



Dear Contra Costa County Educator:

Embarking on its fourth year, ***the Contra Costa County Office of Education, the Contra Costa District Attorney's Office, the Contra Costa County Probation Department and Contra Costa Juvenile Court*** are collaborating to promote the awareness campaign entitled ***Every School Day Counts: Attend today, achieve for a lifetime!***

Why is school attendance so important?

- Research shows that students who attend school every day in the primary grades are far more likely to read proficiently by 3rd grade.
- For every day of school missed, it takes three days to make up what was taught.
- By the 6th grade, chronic absence is a leading indicator of whether a student will drop out of high school.
- In the 9th grade, school attendance is a better indicator than test scores of a student's likelihood to graduate from high school.
- Californians who do not earn high school diplomas are eight times more likely to be incarcerated than those who do; 75% of prison inmates and 69% of inmates in county jail are drop outs.

This campaign is designed to provide communication resources to schools and engage communities with the goal of reducing truancy and chronic absenteeism, and boosting student attendance across the entire county. For the past three years, over 200 schools in Contra Costa County have participated in this extraordinary effort to promote the importance of attending school each day!

The ***Every School Day Counts*** communication toolkit includes hard copies and digital files of:

- Parent flyers in English and Spanish
- Talking points about the importance of school attendance for multiple audiences
- Tips for getting in touch with hard---to---reach parents
- Guidelines for establishing school---wide attendance incentives
- Attendance certificates to incentivize and reward good attendance
- School self---assessments
- Posters in English and Spanish

This toolkit, which has been customized with each district's logo, can be found online at <http://www.cocoschools.org/attendance>.

The Contra Costa County Office of Education continues to work with its county partners and Attendance Works (www.attendanceworks.org) to provide additional tools and resources to assist Principals and Teachers with prevention and intervention strategies as a significant aspect of this 2017---18 Attendance Awareness Campaign.

C.O.P.E. Family Support Center is extremely proud to once again be actively involved in a County---wide partnership to boost student attendance by providing parenting programs and support services to students and families facing critical barriers which prevent consistent school attendance. Through pre and post assessments, they have documented the success of these important interventions.

*This year, the four agencies are presenting a special event, with all proceeds benefitting C.O.P.E. We invite you to join us on **Friday, November 3, 2017**, at the Crowne Plaza in Concord for a dinner celebration and fundraiser entitled: "**Kids: Investing in OUR Future**"— **A County---wide Program to Raise Attendance Awareness and Keep Our Kids in School!** This year's program will showcase both school, community and county agency efforts to increase awareness regarding the direct link between attendance and achievement, as well as showcase the prevention and intervention strategies to decrease chronic absenteeism and truancy. C.O.P.E is an essential partner in this work, and provides invaluable services to students and families.*

We strongly invite you to attend this important event. Sponsorships are also welcome! All funds raised go directly toward providing critical services for children, teens and families in our communities. For more information about sponsorships and to register for the event, go to www.copefamilysupport.org.

Information about this year's Attendance Awareness Campaign can be found online at <http://www.cocoschools.org/attendance>. You can also follow the status of this county---wide campaign on social media (#cocoschooleveryday)

Please join us in using these resources to help us tackle this important issue and boost attendance at all Contra Costa County schools!

Sincerely,



Karen Sakata
Superintendent of Schools



Doug MacMaster
Chief Assistant District Attorney



Todd Billeci
Chief of Probation



Honorable Rebecca Hardie
Presiding Juvenile Judge