

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 2026 AS ATTENDANCE AWARENESS MONTH IN ALABAMA

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education and the Alabama State Department of Education accepted the National Attendance Challenge to reduce chronic absenteeism by 50% over five years, and Alabama is committed to dedicating resources and attention to reducing chronic absenteeism rates—starting as early as kindergarten—recognizing that good attendance is essential to student achievement and graduation; and

WHEREAS, Alabama reduced chronic absenteeism by 2.8 percentage points, from 14.84% to 12.05%, on the 2025 State Report Card, which is a required reporting metric under the federal *Every Student Succeeds Act*; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Department of Education has developed the *2026-27 Alabama Attendance Manual*, to support school systems by providing consistency in policies and procedures related to school attendance; and

WHEREAS, chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 18 or more days of school for any reason—including excused and unexcused absences—or just two or three days a month, which is a proven predictor of academic difficulty and increased dropout rates; and

WHEREAS, the definition of attendance has expanded beyond the physical classroom to include virtual and remote learning; and

WHEREAS, improving student attendance and reducing chronic absences requires commitment, collaboration, and tailored approaches that reflect the unique challenges and strengths of each community; and

WHEREAS, chronic absenteeism affects vulnerable students differently, particularly those facing systemic barriers that make regular attendance difficult; and

WHEREAS, chronic absenteeism exacerbates the achievement gap often associated with struggling students; and

WHEREAS, student absenteeism undermines efforts to improve struggling schools, as it is difficult to measure instructional improvement when students are not present to benefit from instruction; and

WHEREAS, schools and communities must increase commitment to identifying, analyzing, projecting, and sharing data on chronically absent students to ensure appropriate interventions and services align with student needs; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Department of Education works collaboratively with the Alabama Department of Mental Health and other state agencies and organizations to provide support services that increase attendance for all students; and

WHEREAS, chronic absenteeism can be significantly reduced when schools, parents, and communities work together to monitor and promote good attendance and address barriers that keep students from attending school; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education encourages all local communities, school systems, and civic organizations to join in this laudable effort to reduce chronic student absenteeism and hereby encourages all Alabamians to participate in activities recognizing September 2026 as *Alabama Attendance Awareness Month*.

Done this 13th day of August 2026