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For Immediate Release

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Utah Schools Aim to Decrease Chronic Absenteeism

SALT LAKE CITY – Schools throughout Utah are putting an extra focus on decreasing chronic absenteeism as part of September being School Attendance Awareness Month.

In Utah, 1 in 7 students is chronically absent, which is defined as missing at least 10 percent of school for any reason. Students who are chronically absent on average have lower test scores, lower grades, and lower graduation rates. Those who are chronically absent in grades 8-12 are seven times more likely to drop out of high school.

“Chronic absenteeism is one of our most urgent problems, but we are seeing encouraging strategies and solutions in schools throughout Utah. Creating a schoolwide culture of good attendance, using data, and personalizing outreach and support will help increase attendance rates and improve individual student outcomes,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Sydnee Dickson.

To publicize these efforts, Gov. Gary Herbert issued [a declaration](#) calling for increased public awareness on the importance of regular school attendance, and the Utah Education Network in conjunction with Regional Educational Laboratory West at WestEd has created [an informational video and website](#) that highlights practices and schools that have made a difference in improving overall attendance rates.