

FINGERTIP FACTS

Selected from:

School Attendance Improvement Handbook

**California Department of Education, Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office,
Sacramento, 2000**

School absence is a student missing from school or class with or without the prior knowledge and consent of either parents, guardians, or school personnel.

Absenteeism hurts other students since students who are frequently absent require more individual attention from the teacher.

Absenteeism hurts the school and the district since state financial support for schools is directly linked to student attendance. When students are absent, the school loses money.

Absenteeism hurts business since businesses must use resources to train uneducated workers.

School districts have been able to cut their “unexcused” absences in half by implementing teacher-supervised independent study for students who are absent due to short-term vacations. When students and parents are required to sign a contract and complete assignments while gone, the students are able to keep up with the class and the school district can collect ADA revenues that would otherwise be lost.

High school dropouts are two and a half times more likely to be on welfare than high school graduates and are almost twice as likely to be unemployed, according to a U.S. Department of Education 1996 finding.

Education Code Section 48260 states that a truant is any student who is absent from school three times in the same school year without a valid excuse.

Truancy is not the problem – it’s an indicator of other problems. When students aren’t in school, we need to understand why they stay away before we can effect solutions.

Chronic absenteeism, especially truancy, is a behavior that is highly associated with dropping out of school.

Studies show that truancy frequently leads to criminal activity, drug use, and incarceration.

Studies have found that to be effective truancy prevention programs should include the whole family – parents/guardians and siblings.

Research published by the Crime Prevention Coalition (1996) indicates that the most effective prevention programs address the underlying causes of truancy and are based on partnerships between law enforcement, schools, and social service agencies.

Attendance is closely tied to the students' perceptions about school safety. Students who feel bullied are more likely to find excuses to stay away from school. A study by the National Association of Secondary School Principals found that even the best-administered schools, 25 percent of students surveyed reported that one of their most serious concerns was fear of bullies.

According to recent statistics, about 50 percent of prison inmates are high school dropouts and cost society well over \$240 billion in lost wages and taxes over their lifetimes.

Selected from
Increasing Student Attendance: Strategies from Research and Practice
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, June 2004

Absenteeism due to reasons other than illness and cutting individual classes increases with each grade level, starting in the eighth grade (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002).

Poor attendance is a major indicator of gradual alienation and disengagement, and may lead to a student dropping out permanently (Lan and Lanthier, 2003; Schargel and Smink, 2001).

If schools are to successfully address low attendance, clearly they must understand why their students don't come to school. Commonly cited reasons that students have given for not attending school (Clement, Gwynne, & Younkin, 2001; Wagstaff, Combs, and Jarvis, 2000):

- Viewed classes as boring, irrelevant and a waste of time
- Did not have positive relationships with teachers
- Did not have positive relationships with other students
- Was suspended too often
- Did not feel safe at school
- Could not keep up with schoolwork or was failing (and there were no timely interventions)
- Found classes not challenging enough and students can miss class days and still receive credit
- Could not work and go to school at the same time

Additional facts to include financials:

In the typical 180-day school year, an average daily attendance rate of 93 percent means students are missing, on the whole, more than 13 days of school – about two and a half weeks ("Education Week," May 2001).

Every absence represents a loss of nearly \$_____ per day/per student.

An overall increase in daily attendance of _____ % equates to \$ _____ to the district.

XYZ Unified School District
123 Main Street
Anytown, CA 91234
(800) 555-1234

PERFECT ATTENDANCE LETTER

July 28, 20XX

To the Parents/Guardians of _____

The staff at **insert school name** believes that students who are most successful academically, socially, and emotionally are those who attend school on a daily basis. Regular and punctual attendance maximizes the opportunities for student success. We believe parents, teachers, staff, and community need to be responsible for regular attendance and punctuality to help foster lifelong habits and attitudes of personal responsibility and accountability. We encourage you to make every effort to have your children at school on time each day they are in good health.

That being said, I would like to commend you for the role you have played in your child's attendance. Upon reviewing our records, we noticed that _____ has had 0 absences and 0 tardies since the beginning of school. This is something both you and your child should be proud of!

Take a moment to share this letter with _____ and discuss the importance of maintaining such a commendable attendance record.

Once again, CONGRATULATIONS!

