

## **Contra Costa County Board of Education**

### **Proclamation of September as the Month to Launch the 2016 Attendance Awareness Campaign**

**WHEREAS** good attendance is essential to student achievement and graduation, and we are committed to dedicating our resources and attention to reducing chronic absenteeism rates, with a focus starting as early as kindergarten,

**WHEREAS** chronic absence – missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason including excused and unexcused absences, or just two of three days a month – is a proven predictor of academic trouble and dropout rates,

**WHEREAS** improving attendance and reducing chronic absence takes commitment, collaboration and tailored approaches to particular challenges and strengths in each community,

**WHEREAS** chronic absence predicts lower third-grade reading proficiency, course failure and eventual dropout, it weakens our communities and our local economy,

**WHEREAS** the impact of chronic absence hits low-income students and children of color particularly hard if they don't have the resources to make up for lost time in the classroom and are more likely to face systemic barriers to getting to school – such as unreliable transportation, lack of access to health care, unstable or unaffordable housing,

**WHEREAS**, chronic absence exacerbates the achievement gap that separates low-income students from their peers, since students from low-income families are both more likely to be chronically absent and more likely to be affected academically by missing school. Absenteeism also undermines efforts to improve struggling schools, since it's hard to measure improvement in classroom instruction if students are not in class to benefit from them,

**WHEREAS** schools and community partners can reach out more frequently to absent students to determine why they are missing school and what would help them attend more regularly,

**WHEREAS** schools and districts must do more to track, calculate and share the data on how many students are chronically absent so that we can deliver the right interventions to the right students,

**WHEREAS** all students – even those who show up regularly – are affected by chronic absence because teachers must spend time reviewing for students who missed lessons,

**WHEREAS** chronic absence can be significantly reduced when schools, parents and communities work together to monitor and promote good attendance and address hurdles that keep children from getting to school,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that as the Board of Education of Contra Costa County, we proclaim that our schools will stand with the nation in recognizing September as "Attendance Awareness Month." We hereby commit to our continued focus on reducing chronic

absenteeism to give all children an equitable opportunity to learn, grow and thrive academically, emotionally and socially.

Specifically the Contra Costa County Office of Education will:

- ❖ Build upon our work with district administrators to raise awareness that chronic absence is a proven early warning indicator of academic trouble and dropping out of school.
- ❖ Provide a variety of resources to every principal in each of the 261 school sites in Contra Costa County, including but not limited to district customized Principal Attendance Toolkits and Posters and other valuable tools that can be used to reduce chronic absenteeism.
- ❖ Encourage each Principal of the 261 school sites in Contra Costa County a School Banner to promote attendance awareness by showcasing the banner previously provided with our attendance slogan “Every School Day Counts, Attend today, achieve for a lifetime!”
- ❖ Encourage principals and other key partners to use social media using our hashtag (#cocoschooleveryday) to share their activities and strategies that they are implementing to raise awareness regarding student attendance.
- ❖ Recognize principals and assistant principals on the Contra Costa County Principal Honor Roll for their attention to attendance at their school sites.
- ❖ Encourage student involvement by sponsoring a poster contest for middle and high school students and recognize winners courtesy of the donation provided by Phillips 66.
- ❖ Continue to partner with Attendance Works to implement Phase 3 of the Contra Costa Attendance Learning Network (CCALN) as they analyze their chronic absence data to develop incentives and strategies to reduce the number of students who are chronically absent.
- ❖ Continue to work with the five districts (Antioch, John Swett, Martinez, Mt. Diablo, Oakley and Golden Gate Community School) and invite two new districts to join the CCALN.
- ❖ Continue to participate in the county-wide multi-agency attendance initiative “Keeping Our Kids in School”, facilitated by Judges Rebecca Hardie and Laetner.
- ❖ Expand our work with the Principals in the CCCOE student programs to raise awareness regarding chronic absenteeism and to develop strategies to address this issue with school staff, parents and students.
- ❖ Engage parents, schools, community partners, and the media to help spread the message that good attendance matters and help develop solutions to ensure that all children are in school as much as possible.