



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Governments Issue Proclamations Recognizing September as Attendance Awareness Month

Benton and Franklin Counties, WA – United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties is proud to announce that local governments across the region have officially recognized September as Attendance Awareness Month, bringing critical attention to the importance of consistent school attendance for student success and community well-being.

Proclamations were issued by the cities of Kennewick, Pasco, Richland and West Richland all uniting in support of this important initiative. These proclamations underscore the message that every day counts when it comes to a child's education.

Chronic absenteeism—defined as missing 10% or more of the school year for any reason—affects students' academic achievement, graduation rates, and long-term success. In response, local governments, school districts, and community partners are coming together to spotlight the issue and promote solutions.

"Attendance is a powerful predictor of academic outcomes," said Jade Elliott, Communications and Special Projects Director at United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties. "When students are present and engaged, they have a better chance of succeeding in school and beyond. We are grateful to our local leaders for recognizing the importance of showing up and for supporting families in helping students attend every day."

Throughout the month of September, United Way and its partners have been collaborating with school districts, community organizations, and families to share resources, raise awareness, and encourage practices that support regular attendance.

"We are glad that a spotlight is put on the importance of attendance during the month of September, but chronic absenteeism is a year round issue that we are trying to combat," Elliott said, through our Attendance Matters® mentoring program and our partnerships with the local school districts we hope to encourage students to attend school every day and support them through that process by helping them address health, transportation, and other challenges families may face."

For more information about our Attendance Matters® mentoring program and how to support it, visit uwbfc.org/attendance

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