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OAKLAND

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Approved as to Form and Legality

~~DRAFT~~
City Attorney's Office

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER DAN KALB

Proclamation of September as Attendance Awareness and Student Achievement Month
September 17, 2013

WHEREAS good attendance is essential to student achievement and graduation, and we are committed to dedicating our attention to reducing chronic absenteeism rates, with a focus starting as early as kindergarten,

WHEREAS chronic absence – missing 10 percent or more of school days for any reason including excused and unexcused absences, or just two of three days a month – is a proven predictor of lower academic achievement and higher 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, and weakens our communities and our local economy,

WHEREAS more than one out of 10 students was chronically absent in Oakland last year and in some elementary, middle and high schools, the percentage of chronically absent students was 20% or higher,

WHEREAS the impact of chronic absence hits low-income students and children of color particularly hard if they don't have the resources and support 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, and 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; and 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,

WHEREAS schools and community partners can reach out more frequently to absent students to determine why they are missing school and what would help them attend more regularly,

WHEREAS city agencies and community partners can do more to partner with schools to monitor data and target community resources to the schools and students who need available supports the most,

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 as OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL, we join with the Board of Education of the Oakland Unified School District, to recognize September as Attendance Awareness and Student Achievement Month. We hereby commit to focusing on doing our part to reduce chronic absenteeism to give all children in Oakland an equitable opportunity to learn, grow and thrive academically, emotionally and socially. Specifically we will strive to:

1. Make clear that improved student attendance is a high priority for city government and key city agencies and will use the bully pulpit of the Mayor's office, the City Council. and the City Administration to partner with our District and schools to nurture a local culture of attendance.
2. Partner with the school district to use data to raise awareness about the importance of attendance and as well as identify schools and neighborhoods with the greatest attendance challenges so we can work together to remove barriers to getting to and staying in school.
3. Support the Oakland Education Cabinet Attendance Collaborative efforts to produce and disseminate attendance toolkits offering a wide array of sources to help schools and communities improve student attendance.
4. Engage parents and the community – including civic and elected leaders, local businesses, clergy members and nonprofit organizations – in helping to spread the message that good attendance matters and help us come up with solutions to ensure all children are in school as much as possible.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROOKS, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, SCHAAF, AND
PRESIDENT KERNIGHAN

NOES -
ABSENT -
ABSTENTION -

ATTEST:

LATONDA SIMMONS

City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the City of Oakland, California