



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

September 2019

## Message from Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati: Importance of Attendance

Dear parents and guardians,

While September is Attendance Awareness Month, our district's pledge is to create a culture of showing up every day of every month. We know that achievement and student success are inextricably linked to attendance. The leadership and staff at SMMUSD are dedicated to ongoing communication, support and encouragement around the importance of attendance.

The **most** important thing we can do for our children to be successful in life is to get them to school, on time, every day. Here's why:

- In the elementary years, children who miss school are more likely to struggle academically and in later years, to dropout entirely
- In the secondary years, attendance is the No. 1 predictor of dropout and graduation rates
- Attendance is a top indicator of being on track for graduation and for college and career readiness
- Nearly 67% of course failures were attributed to absenteeism

Every year, thanks to our innovative partnerships, we are seeing continuous attendance improvements. With you and your family on our team, we are recovering valuable learning time for our students.

Thank you for your dedication all year long—together we are making a difference!

Sincerely,

Dr. Ben Drati  
Superintendent

Link: [Build the Habit of Good Attendance](#) information

**SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

1651 Sixteenth Street • Santa Monica • California 90404-3891 • (310) 450-8338 • [www.smmusd.org](http://www.smmusd.org)

**Board of Education:** Oscar de la Torre • Jon Kean • Craig Foster • Maria Leon-Vazquez

Laurie Lieberman • Ralph Mechur • Dr. Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein

**Superintendent:** Dr. Ben Drati