

August 15, 2023

APPROVED: DD:br

Board Meeting – August 15, 2023

Item VI. Consent Calendar Recommendations

B. Adoption of Board Resolution No. 1 in Recognition of Attendance Awareness Month, September 2023

The Superintendent recommends that the County Board adopt Resolution No. 1 as part of the regular County Board meeting on August 15, 2023; and further recommend that the Board recognize September 2023, as Attendance Awareness Month in order to recognize that regular school attendance is essential to student achievement, and Attendance Awareness Month kicks off the school year on a positive note by highlighting the importance of school attendance on students' academic success. School districts and charter schools are encouraged to create attendance awareness campaigns that meet the diverse and unique needs of their educational partners. Local Education Agencies are also encouraged to utilize the myriad resources offered by LACOE staff to create a safe, caring and inclusive school climate in which all students can thrive.

Resolution No. 1 is attached.

Next Steps:

- Post the September is Attendance Awareness Month Resolution on social media.
- Publicize the September is Attendance Awareness Month Resolution via Student Support Services listservs.
- Share this information at the CWA Café and other communities of practice across Student Support Services.
- Finalize and release an Attendance Toolkit to support districts and charters for beginning of the year practices and various efforts to continue to promote attendance throughout the school year.

BOARD RESOLUTION

No. 1: 2023-24

- WHEREAS** Research reveals that good attendance is essential to student achievement, and we are committed to dedicating our resources and attention to improving attendance rates to reduce chronic absenteeism rates, starting as early as pre-kindergarten, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten; and
- WHEREAS** chronic absenteeism, which continues to be defined as missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason, including excused and unexcused absences, is a proven predictor of lower academic achievement and a leading indicator of students dropping out; and
- WHEREAS** students in specialized populations who move frequently by no choice of their own, including migrant, newcomer, those experiencing homelessness, youth in foster care, active military families, adjudicated youth and students receiving special education services, may have busing or mobility challenges; and
- WHEREAS** students living in poverty are more likely to face systemic barriers to attend school – such as unreliable transportation, lack of access to health care, poor nutrition, unstable or unaffordable housing and lack of internet connectivity or electronic equipment – which leads to little or no participation in any offered alternative educational programs. This was especially true during the pandemic; and
- WHEREAS** chronic absenteeism exacerbates the opportunity and achievement gap for our students living in poverty who are more likely to miss school and be affected academically; and
- WHEREAS** chronic absenteeism undermines efforts to improve academically struggling schools since it is hard to measure improvement in classroom instruction if students are not physically in class, not completing assignments and/or not engaged in alternative educational opportunities; and
- WHEREAS** the Los Angeles County Board of Education, school districts, charter organizations and community partners can reach out more often to students who are frequently absent to determine why they are missing classes or assignments and identify and provide resources that would help them attend school more regularly in order to connect with staff and peers and to engage in meaningful instruction; and
- WHEREAS** chronic absenteeism can be significantly reduced when schools, families and communities work together to monitor and promote good attendance and to address barriers that keep children from attending school, connecting online, or from retrieving and/or returning assignments when they attend through alternative educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS effective strategies for improving attendance include monitoring attendance data; partnering with students, parents, grandparents, guardians and other family members; and deploying resources that address physical and mental health, safety, transportation, connectivity and other issues that may cause a student to repeatedly miss school either in-person or through alternative educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS the Los Angeles County Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is essential to student achievement, greater attention is needed to increase attendance rates and to reduce chronic absenteeism.

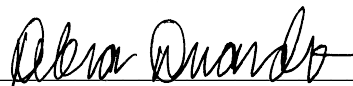
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Los Angeles County Board of Education hereby proclaims September 2023 as “Attendance Awareness Month”; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Los Angeles County Office of Education is committed to serving and supporting all Local Education Agencies serving Transitional Kindergarten through grade 12 students to decrease chronic absenteeism across our county by at least 10% by June 2025 compared to the 2021-2022 school year; and

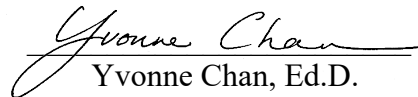
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Los Angeles County Office of Education has expanded child welfare and attendance support, training, outreach, and technical assistance to address chronic absenteeism and a myriad of other concerns, in response to the unprecedented impact that the pandemic had on our students, families, schools, and districts countywide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Los Angeles County Board of Education encourages every school district to set ambitious and equity-driven attendance goals, monitor absence data and join together with community partners to prevent and reduce chronic absenteeism, address barriers to attendance, participate in the robust training options offered by LACOE’s Division of Student Support Services, take advantage of the training and technical assistance offered by the Child Welfare and Attendance Senior Program Specialists, and ensure that all children are provided the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive whether in person or through alternative educational programs, as appropriate.

ADOPTED this 15th day of August 2023 by the Los Angeles County Board of Education in Downey, California.



Debra Duardo, M.S.W., Ed.D.
Superintendent



Yvonne Chan, Ed.D.
Board President