Sincerely,

Principal

XYZ Unified School District
123 Main Street
Anytown, CA 91234
(800) 555-1234

PERFECT ATTENDANCE LETTER

July 28, 20XX

Dear Parents of _____,

Congratulations! Your child, _____, had perfect attendance from _____ to _____. We at **[insert school name]** thank you for your support. As you know it is very important that students attend every day. We appreciate your help and know that your child is learning something new every day.

Mrs. Montoya
Principal

Estimados Padres de _____,

Felicidades! Su hijo(a), _____, tuvo asistencia perfecta de _____ a _____. Nosotros en **[insert school name]** le damos las gracias por su apoyo. Como ustedes saben es muy important que los estudiantes asistan cada dia. Agradecemos su ayuda y sabemos que su hijo(a) esta aprendiendo algo Nuevo cada dia.

XYZ Unified School District

ABC School
123 Main Street
Anytown, CA 91234
(800) 555-1234

EARLY INTERVENTION LETTER

July 28, 20XX

Dear _____,

Our attendance records show that your child, _____ has excused absences on the following dates:

The law requires that we send you this notice to ensure that you are aware of these absences and their impact on your child. This may not appear to be much of a problem at the present time, but projected over the entire school year, this absence rate would amount to a substantial accumulation of days missed.

We realize that occasionally children are too ill to attend school, and we encourage you to keep them home when they are sick. However, when students are frequently absent from school, for any reason, they miss the educational opportunities available to them. Academically, they often fall behind the other members of their class because of the direct instruction they have missed.

Your child's teachers and I are available to talk to you about your child's attendance. By working together, we can help provide your child with a quality education and increase his/her chance for success this year and in the future. Please feel free to contact us for assistance.

Sincerely,

Principal

cc: Attendance Office
Student File

SAMPLE PARENT INFORMATION

(May be posted on website)

_____ **School District**
Student Attendance is Everyone's Responsibility
Tips for Parents 20XX-XX (Fiscal Year)

Background Information:

- July 1, 1998 –California changed the way schools receive state funding. The schools no longer receive funding for “excused” absences. Schools only receive money for students who are actually in class.
- The _____School district expects to receive \$X,XXX per student for the 20XX-XX school year from the state. This means for that for every day you don't send your student to school, the district loses \$XX.XX.
- Actual attendance district wide is about XX% of enrollment. By increasing student attendance district wide by only 1%, district funding would increase by \$XXX,XXX.
- Senior Ditch Day – The district lost \$XX,XXX district wide for Senior Ditch Day in one year alone!

Compulsory Education Law:

Requires students ages 6 – 18 years of age to attend school all day; therefore, attendance is taken every period. In order for the district to receive funding, a student must attend at least part of the day.

- Legally Excused Absences (Education Code §48205)
 1. Personal illness or injury.
 2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
 3. Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered.
 4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family.
 5. Jury duty or court ordered appearance.
 6. Exclusion for failure to present evidence of immunization.
 7. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion.
 8. Appearance at SARB or SART hearing.
- **We do not get funding for *any* absences!**

Attendance is Everyone's Responsibility. Here's how:

Parents and Students

- Arrive to school and class on time.
- Notify attendance office of student's absence in a timely manner.
- Plan family vacations during non-school days.
- Try to schedule doctor appointments for your child after school hours.
- Allow your child to stay home only when he/she has a contagious illness or is too sick to be comfortable at school.
- Help prevent child illnesses from spreading at our school by getting your child vaccinated against flu and chicken pox.
- When your child has a doctor's appointment in the middle of the school day, bring him/her to school before the appointment. The district receives full funding if a student attends for part of the day.
 - Good attendance benefits your child's education. Every day a student misses school, he/she gets more than two days behind his/her peers, because he/she must make up missed learning and catch up with new learning at the same time.
 - Good attendance raises your child's chance to score well on tests.
 - Your child learns more about responsibility each day he/she attends school.

School Staff

- Take attendance every period.
- Notify parents of student absences.
- Follow-up on uncleared absences.
- Work with parents of students with "poor" attendance.
- Put together a team of appropriate staff members to assist student to improve attendance.

