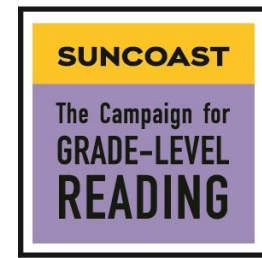# Proclamation of September as Attendance Awareness Month

Whereas, good attendance is essential to student achievement and graduation, and the community is committed to dedicating our resources and attention to reducing chronic absenteeism rates, with a focus starting as early as pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, and

WHEREAS, chronic absence – missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason including excused and unexcused absences, or just two of three days a month – is a proven predictor of academic trouble and dropout rates, and

WHEREAS, improving attendance and reducing chronic absence takes commitment, collaboration and tailored approaches to particular challenges and strengths in each community, and

WHEREAS, attendance gaps among groups of students often turn into achievement gaps that undermine student success. Chronic absence particularly exacerbates the achievement gap that separates low-income students from their peers, since students from low-income families are both more likely to be chronically absent and more likely to be affected academically by missing school.

WHEREAS, schools and districts must do more to track, calculate and share the data on how many students are chronically absent so that we can see the attendance gaps and can deliver the right interventions to the right students, and

WHEREAS, chronic absence can be significantly reduced when schools, families and communities work together to monitor and promote good attendance and address hurdles that keep children from getting to school.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board of Sarasota County proclaims that our schools will stand with the nation in recognizing September as "Attendance Awareness Month." We hereby commit to focusing on reducing chronic absenteeism to give all children an equitable opportunity to learn, grow and thrive academically, emotional and socially.

_____   _____
Frank Kovach, Chairman   Caroline Zucker, Member

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Shirley Brown, Vice Chair   Bridget Ziegler, Member

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Jane Goodwin, Member