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Gov. Daugaard proclaims September Attendance Awareness Month

PIERRE, S.D. – With school back in session across the state, Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed September [Attendance Awareness Month](#).

“In order to succeed in school, students are often reminded to listen to their teachers, complete homework assignments on time and cooperate with their classmates,” said Gov. Daugaard. “There is another simple practice we sometimes overlook that is absolutely critical: consistent school attendance. It seems obvious, but the importance of attendance cannot be overstated.”

Research indicates that missing just 10 percent of a school year can negatively impact student achievement. That equates to just two to three days a month.

The South Dakota Department of Education is working to raise awareness about the importance of regular attendance through outreach to schools and other stakeholders.

“Sometimes we have a tendency to assume chronic absence only affects students in the upper grades,” said Secretary of Education Dr. Melody Schopp. “However, the research shows that students who are chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade are less likely to read on grade level by the time they get to 4th grade. This is an important reading benchmark. Students who don’t meet it are likely to continue struggling with reading into the future.”

Students who are chronically absent are also at risk of dropping out of school. By 6th grade, chronic absenteeism is a proven early warning sign for students at risk for dropping out, and by 9th grade, good attendance can predict graduation rates even better than 8th grade test scores.

More information about the importance of consistent school attendance is available at <http://attendanceworks.org>.