SAMPLE PARENT INFORMATION

(May be posted on website)

_____ School District

La Asistencia del Estudiante es la Responsabilidad de Todos Ayuda Informativa para los Padres 20XX-XX

Información Fundamental:

- Julio 1,1998- California cambió el sistema de distribución de fondos estatales para las escuelas. Las escuelas ya no reciben fondos por ausencias “con excusa”. Las escuelas solamente reciben dinero por los estudiantes que están presentes en las clases.
- El distrito de _____ espera recibir del estado \$X,XXX por estudiante durante el año escolar de 20XX-XX. Esto significa que por cada día que Ud. no mande a su estudiante a la escuela, el distrito perderá \$XX,XX.
- La asistencia a través del distrito está entre el XX% de la matrícula. Aumentando la asistencia estudiantil a través del distrito solamente por el 1%, los fondos del distrito aumentarían por la cantidad de \$XXX,XXX.
- Día de Ausencia del Ultimo Año-En un año el distrito perdió ¡\$XX,XXX a través del distrito debido al Día de Ausencia del Ultimo Año!

La Ley Educativa Obligatoria:

Requiere que los estudiantes entre las edades de 6-18 años asistan a la escuela todo el día, por lo tanto la asistencia se toma en cada período. Para que el distrito reciba los fondos, un estudiante debe asistir por lo menos a un período.

- Ausencias con Excusas Legales (E.C. §48205)
 1. Enfermedad personal o lesión.
 2. Cuarentena bajo la dirección de un oficial de salud del condado o de la ciudad.
 3. Servicios proporcionados por un médico, dentista, optometrista o quiropráctico.
 4. Asistencia a servicios funerarios para un miembro de la familia inmediata.
 5. Deber de Jurado o presencia a una orden de corte.
 6. Exclusión por falta de presentar evidencia de inmunización.
 7. Observación de una festividad o ceremonia de su religión.
 8. Presencia a una audiencia de SARB o SART.
- **¡No recibimos fondos por ausencias de cualquier tipo!**

La Asistencia es la Responsabilidad de Todos. De la siguiente forma:

Padres y Estudiantes

- Lleguen a tiempo a la escuela y a la clase.
- Notifiquen a tiempo a la oficina de asistencia acerca de la ausencia del estudiante.
- Planeen vacaciones familiares durante los días sin escuela.
- Traten de hacer citas con el doctor para su estudiante después de las horas de escuela.
- Permita que su estudiante se quede en casa solamente cuando tenga una enfermedad contagiosa o esté muy enfermo/a para sentirse cómodo/a en la escuela.
- Ayude a prevenir que las enfermedades del estudiante se propaguen en la escuela haciendo que se vacune en contra de la gripe y la varicela.
- Cuando su estudiante tenga una cita con el doctor en medio del día de clases, tráigalo/a a la escuela antes de la cita. El distrito recibe fondos por todo el día si el estudiante asiste por parte del día.
 - La buena asistencia beneficia la educación de su estudiante. Cada día que un estudiante pierde escuela, se atrasa más de dos días que el resto de sus compañeros, porque tiene que completar las lecciones que ha perdido y al mismo tiempo mantenerse al día con las nuevas lecciones.
 - La buena asistencia aumenta la oportunidad de que su estudiante reciba buenas calificaciones en las pruebas.
 - Su estudiante aprende más acerca de responsabilidad cada vez que asiste a la escuela.

Personal de la Escuela

- Tomen asistencia en cada período.
- Notifiquen a los padres de las ausencias del estudiante
- Continúen averiguando las ausencias no aclaradas.
- Trabajen con los padres de los estudiantes con “mala” asistencia.
- Formen un equipo con miembros apropiados del personal para ayudar al estudiante a mejorar la asistencia

SAMPLE INFORMATION LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO PARENTS

ABOUT SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Beginning July 1, 1998, school districts no longer receive funding from the State of California for pupils who are absent from school. This includes all absences, even those related to illness, medical or doctor appointments, or for the purposes of attending funeral services of a member of the immediate family.

In other words, schools will receive state funding only for students who actually attend school. If you find it necessary to keep your child out of school for reasons other than illness, we encourage you to send your child to school for at least part of the day. Then your child will not be counted absent for the day and will not miss out on important school assignments. It is crucial that local schools continue to receive the financial resources necessary to provide quality educational services and reduce program cuts. We want to avoid the unnecessary absences that reduce district resources and limit your child's opportunity to get good grades.

