**[Name of State Education Commission/Superintendent] Announces Commitment to Tackle Student Chronic Absence**

***[NAME] pledges to engage state agencies, local districts, and partners
 in concerted effort to reduce chronic absence***

[NAME OF CITY ] – [/EDUCATION COMMISSIONER/SUPERINTENDENT] has committed to cut chronic absence by 50% over five years in [STATE NAME], joining a bipartisan [list of states](https://www.attendanceworks.org/states-participating-in-the-50-challenge/) that are taking a firm stand on an urgent issue, that if not addressed, could have long-term impacts on students, families and the state’s economic health.

Chronic absence, or missing more than 10% of school days for any reason, spiked during the Covid-19 pandemic, and rates remain elevated across the nation. Chronic absence puts a drag on students’ social and academic development, and can have consequences not only for the absent students but also for their classmates.

Nationally, 14.7 million students were missing so much school they were chronically absent in the 2021-22 school year. While it is experienced by students in all demographics, chronic absence disproportionately affects children from low-income families and communities of color, creating attendance gaps that exacerbate achievement gaps in local schools.

[SAMPLE QUOTE] “As we begin a new school year our administration is proud to announce our commitment to reduce student chronic absence in [STATE NAME] by 50% in five years. Our team has been working hard to ensure all students have access to a high quality education, feel a sense of belonging at school and receive the supports they need to attend school regularly and achieve,” said [INSERT NAME].

[Insert sentence describing the chronic absence levels in your state, indicating the highest levels reached and the most recent data. Briefly explain what the state has done to improve chronic absence. ]

[SAMPLE QUOTE] “Our progress so far shows that there is still much work to be done. We are optimistic that districts and community partners will continue to join forces with families to create school environments that are engaging, healthy and that offer opportunities for our students to build relationships and develop socially and academically," said [NAME].

[SAMPLE QUOTE] “Improving student attendance matters to all of us, not just those with school-age children,” [INSERT NAME] said. “When more students graduate, on time, our communities and our economy are stronger. We have more people who are prepared for the workplace and more engaged in our state’s civic life.”

The [NAME OF STATE DEPARTMENT/AGENCY] has developed resources for schools and districts related to chronic absence, including [INSERT RESOURCE NAMES AND LINKS IF AVAILABLE] .

Other initiatives designed to improve student engagement and attendance include:

[INSERT BULLETED LIST OF ACTIVITIES]