Dear [Community Partner]

We invite you to join us in recognizing this September as Attendance Awareness Month in our community!

The start of each school year presents an important opportunity to lift up an increasingly urgent issue: Too many children are missing too many days of school. Literally tens of thousands of children even in the early grades are chronically absent—missing nearly a month or more of school every year. Paying attention to absenteeism is even more important as we address the schooling disruptions created by Covid-19.

[Insert if you have your local data: In our community, one in X students missed nearly a month of school last year.]

Children who are chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are much less likely to read proficiently by the end of third grade and are more likely to have poor attendance in later grades. By middle and high school, chronic absence is a proven early warning sign that a student will drop out. This is especially true for those students living in poverty, who need school the most and often face the greatest barriers to getting to class.

Chronic absence is a problem we can solve when schools, families and community partners join forces to engage students in learning, encourage school-going routines and keep everyone healthy. Together, we can identify and address challenges, such as a lack of access to health care, unstable housing, poor transportation or unsafe paths to school. Across the country, hundreds of communities like ours are celebrating Attendance Awareness Month, a significant step in calling attention to the importance of school attendance at the start of the school year.

Whether you are a parent, teacher, principal, superintendent, elected official, business leader, after-school provider, or you represent a public agency or a faith-based organization, you have a role to play. Please join us!

[add meeting details: time, place, host, agenda]