**Chronic Absenteeism Script for district or school use: Can be customized by district, add local context and data.**

Hello, I'm [SUPERINTENDENT’S NAME], superintendent of [NAME OF DISTRICT], and I want to talk to you about a significant issue impacting nearly [LOCAL PERCENTAGE] of our students in [NAME OF CITY/COUNTY] -- chronic absenteeism.

It's not just about unexcused absences. Any absence, even just two days a month, adds up and hinders learning.

There are several reasons for chronic absenteeism – including academic struggles, bullying and negative school experiences – which make students less likely to attend school every day.

[SECTION CAN BE CUSTOMIZED BY DISTRICT - “Our district data tells us that the major reasons for chronic absenteeism in our schools include…] *Additionally, factors such as illness, lack of healthcare, vision and dental care, mental health challenges, unsafe routes to school, transportation issues, and involvement with child welfare or the juvenile justice systems can further complicate attendance.*

This issue impacts not only the students, but also our entire community. Schools with high absentee rates suffer from lower academic performance, which can affect our overall economic growth.

To combat this issue, we are joining the Kentucky Department of Education in the Attendance Matters campaign. You'll be seeing billboards and television ads, and hearing about the importance of attending school on the radio. We are also taking proactive steps by using resources made available from the Kentucky Department of Education.

We are tracking students who miss school for any reason and identifying trends so we can start reaching out to those students and families. We know that early communication with families is essential; sharing specific attendance data can help raise awareness and develop action plans to overcome barriers our students may face. Understanding the root causes of absences allows us to build positive partnerships with our families and help improve our students’ lives by addressing issues like health, transportation and school climate.

We must work together [DISTRICT/SCHOOL CUSTOMIZE HERE - “We are working with our local community partners (name health care organization, name mental health resource, name before or after care program, etc.)] to address these barriers. Ensuring access to healthcare, safe transportation and mental health support is crucial. Raising awareness is key: every school day counts.

We all must work together to give our students every opportunity to thrive. By addressing chronic absenteeism, we commit to the future success and well-being of every student and in [NAME OF CITY/COUNTY].