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Gov. Dugaard proclaims September Attendance Awareness Month

PIERRE, S.D. – The 2018-19 school year is underway, and Gov. Dennis Dugaard has proclaimed September [Attendance Awareness Month](#).

“Time out of school is learning lost,” said Mary Stadick Smith, interim secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education. “All it takes is missing 10 percent of a school year to negatively impact student achievement. That equates to just two or three days of school per month. With that in mind, I encourage school districts, communities and families to examine their local school attendance rates and work together to get and keep those rates high.”

The South Dakota Department of Education has been working to raise awareness about the importance of regular attendance through outreach to schools and other stakeholders. Research indicates that 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>.