



# SIERRA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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To inspire,  
engage,  
challenge, and  
support all  
students to  
reach their  
highest level of  
learning and  
personal  
development.

Dear Sierra Unified Community,

September is Attendance Awareness Month—a time to highlight something simple but so important: showing up to school every day matters. Research shows that regular attendance is one of the strongest predictors of student success. Yet, across the country and here in California, chronic absenteeism continues to be a challenge.

At Sierra Unified, our top priority is always student safety. With the Garnet Fire impacting our community, we know this has been a stressful time for many families. Thankfully, the rain and favorable conditions have brought the fire to over 90% containment. Even as we keep safety at the forefront, we also want to emphasize the importance of attendance. When students are in class consistently, they learn more, build stronger connections with their peers and teachers, and are better prepared for the future. On the other hand, even a few absences can add up quickly—missing just two days a month equals nearly 20 days across the year, which is almost an entire month of lost learning.

We also recognize that every family's situation is unique. For those facing challenges due to the fire or other circumstances, Sierra Unified offers site-based independent study as an option. This allows students to continue learning without falling behind while providing flexibility for families who need it.

In addition, we know that times of stress and uncertainty can be especially difficult for our students. Counseling services are available at each school site, and we encourage students and families to reach out if additional support is needed. Our staff is here to help students navigate challenges, build resilience, and stay connected to their learning.

Attendance is a shared responsibility, and we are deeply grateful for the partnership of our families. Whether it's supporting morning routines, encouraging healthy sleep habits, or reaching out to teachers when obstacles arise, your efforts make a meaningful difference.

As we focus on attendance and academic success, we must also remember the importance of kindness and compassion. Last week, I emphasized the power of modeling these values for our students, and I want to continue that message today. Together, let's ensure our schools are safe, welcoming spaces where every student feels valued and supported. Please encourage students not only to model kindness and respect, but also to reach out to a trusted adult if they ever feel unsafe or unsettled at school.

I am so proud of the way our students show up every day—both in their classrooms and in the wider community—and I know we will continue to build on that positive trend together.

### Measure U Updates:

- 50% Design Development plans have been scheduled.

- Expecting the 1st cost estimate for phase 2 of the project on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup>
- Classroom finish discussion with administrators and staff is scheduled

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori Grace". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lori" being more prominent than the last name "Grace".

**Dr. Lori Grace**  
Superintendent, Sierra Unified School District