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Dear Students and Families of Foresthill Union School District;

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you back to school for the 2018-2019 school year! We are very excited about the programs and opportunities for learning that are offered at Foresthill Divide School! Our professional, well-trained and deeply committed teaching, administrative and support staff strive to make every day positive and productive for every student and family, within the safe and friendly environment of our TK-8 school.

If we are to be truly successful in educating every student to his and her full potential, however, we will need the active involvement and engagement of every parent. So, how can you help?

First, as we begin the new school year, please remember that student attendance EVERY DAY is absolutely critical to the learning process. When students miss school for any reason other than real illness, it severely compromises our ability to assist your child(ren) in mastering the rigorous state standards that are required at each grade level. When any student's attendance is irregular even from occasional absences such as extended weekends or family trips, the entire sequence of learning for the year can be put in jeopardy as critical concepts could be missed. This can be particularly true for younger students, who when absent, are trying to understand difficult concepts without the teacher's expertise, often without a full explanation and the guided practice necessary to achieve mastery. Our students also then often struggle trying to make up missed classwork, while being expected to keep up with newly assigned work. Trying to catch up can put undue stress on students and is just not the same as being in school for great first instruction from a trained teacher.

September is "National Attendance Awareness Month". Reducing chronic absence requires a whole school approach supported by the whole community. We clearly need to address these problems *before* students become truant (which by state definition is 10 percent or more of the days they were enrolled.) Chronic absence also negatively affects school funding and our ability to provide high quality programs and staffing, as we receive our funding based on the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) of our students. We have metrics that indicate our overall attendance is not as strong as it could be. Please help us make improvements in this area this year by getting your child(ren) to school every day!

Secondly, as parents, are you involved in the school? The success of children in school is often directly correlated to the degree of involvement of their parents. We always welcome parents to participate as classroom volunteers, in our Parent Teacher Organization, on our School Site Council / LCAP Committee, on site and district committees, and in many other capacities. We welcome you into our school and hope you will choose to be an important partner in your child's education.

We hope this is a great school year for you - our students and families! Our site and district staff will be there to help with any issues relating to your child's education. If ever we can be of service, please contact us at the District Office at (530) 367-2966.

Sincerely,

David Swart

Superintendent