Effective January 1, 1999, amendments to Education Code section 48205 make clear that pupils absent from school for any excusable reason, including illness, shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence that can be reasonably provided and, upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time, shall be given full credit therefore. As the teacher of any class from which a pupil is absent shall determine[,] the tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the pupil missed during the absence.

Studies show that there is a direct correlation between good school attendance and student achievement. Therefore, we encourage you as parents to reinforce the importance of good school attendance and to make every effort to send your child to school on a regular basis.

Again, we encourage you continued support to promote good school attendance and student achievement.

Sincerely,

Superintendent

XYZ Unified School District
123 Main Street
Anytown, CA 91234
(800) 555-1234

September, 25, 20XX

Dear Parent:

Every Day Counts in a child's education. Every day a student misses school, he gets more than two days behind his peers, because he must make up missed learning and catch up with new learning at the same time. Every day a student is in school, she raises her chance to score well on tests. Every day a student goes to school, he learns a little more about responsibility. Every Day Counts towards funding for school supplies too. A new law has changed the way schools receive state funding. Schools can no longer receive money for excused absences. Schools will now only receive funding for students who are actually in class. Every day a student misses school, even for excused absences, the school loses about \$35 in income, the equivalent of about three library books.

XYZ Unified School District is working hard toward becoming the best district in XYZ County. We are proud of the giant steps we are taking toward improving student achievement. We now have some of the highest graduation requirements in the county, as well as academic criteria that every high school student must meet to advance to the next grade. We have a ninth-grade academy for eighth-graders who don't meet the criteria for entering high school. We have a policy that requires us to teach children to memorize basic arithmetic facts, and we have adopted new language arts materials that bring basic phonics and spelling skills back to our classrooms. Our dropout rate is below the county average, and nearly half of all our seniors meet the requirements for the University of California system.

But our work is not done and we need your help. We want to ensure that every student can meet our new, rigorous academic criteria and graduation requirements. We also need to raise our standardized test scores in most subject areas. And we must get students who don't speak English into English classrooms sooner.

Please support our efforts to make XYZ Unified School District the best in XYZ County by helping to get our student to school every day. You can do this by:

- planning your family vacations during the summer months or when school is on holiday
- teaching your child to be on time for school each day
- making sure your child stays home only when he or she is sick
- asking your child's doctors to schedule appointments before or after school hours
- bringing your child to school before and after his daytime doctor appointment

We know you must want the very best education for your child, and we do too. By understanding that **Every Day Counts**, together we can give your child the very best.

Yours truly,

Superintendent

Districto Unificado Escolar de XYZ
123 Main Street
Anytown, CA 91234
(800) 555-1234

25 de septiembre de 20XX

Estimado padre:

Cada Día Cuenta en la educación de uno niño/a. Cada día que un estudiante falta a la escuela, él se atrasa dos días que el resto de sus compañeros, porque él debe de reponer el aprendizaje perdido y ponerse al corriente con el nuevo aprendizaje al mismo tiempo. Cada día que el estudiante está en clases, él alcanza su oportunidad de sacar mayor calificación en sus pruebas. Cada día que el estudiante está en clases, él aprende un poco más acerca de la responsabilidad. Cada día también cuenta hacia fondos para artículos escolares. Una nueva ley ha cambiado la forma que las escuelas reciben fondos para los estudiantes que están presente en clase. Cada día que un estudiante pierde clases, aún por ausencia justificable, la escuela pierde cerca de \$35 en ingresos, el equivalente de tres libros de biblioteca.

El Distrito Escolar Unificado XYZ está trabajando duro para convertirse en el mejor distrito en el Condado de XYZ. Estamos orgullosos de los pasos gigantes que estamos tomando para mejorar el logro del estudiante. Nosotros tenemos ahora algunos de los más altos requisitos de graduación en el condado, como también el criterio académico que cada estudiante de escuela preparatoria debe reunir para avanzar al siguiente grado. Nosotros tenemos una academia de noveno grado para los estudiantes de octavo que no cumplieron con el criterio para entrar a la escuela preparatoria. Tenemos una póliza que nos requiere enseñar a los niños memorizar factores básicos de aritmética, y de nuevo hemos adoptado nuevos materiales de arte de lenguaje que proporciona fónicos básicos y habilidades de deletreo en nuestros salones de clases. Nuestro porcentaje de deserción es más bajo que el promedio del condado, y casi la mitad de nuestros estudiantes de ultimo grado hacen los requisitos para el sistema de la Universidad de California.

