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**Care Counts™ Laundry Program by Whirlpool Brand Continues to Provide Critical Access to Clean Clothes and Combat Post-Pandemic Absenteeism Rates**

*Now in its eighth year and impacting 144 schools in 37 states, the Care Counts™ laundry program continues to grow and boost attendance rates across the U.S.*

BENTON HARBOR, Mich., Oct. 10, 2022 – While students have been back to in-person learning for about a year, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact attendance rates nationwide. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 72% U.S. of public schools reported an increase in chronic absenteeism among their students compared to the 2020-2021 school year<sup>1</sup>. To continue its effort to lower absenteeism rates among elementary school students, the Care Counts™ laundry program by Whirlpool brand continues to provide washers and dryers to selected schools across the country with high percentages of absenteeism rates. As a result, 84% of participating high-risk elementary school students<sup>2</sup> enrolled in the program were reported by teachers to feel connected to their school during the 2021-2022 academic year.

With the support of long-time collaborator, Teach For America, the Care Counts™ laundry program works with participating schools to find ways to ensure children have access to clean clothes throughout the school year. Over the years, the program has contributed to decreases in chronic absenteeism, and increases in attendance rates, grades and engagement levels among participating at-risk students. In analyzing the most recent data from the 2021-2022 school year, Whirlpool brand found that:

- Nearly 70% of participating high-risk elementary school students<sup>3</sup> saw an increase in attendance.
- Participating high-risk elementary school students<sup>4</sup> saw an average increase in attendance by 12 more days than the previous academic year.

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<sup>1</sup>Source: [https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press\\_releases/07\\_06\\_2022.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/07_06_2022.asp)

<sup>2</sup>High-risk elementary school students are defined as elementary students at risk of missing 10% or more days of school during a reporting period

<sup>3</sup>High-risk elementary school students are defined as elementary students at risk of missing 10% or more days of school during a reporting period

<sup>4</sup>High-risk elementary school students are defined as elementary students at risk of missing 10% or more days of school during a reporting period

- Nearly 60% of participating high-risk elementary school students<sup>5</sup> decreased their level of chronic absenteeism while in the Care Counts™ laundry program, and 30% of participating high-risk students<sup>6</sup> were no longer at risk for chronic absenteeism at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year.

“We’re proud to continue growing the Care Counts™ laundry program, particularly at a time when we’re seeing the detrimental impact the pandemic continues to have on the ability of our young students to attend school,” said Nelly Martinez, senior brand manager for Whirlpool brand. “We’re incredibly thankful for the school leaders and volunteers across the nation who are integral in keeping this program running, staying connected with students and their families, and providing more vulnerable people with access to clean clothes.”

Now entering its eighth year, the Care Counts™ laundry program by Whirlpool brand has expanded its presence to five new states in the 2022-2023 school year: Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Virginia, Delaware and Hawaii. It will continue to work with schools that are participating in a second year of the program in five regions: Idaho, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma and South Carolina.

“The impact of the washer and dryer is truly incredible,” said Krishna Barroso, principal at AVON Avenue School in Newark, NJ. “These two simple machines that most people take for granted provide essential access to clean clothes, which builds pride, confidence, and improves attendance for our students.”

The Care Counts™ laundry program by Whirlpool brand is designed to remove one small but important barrier to attendance - access to clean clothes - by installing washers and dryers in select schools nationwide. To learn more about the Care Counts™ Laundry Program by Whirlpool brand, visit <https://www.whirlpool.com/care-counts>.

### **About Whirlpool Brand**

For more than one hundred years, Whirlpool brand has been inspired by how people care for their families. Whirlpool brand is designing home appliances that are focused on improving how families give and get the care they need with the latest technologies and innovations – whether that means flexible refrigerator storage for all types of family needs, induction technology for efficient cooking and easier cleaning, or laundry pairs that sense and adapt to clothes with the latest in connected technologies. Whirlpool brand created and continues outpacing goals of its Care Counts™ Laundry Program, through which the brand is committed to helping create educational equality by installing washers and dryers in schools to help remove one small but important barrier to attendance – access to clean clothes. Whirlpool brand is part of Whirlpool Corporation, a leading appliance manufacturer committed to being the best global kitchen and laundry company, in constant pursuit of improving life at home. For more information on

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