



Santa Fe Independent School District
Proclamation
Attendance Awareness Month

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 prekindergarten and kindergarten; and

WHEREAS chronic absenteeism- 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; and

WHEREAS chronic absenteeism is now a required reporting metric under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act; and

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

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

WHEREAS the impact of chronic absenteeism hits students in low-income communities 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; and

WHEREAS, attendance gaps among groups of students often turn into achievement gaps that undermine student success. Chronic absences particularly exacerbates the achievement gap that separates students in low-income communities from their peers, since students from low-income communities are both more likely to be chronically absent and more likely to be affected academically by missing school; and

WHEREAS, absenteeism also undermines efforts to improve struggling schools, since it is hard to measure improvement in classroom instruction if students are not in class to benefit from them; and

WHEREAS schools and community partners can reach out more frequently to absent students to determine what barriers they face attending school and what would help them attend more regularly; and

WHEREAS health care providers can share the importance of school attendance with families and can offer proactive, preventive care to reduce absences; and

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 see the attendance gaps and can deliver the right interventions to the right students; and

WHEREAS all students – even those who show up regularly – are affected by chronic absences because teachers must spend time reviewing for students who missed lessons; and

WHEREAS chronic absences can be significantly reduced when schools, families 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 Santa Fe, Texas, we proclaim our school district will stand with the nation in recognizing September as “Attendance Awareness Month.” We hereby commit to focusing on reducing chronic absenteeism to give all children an equitable opportunity to learn, grow and thrive academically, emotionally and socially.

SPECIFICALLY, WE WILL:

Raise public awareness and concern about the toxic impact of chronic absences. Encourage broad community engagement and sustained civic action to help families get their children to school every day. Analyze our data to identify which students and schools are most affected by chronic absences, as well as to unpack common attendance challenges that need to be addressed. Publish chronic absenteeism data, along with average daily attendance for the district as a whole, as well as, by grade, school and student sub-group.

Passed and approved this 23rd day of September 2019.

J.R. “Rusty” Norman, President

Wayne Logan, Vice President
Eric E. Davenport, Secretary
John H. Snider

Patrick Kelly
James Grassmuck
Clay Hertenberger

Dr. Leigh Wall, Superintendent