Pero nuestro trabajo no está completo y necesitamos su ayuda. Queremos asegurar que cada estudiante pueda cumplir con nuestro nuevo y riguroso criterio académico de requisitos de graduación. También necesitamos elevar las metas de pruebas normales en la mayoría de las materias. Y debemos hacer que los estudiantes que no hablan inglés estén más pronto en clases de ingles.

Favor de apoyar nuestros esfuerzos para hacer que el Distrito Unificado Escolar de XYZ sea el mejor en el Condado de XYZ ayudando a nuestros estudiantes a asistir a la escuela todos los días. Usted puede hacerlo al:

- Planear las vacaciones familiares durante los meses de verano o cuando la escuela tiene días festivos
- Enseñar a su hijo/a a llegar a tiempo a la escuela todos los días
- Asegurarse que su hijo/a esté en casa cuando el/ella está enfermo
- Pedir citas de doctor de su hijo/a antes o después de horas escolares
- Traer a su hijo/a a la escuela antes y después de la cita del doctor

Nosotros sabemos que usted quiere la mejor educación para su hijo/a, y nosotros también. Al entender que **Cada Día Cuenta**, juntos daremos a su hijo/a lo mejor.

Atentamente,

Superintendente

SAMPLE SCRIPTS

Script 1 – School Administrator:

Hi,

This is _____ calling from your child's school **[or insert school name]**. Why is this recording calling me, you ask? What has my child done now? Am I being called to the principal's office?

Don't worry! I'm just calling to commend you on doing your part to educate your child.

You've heard the saying, "You miss school; you miss out." Well it's truer than ever, and just getting your child to school everyday helps us do our part in providing quality education for all children.

Students who attend school everyday do better academically. Today's students need to master ever-growing amounts of information and skills to be successful. Just being at school is the crucial first step to doing so. Your support in promoting attendance really does make a difference for your child.

Thanks for your time, and for your help in our partnership!

Script 2 – Celebrity:

Hi,

This is _____ calling on behalf of **[insert school name]**. Why am I calling you?

Did you win free tickets to Sunday's game? Are you going to meet the President? Are you going to be on TV? [or other question appropriate to specific caller]

Well, it's actually something bigger than that. I'm calling to commend you on doing your part to educate your child. What made a huge difference for me in my education was my parents' emphasis on attending school and doing my best. It's helped me get where I am today.

Students who attend school everyday do better academically. Today's students need to master ever-growing amounts of information and skills to be successful. Just being at school is the crucial first step to doing so. Your support in promoting attendance really does make a difference for your child.

Thanks for your time, and **[ending appropriate to specific speaker]**

Script 3 – Seasonal (holiday example):

This is _____ calling from your child's school [or **insert school name**]. Why is this recording calling me, you ask? Don't we know you have shopping to do?

Don't worry! I'm just calling to commend you on doing your part to educate your child.

You've heard the saying, "You miss school; you miss out." During the holiday season, we realize there are many demands on your time and your family's time, and we appreciate your continued emphasis on the importance of attending school.

Our teachers strive to make every day count all throughout the year. They plan meaningful lessons for each and every school day. Although we realize this may be a busy time of year for your family, we encourage you to support your child's success by planning holiday activities around school time so your child doesn't fall behind in school. This is the best gift you can give your child this season.

Thanks for your time, and happy holidays!

CALL IN SCRIPTS/recordings when parents are on hold.

- 1) Our teachers strive to make every day count all throughout the year. They plan meaningful lessons for each and every school day. Although we realize this may be a busy time of year for your family, we encourage you to support your child's success by planning holiday activities around school time so your child doesn't fall behind in school. This is the best gift you can give your child this season. **(This would be during the holiday season)**
- 2) Students who attend school everyday do better academically. Today's students need to master ever-growing amounts of information and skills to be successful. Just being at school is the crucial first step to doing so. Your support in promoting attendance really does make a difference for your child.

