

**FROM THE OFFICE OF
MAYOR ASHLEY SWEARENGIN**

PROCLAMATION

- WHEREAS,** consistent attendance is essential to student achievement and graduation, and our community is committed to dedicating our attention to reducing chronic absenteeism, with a focus starting as early as kindergarten; and
- WHEREAS,** chronic absence – missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason including excused and unexcused absences, or just two or three days per month – is a proven predictor of academic trouble and dropout rates; and
- WHEREAS,** the impact of chronic absence hits low-income and children of color particularly hard if they lack 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 limited or unreliable transportation, lack of access to health care, and unstable or unaffordable housing; and
- 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
- WHEREAS,** absenteeism also undermines efforts to improve struggling schools, since it is difficult to measure improvement in classroom instruction if students are not in class to benefit from the instruction; and
- WHEREAS,** schools and districts track, calculate and share the data on how many students are chronically absent so that the proper interventions can be delivered for students in need; and
- WHEREAS,** all students – even those who show up regularly – are affected by chronic absence, as teachers must spend time reviewing for students who miss lessons; and
- WHEREAS,** improving attendance and reducing chronic absence takes commitment, collaboration and tailored approaches to particular challenges and strengths in each community; and
- WHEREAS,** schools, families, neighborhoods, and community partners can reach out more frequently to absent students to determine why they are missing school and what would help them attend regularly; and
- 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 I, Mayor Ashley Swearengin, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2014 to be:

“ATTENDANCE AWARENESS MONTH”

in the City of Fresno.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of the City of Fresno, California, this 11th day of September, 2014.

MAYOR ASHLEY SWEARENGIN