

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 2025 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. 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 3.06% on the 2024 State Report Card, which is a required reporting metric under the federal *Every Student Succeeds Act*; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Department of Education developed the *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 trouble and dropout rates; and

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

WHEREAS, local school systems have effectively worked to advance student success by reducing chronic absenteeism rates from the previous school year; and

WHEREAS, improving student attendance and reducing chronic absences takes commitment, collaboration, and tailored approaches to challenges and strengths in each community; and

WHEREAS, the impact of chronic absenteeism impacts vulnerable students differently, particularly if they do not have the resources to make up for lost time in the classroom, aligning with situations where students are likely to experience systemic barriers to attending school; and

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

WHEREAS, student absenteeism undermines efforts to improve struggling schools since it is hard to measure improvement in classroom instruction if students are not engaged to benefit from instruction; and

WHEREAS, schools and communities must increase their commitments to identifying, analyzing, projecting, and sharing data on the number of students who are chronically absent to ensure appropriate interventions and related services align with the needs of students; and

WHEREAS, *Alabama Literacy Act #2019-523* concentrates on systematic efforts to improve the reading skills of all public-school students in early literacy so that every student is reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade; 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 for increasing 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:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does encourage all local communities, school systems, and civic organizations to join in this laudable effort to reduce chronic student absenteeism and does hereby encourage all Alabamians to participate in activities recognizing September 2025 as “Alabama Attendance Awareness Month.”

Done this 14th day of August 2025