PARENT STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

Physical Strategies

Include regular exercise

Balanced diet

Medication if appropriate

Homework done at the same time daily

Quiet, non-distractible room for studying

Predictability Strategies

Prepare for transitions to new activity

Practice simple daily routines

Have regular communication with school

Give instructions one at a time and let child see your lips

Do not give instructions unless your child can see your face

Reward your teenager when he/she pays attention to difficult tasks

Organization Strategies

Organize backpack and notebook

Have a “Launch Pad” area for next morning’s materials and messages

Encourage on-task behavior

Obtain an “organizer” stylebook and supervise and reward its use

Post school calendar and notes (refrigerator, room, etc.)

Monitoring Strategies

Use simple, positive directions showing what to do instead of what not to do

Give visual clues

Provide regular times and a quiet, clean area for doing homework

Limit and balance extra curricular activities

Supervise homework

Social Skills Strategies

- Teach cooperation skills, taking turns, and making choices
- Encourage non-competitive physical activity (karate, dance, and hiking)
- Use “special time” for bonding
- Enroll in classes in behavior management and join support groups
- Do not model impulsivity
- Set a rule at home where no one interrupts the other while talking

Behavior Strategies

- Reduce impulsive behavior
- Reward desired behaviors
- Teach positive self-talk and goal setting
- Cognitive restructuring of problems and solutions
- Set the example, then enforce the rule
- Keep the communication lines open

Contact the experts anytime you have question or concerns

- Police
- School officials
- Counselors
- Doctors

Better to question than to second guess yourself

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

Make sure your child goes to school regularly.

Take an interest in your child's schoolwork.

If your child starts to miss school, speak to the school and let your child know he/she must attend.

If your child is ill, contact the school and explain the reason for the absence.

Do not expect the school to agree to frivolous outings, such as shopping trips.

Don't expect your older children to stay home and act as baby sitters for younger children.

LOVE YOUR CHILDREN...KEEP THEM IN SCHOOL

Who says Kindergarten isn't important?

Kindergarten children are absent more than children at any other elementary or junior high grade level.

Most people still do not understand that kindergarten is one of the most important years in a child's educational career. When most of us went to kindergarten we learned to take naps, stand in line, and share our toys. Socialization skills are still important, but kindergarten children today learn to read, print, and do simple arithmetic. They learn about their community. The loss of these skills through excessive absenteeism can scar the child for the rest of his/her educational career.

There is another and even more important factor to consider. Kindergarten children are picking up many messages from the adults in their world. If Mom doesn't think it's important to go to school, a child will not feel the importance. If a child knows that he/she is supposed to be in school and Mom takes him/her shopping instead, the message to the child says that he/she doesn't have to be responsible and he/she doesn't have to follow the rules.

Kindergarten children are highly susceptible to measles, mumps, and runny noses. If there is something physically wrong, other than the usual, the school may be able to help. If there is a difficulty at school, this is the year for the parent and teacher team to go to work to find the cause. Let's not wait—the educational foundation starts in kindergarten.

WHY SHOULD I STAY IN SCHOOL?

If you stay in school and get your diploma, you'll double your chances of getting a good paying job.

If you stay in school, you're less likely to get involved with gangs and drugs.

If you stay in school, you're less likely to be a victim of crime.

If you stay in school, you won't run the risk of being prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office for truancy.

If you stay in school, you can write your own ticket to go anywhere, to do anything, to be anyone.

XYZ Unified School District

123 Main Street

Anytown, CA 91234

(800) 555-1234

September, 25, 20XX

Dear Business Owner:

Every Day Counts in a child's education. Every day a student misses school, he gets more than two days behind his peers, because he must make up missed learning and catch up with new learning at the same time. Every day a student is in school, she raises her chance to score well on tests. Every day a student goes to school, he learns a little more about responsibility. **Every Day Counts** towards funding for school supplies too. A new law has changed the way schools receive state funding. Schools can no longer receive money for excused absences. Schools will now only receive funding for students who are actually in class. Every day a student misses school, even for excused absences, the school loses about \$35 in income, the equivalent of about three library books.

