

Pleasanton Unified School District Student Services

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Attendance Awareness Month begins September 4th. **Our goal again this year is to ensure that every student attends school regularly and on time.**

Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success *starting in kindergarten* and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families still play a key role in making sure students get to school every day and helping their children understand why attendance is so important for success in school and life. Truancy is often considered an early warning sign that a young person may become involved with criminal behavior. According to the latest research from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 82% of prisoners are high school dropouts.

We realize some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances, but we also know when students miss too much school, regardless of the reason, it can cause them to fall behind academically. Your child is less likely to succeed if he or she is chronically absent.

Research shows that children who are chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of third grade. A child is chronically absent if he or she misses just two days of school every month! Regular attendance is important in establishing good habits--even in kindergarten. By sixth grade, chronic absence is a proven early warning sign for students at risk for dropping out of school. By ninth grade, good attendance can predict graduation rates *even better than eighth grade test scores*. Clearly, attending school regularly matters!

We don't want your child to fall behind in school and get discouraged. Please make sure your child attends school every day and arrives on time. Here are a few practical tips to help support regular attendance:

- **Help** your children keep a regular bedtime and establish a morning routine.
- **Ensure** your children go to school every day unless they are truly sick.
- **Avoid** scheduling vacations or doctor's appointments when school is in session.
- **Lay out** clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- **Talk** to teachers and counselors for advice if your child feels anxious about going to school.
- **Have** a backup plan for getting to school in case something comes up.

Please, let us know how we can best support you and your children so they can arrive for school on time every day. We can help if you have issues around food, clothing, school supplies or transportation. We want your child to be successful in school! If you have any questions or need more information please contact us, your child's counselor or vice principal.

During the month of September, please expect brief announcements from our Student Services Department's Child Welfare and Attendance Specialists (CWAs) with attendance facts.

Kelly Mills, CWA (925) 461-6634 kmills@pleasantonusd.net
School Assignments: Donlon, Lydiksen, Hart, Pleasanton Middle, Foothill, Village

Deborah Tomlin, CWA (925) 461-6117 dtomlin@pleasantonusd.net

School Assignments: Alisal, Fairlands, Mohr, Valley View, Vintage Hills, Walnut Grove, Harvest Park, Amador

September, 2018