

CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY

The Governing Board believes that excessive student absenteeism and tardiness, whether caused by excused or unexcused absences, may be an early warning sign of poor academic achievement and may put students at risk of dropping out of school. The Board desires to ensure that all students attend school in accordance with the state's compulsory education law and take full advantage of educational opportunities provided by the district.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a system to accurately track student attendance in order to identify individual students classified as chronic absentees and truants, as defined in law and administrative regulation.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies that focus on prevention of attendance problems, which may include, but are not limited to, efforts to provide a safe and positive school environment, relevant and engaging learning experiences, school activities that help develop students' feelings of connectedness with the school, school-based health services, and incentives and rewards to recognize students who achieve excellent attendance or demonstrate significant improvement in attendance. The Superintendent or designee also shall develop strategies that enable early outreach to students as soon as they show signs of poor attendance.

The Superintendent or designee shall work with students, parents/guardians, school staff, and community agencies, as appropriate, to identify factors contributing to chronic absence and truancy. He/she also may collaborate with child welfare services, law enforcement, courts, public health care agencies, other government agencies, and/or medical, mental health, and oral health care providers to ensure that alternative educational programs and nutrition, health care, and other support services are available for students and families and to intervene as necessary when students have serious attendance problems.

Students who are identified as truants shall be subject to the interventions specified in law and administrative regulation.

A student's truancy, tardiness, or other absence from school shall not be the sole basis for his/her out-of-school suspension or expulsion. Alternative disciplinary strategies and positive reinforcement for attendance shall be used whenever possible.

The Superintendent or designee shall regularly analyze data on student absence to identify patterns of absence districtwide and by school, grade level, and student population. Such data shall be used to identify common barriers to attendance, prioritize resources for intervention, and monitor progress over time. The Superintendent or designee shall periodically report this information to the Board for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of strategies implemented to reduce chronic absence and truancy and making changes as needed. As appropriate, the Superintendent or designee also shall provide this information to key school staff and community agency partners to engage them in program evaluation and improvement and in identification of how to best allocate available community resources.

CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY (continued)

School Attendance Review Board

In accordance with law and administrative regulation, habitual truants may be referred to a school attendance review board (SARB).

The Board may submit a nomination to the County Superintendent of Schools for a person who will serve on the county SARB as a representative of school districts. (Education Code 48321)

The Board shall appoint members of the district's SARB, who may include, but are not limited to, a parent/guardian as well as representatives of the district, county probation department, county welfare department, county office of education, law enforcement agencies, community-based youth service centers, school guidance personnel, child welfare and attendance personnel, school or county health care personnel, and school, county, or community mental health personnel. (Education Code 48321)

The district's SARB shall operate in accordance with Education Code 48320-48325 and procedures established by the Superintendent or designee.

Legal Reference: (see next page)

CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY (continued)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

1740 Employment of personnel to supervise attendance (county superintendent)

37223 Weekend classes

41601 Reports of average daily attendance

46000 Records (attendance)

46010-46014 Absences

46110-46119 Attendance in kindergarten and elementary schools

46140-46147 Attendance in junior high and high schools

48200-48208 Children ages 6-18 (compulsory full-time attendance)

48225.5 Work permits, entertainment and allied industries

48240-48246 Supervisors of attendance

48260-48273 Truants

48290-48296 Failure to comply; complaints against parents

48320-48325 School attendance review boards

48340-48341 Improvement of student attendance

48400-48403 Compulsory continuation education

48900 Suspension and expulsion

49067 Unexcused absences as cause of failing grade

60901 Chronic absence

GOVERNMENT CODE

54950-54963 The Ralph M. Brown Act

PENAL CODE

270.1 Chronic truancy; parent/guardian misdemeanor

272 Parent/guardian duty to supervise and control minor child; criminal liability for truancy

830.1 Peace officers

VEHICLE CODE

13202.7 Driving privileges; minors; suspension or delay for habitual truancy

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

601-601.4 Habitually truant minors

11253.5 Compulsory school attendance

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

306 Explanation of absence

420-421 Record of verification of absence due to illness and other causes

COURT DECISIONS

L.A. v. Superior Court of San Diego County, (2012) 209 Cal.App.4th 976