



## **Attendance Matters**

August 2019,

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In California students with poor attendance or behavior are dropping out from school in alarming numbers. For this reason improving school attendance is a priority for the GUSD Board of Education. We need your help. It is important that parents and guardians understand their role in establishing a pattern of regular, on time school attendance.

According to the California Department of Education a student is considered to be “chronically absent” from school when he or she has missed two or more days per month. It may not seem like a lot, but that adds up quickly. Over a ten-month school year – that would be 20 days, a whole month of missed school. Even two days each month can put your child’s education behind other students. Students in kindergarten and first grade who are chronically absent are less likely to learn to read by the end of third grade. By sixth grade, chronic absences increase student drop-out rates. By ninth grade, good attendance predicts graduation better than eighth-grade test scores. Clearly, *going to school regularly matters!*

Going to school on time every day also matters! Student are expected to be in their seat and prepared to do work for class at the beginning of the school day or period. Students tardy 30 minutes or more to class, on three separate occasions, equals a full day absence for attendance reporting (e.g., 3 tardies of 30 minutes or more = 1 absence).

Sometimes children get sick and need to stay home. Parent/guardians may excuse their child’s illness(s) up to 7 times in a school year without a doctor’s note. Starting with the 8<sup>th</sup> time, a doctor’s note is required to excuse a child’s illness. Parents/guardians have three days, from the date of the absence, to excuse absences by directly contacting their student’s school.

While there are many factors that contribute to success in school, regular school attendance is critical to ensure that all students graduate. We would like to help your family with any problems causing your child to miss school. GUSD welcomes open and effective communication with parents and guardians, such as meetings with administration, teachers, counselors and connecting through *Parent Connect*. Together we can find the most appropriate solution for each student and family to ensure that your child is attending school and being given the opportunity to learn. Your child’s education is important to us.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please refer to your school administration. They will be able to assist you with any attendance-related questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ilin Magran  
Assistant Director, Child Welfare & Attendance