



September 9, 2022

Dear County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

September Is National School Attendance Awareness Month: Engaging Families to Reduce Chronic Absence

As we begin this school year, I want to thank you and your staff for all you have done to support our students and their families during these incredibly difficult times. I invite you to join me in welcoming all families back to our school communities where this year provides us the opportunity to create positive and supportive conditions for learning that foster healing and elevate the strengths of every student.

This school year, it is more important than ever for us to celebrate **September as National School Attendance Awareness Month** and increase consistent student attendance throughout our state. I urge you to use this national attendance awareness month as a catalyst to launch proactive student and family engagement campaigns geared toward increasing consistent attendance and ultimately raising academic outcome indicators.

It is encouraging that several indicators showed attendance rates rebounded last year with a return to in-person instruction. However, we know that chronic absentee rates remain at an all-time high. Attendance Awareness Month is an opportunity to start the school year with information and resources that support local educational agency (LEA) efforts to successfully engage students.

The California Department of Education has partnered with School Innovations & Achievement and Attendance Works to offer resources to assist, guide, and support LEAs in these efforts. The following links to the Attendance Works website may be helpful in your efforts to promote attendance awareness and reengage families who have disconnected from our systems.

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- <https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/promotional-materials/>
- <https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/social-media-3/>
- <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/pathways-to-engagement-a-toolkit-for-covid-19-recovery-through-attendance/>

The following links to additional free resources provided on the Attendance Works website and the School Innovations & Achievement website:

- Showing Up Matters for R.E.A.L. (<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/showing-up-matters-for-real/>)
- Sample Back to School letter (<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/welcome-students-to-school/>)
- Handouts for Families (<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/handouts-for-families/>)
- Proclamations 2022 (<https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/proclamations-2022/>)

These resources can help us build classrooms and school sites where every student knows that they are an important member of the learning community, and that their attendance and engagement matter.

I thank you in advance for your efforts to make National School Attendance Awareness Month meaningful and successful.

If you have any questions about this important campaign, please contact Steve Zimmer, Deputy Superintendent, Student Support Services Branch, by email at SZimmer@cde.ca.gov or Jacie Ragland, Education Administrator, Educational Options Office, by email at JRagland@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Signed by

Steve Zimmer, Deputy Superintendent
Student Support Services Branch

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