are missing school, lack working contact information or are challenged by connectivity so that we can evaluate whether learning opportunities are accessible for all students and assess whether attendance supports are making a difference,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Sacramento City Unified School District stands with the nation in recognizing September as "Attendance Awareness Month." We hereby commit to focusing on absenteeism and addressing the factors that cause students to miss school (whether offered at a distance, in-person or a blend) in order to ensure all children an equitable opportunity to learn, grow and thrive academically, emotional and socially. We recognize that we must work together to send the message that learning can and must continue, whether students participate remotely, in person or through blended approaches.

Specifically, we will:

1. Make clear that improving student attendance, including taking daily attendance and monitoring absenteeism, continues to be a top priority.
2. Ensure that all students' participation and engagement in learning opportunities, both synchronous and asynchronous are equitable and that schools are held accountable by certifying and monitoring the state mandated Weekly Engagement Record.
3. Use an expanded set of data (including chronic absence, digital access, contact information, relationships and participation) to monitor outcomes for different populations of students, raise public awareness, establish goals, allocate resources, track progress and assure accountability for an equal opportunity to learn.



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4. Engage students, families, educators and the broader community – including civic and elected leaders, local businesses, clergy members and nonprofit organizations – in identifying barriers to getting to school (whether lessons are remote or in-person) and developing meaningful solutions that ensure all children and youth keep learning despite the challenges of Covid-19.
5. Ensure access to learning by promoting universal access to internet and computer devices to all students and schools staff.
6. Hold schools and/or districts harmless for funding decisions based on attendance and enrollment data for the 2020-2021 school year.
7. Provide tiered engagement strategies and interventions to re-engage students and families who participate less than 40% or miss 3 school days in any given week.