

**Mt. Diablo Unified School District**

**Proclamation of September as Attendance Awareness Month  
Resolution No. 14/15-14**

**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** 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 the Mt. Diablo School District proclaims 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, emotional and socially.

Specifically, the Mt. Diablo Unified School will:

- ◆ Build upon our work with site administrators to raise awareness that chronic absence is a proven early warning indicator of academic trouble and dropping out of school.
- ◆ Provide a Principal Attendance Toolkit and Attendance Posters to every principal in each of the school sites in Mt. Diablo Unified School.
- ◆ Provide each of the school sites in Mt. Diablo Unified School a School Banner with our attendance slogan “Every School Day Counts, Attend today, achieve for a lifetime!”
- ◆ Continue to partner with Contra Costa County of Education and participate with the Attendance Learning Network, as we analyze our chronic absence data to develop incentives and strategies to reduce the number of students who are chronically absent.
- ◆ Expand our work with the Principals in the MDUSD 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 us come up with solutions to ensure that all children are in school as much as possible.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution be distributed to all schools within the district.

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Barbara Oaks  
President, Board of Education

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Brian Lawrence  
Vice President, Board of Education

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Cheryl Hansen  
Member, Board of Education

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Lynne Dennler  
Member, Board of Education

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Linda K. Mayo  
Member, Board of Education

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Date