XYZ Unified School District is working hard toward becoming the best district in XYZ County. We are proud of the giant steps we are taking toward improving student achievement. We now have some of the highest graduation requirements in the county, as well as academic criteria that every high school student must meet to advance to the next grade. We have a ninth-grade academy for eighth-graders who don't meet the criteria for entering high school. We have a policy that requires us to teach children to memorize basic arithmetic facts, and we have adopted new language arts materials that bring basic phonics and spelling skills back to our classrooms. Our dropout rate is below the county average, and nearly half of all our seniors meet the requirements for the University of California system.

Nevertheless, our work is not done and we need your help. We want to ensure that every student can meet our new, rigorous academic criteria and graduation requirements. We also need to raise our standardized test scores in most subject areas. And we must get students who don't speak English into English classrooms sooner.

Please support our efforts to make XYZ Unified School District the best in XYZ County by helping to get our student to school every day. You can do this by:

- posting the enclosed poster in your storefront window so community parents and children will see it
- encouraging regular school attendance among your employees, those who are parents and those who are students.

We know you want the very best education for the children of XYZ Unified School District, and we do too. After all, a well-educated community is good for business too. By understanding that **Every Day Counts**, together we can give your child the very best.

Yours truly,

Superintendent

XYZ Unified School District

123 Main Street

Anytown, CA 91234

(800) 555-1234

September, 25, 20XX

Dear Physician:

Every Day Counts in a child's education. Every day a student misses school, he gets more than two days behind his peers, because he must make up missed learning and catch up with new learning at the same time. Every day a student is in school, she raises her chance to score well on tests. Every day a student goes to school, he learns a little more about responsibility. **Every Day Counts** towards funding for school supplies too. A new law has changed the way schools receive state funding. Schools can no longer receive money for excused absences. Schools will now only receive funding for students who are actually in class. Every day a student misses school, even for excused absences, the school loses about \$35 in income, the equivalent of about three library books.

XYZ Unified School District is working hard toward becoming the best district in XYZ County. We are proud of the giant steps we are taking toward improving student achievement. We now have some of the highest graduation requirements in the county, as well as academic criteria that every high school student must meet to advance to the next grade. We have a ninth-grade academy for eighth-graders who don't meet the criteria for entering high school. We have a policy that requires us to teach children to memorize basic arithmetic facts, and we have adopted new language arts materials that bring basic phonics and spelling skills back to our classrooms. Our dropout rate is below the county average, and nearly half of all our seniors meet the requirements for the University of California system.

Nevertheless, our work is not done and we need your help. We want to ensure that every student can meet our new, rigorous academic criteria and graduation requirements. We also need to raise our standardized test scores in most subject areas. And we must get students who don't speak English into English classrooms sooner.

Please support our efforts to make XYZ Unified School District the best in XYZ County by helping to get our student to school every day. You can do this by:

- asking your staff to schedule appointments with schoolchildren before and after school hours, whenever possible
- encouraging parents to take their child back to school after a daytime appointment if the child is well
- encouraging regular school attendance among your parent employees

We know you want the very best education for the children of XYZ Unified School District, and we do too. By understanding that **Every Day Counts**, together we can give your child the very best.

Yours truly,

Superintendent

WHY SHOULD I STAY IN SCHOOL?

If you stay in school and get your diploma, you'll double your chances of getting a good paying job.

If you stay in school, you're less likely to get involved with gangs and drugs.

If you stay in school, you're less likely to be a victim of crime.

If you stay in school, you won't run the risk of being prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office for truancy.

If you stay in school, you can write your own ticket to go anywhere, to do anything, to be anyone.

XYZ Unified School District
123 Main Street
Anytown, CA 91234
(800) 555-1234

September, 25, 20XX

Dear Business Owner:

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Please support our efforts to make XYZ Unified School District the best in XYZ County by helping to get our student to school every day. You can do this by:

- posting the enclosed poster in your storefront window so community parents and children will see it
- encouraging regular school attendance among your employees, those who are parents and those who are students.

We know you want the very best education for the children of XYZ Unified School District, and we do too. After all, a well-educated community is good for business too. By understanding that **Every Day Counts**, together we can give your child the very best.

Yours truly,

Superintendent

XYZ Unified School District

123 Main Street

Anytown, CA 91234

(800) 555-1234

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