

SARB: School Attendance Review Board

What is SARB?

The School Attendance Review Board (SARB) is a state-mandated process created by California Legislation in 1975 and became operative in 1976 to assist students with attendance and behavior problems. SARB is a community-based effort to bring together multiple resources to assist families with attendance, truancy and behavior issues so that students will stay in school, attend school regularly and graduate. The SARB process begins with the School Attendance Review Team (SART) at the school site. When the school has exhausted all resources and a student's attendance or behavior has not improved, then a family may be referred to a SARB hearing. The California Compulsory Education Law (E.C. 48200) states, "...every child between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school regularly and on time...", the student is referred to the District-level Resource Panel, and finally to the SARB. For more information about how to refer a case to SARB, please contact your Local District SARB Chairperson.

Purpose

SARB works to divert students with school attendance or school behavior problems from the juvenile court system by providing guidance and coordinated community services to meet their special needs. The main purpose of SARB is to keep a student in school and out of the juvenile justice system and to ensure that all available resources and services for the student are maximized. Irregular attendance and truancy is a complex problem that involves the student, his or her family, the school, and the community as a whole. Studies have shown that students who are frequently absent or tardy, miss opportunities to learn, build lasting relationships, and develop the necessary social skills and attitudes needed to become good citizens and productive members of society.

SARB Panel

The SARB members are composed of a team from multiple agencies such as school and District level support staff, the District/City Attorney, law enforcement personnel, the Los Angeles County Departments of Probation, Children and Family Services (DCFS), Public Social Services (DPSS), Mental Health, and community counseling agencies (these agencies are on hand to combine their expertise and resources as stated in E.C 48321). The team works collaboratively to assess the problem and recommend alternative solutions to alleviate circumstances that contribute to specific truancy, attendance, and/or behavior problems.

Interventions

Recommendations and referrals are made to both family and school with the goal of increasing school attendance and achievement. Families sign a legally-binding contract at the end of the SARB meeting, and if the contract is violated, the case may be referred to the City or District Attorney's Office for prosecution.

Why Does Daily Attendance Matter?

Student absences affect school budgets. Schools and school districts get a significant amount of their funding based upon the number of students who attend school each day. This is called Average Daily Attendance (ADA). A potential loss in ADA revenue affects all students because it can lead to budget cuts affecting a variety of programs, teachers, support services as well as individual schools.

There is a clear connection between student attendance and student performance. Superintendent Dr. Deasy established a Performance Meter for our school district to meet the goal of 100% perfect attendance. To reach that goal, attendance must be a top priority for administrators, teachers, students, parent and the community. Every day counts!

Remember, all children between 6 and 18 years of age are required by California's Education Code to attend school.