



2008 JAN 10 PM 3:35

CITY HALL • 1 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

Office of the City Manager  
Deborah A. Edgerly  
City Manager

(510) 238-3301  
FAX: (510) 238-2223  
TDD: (510) 238-2007

January 22, 2008

Education Partnership Committee  
Oakland, California

Chairpersons Chang and Gallo and Members of the Committee:

**SUBJECT: Receive An Informational Report From the Oakland Unified School District, Oakland Police Department and Department of Human Services On Current Efforts By Oakland Agencies To Curb Truancy, Update On Truancy Enforcement, Data On Crime Involving School-Age Youth And Strategies to Reduce the Likelihood of School-Age Youth Becoming Victims of Crime**

---

Please find enclosed a comprehensive report on truancy efforts from Oakland Unified School District, and accompanying reports from the Oakland Police Department and the Department of Human Services on the City's efforts to reduce truancy. There will be staff from all three agencies available to present the information to the Education Partnership Committee

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah A. Edgerly".  
**DEBORAH A. EDGERLY**

City Administrator

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Committee  
January 22, 2008



Oakland Unified School District  
Comprehensive Report on Truancy Efforts  
January 8, 2008

**BACKGROUND**

Thousands of youth skip school each day in urban areas. Frequently, truancy is the first sign that a student is in trouble – personally, at home, and/or at school. Truancy can lead to dropping out of school completely, thereby sabotaging opportunities for future employment success. Truancy is also a major catalyst for drug use and daytime crime and violence. The reasons youth stay away from school are diverse and complex, the methods used by schools and communities to motivate their return range from school reorganization and intensive family counseling to legal and economic sanctions for families.

All of the Oakland community is concerned with the same OUSD goals of academic achievement and college readiness. If students are not in school, they can not meet our goals. Therefore, the Oakland Unified School District is asking parents and community members to help Oakland students attend and achieve.

In 2003, OUSD developed a cohesive program in partnership with the City of Oakland, Alameda County District Attorney and Probation departments, Alameda County Behavioral Health Services and various outside agencies concerned with the youth of Oakland to form a Truancy Task Force. The Task Force's objectives were to plan a program to reduce truancy and increase attendance in Oakland Unified School District. Meetings were held every two weeks and preparation was made to open a Truancy Center with the goal of being a "one-stop" shop, supply a new staff member in a Student Attendance Compliance Officer position to the 11 schools with the lowest attendance rates, and set high attendance goals of 98% Elementary, 96% Middle school and 94% for High school.

This report will reflect OUSD's efforts to address truancy at all levels focusing on the integration of school site, district and community and county resources.

**OUSD ATTENDANCE GOALS/ SCHOOL YEAR 2006-2007**

OUSD has adopted a performance culture whereby results measure success and drive decisions. Toward this end, the district has implemented the following performance measures related to attendance:

Elementary School	98%	95.10%
Middle School	96%	94.52%
High School	94%	93.28%

Daily attendance affects not only funding, but more importantly a student's educational success. Students are labeled as truants only after three unexcused absences in the same school year.

2006-2007 Enrollment (CBEDS Day)	2006-2007 District Attendance Rate	2006-2007 District Absence Rate	Category
39,705	93.27%	6.73%	
<b>* STUDENTS HAVE MANY TYPES OF ABSENCES DURING THE YEAR</b>			
Number of students who have at least one all day absence	34,332	86.47%	
Number of students who have at least one excused absence	28,906	72.80%	
Number of students who have at least one unexcused absence	22,466	56.58%	
Number of students who have at least one suspended absence	2,999	7.55%	
Number of students who have at least one DHP absence	221	0.56%	
Number of students who have 3 or more unexcused absences	13,976	35.20%	Truant
Number of students who have 5 or more unexcused absences	9,417	23.72%	Habitual Truant
Number of students who have 10 or more unexcused absences	4,738	11.93%	Chronic Truant

### **KEY STRATEGIES: COHESIVE PROGRAM**

Over the past five years, the Oakland Unified School District has invested in numerous strategies to increase attendance. Below are listed the current strategies:

1. **Communication** – It is critical for the schools and the program to communicate regularly to share data, modify efforts and further develop the comprehensive plan for improving student attendance. This happens through monthly data sharing, Network Officers and communication to principals and students.
2. **Training** – Training is available on-line to 100% of the schools on the Student Attendance Review Team (SART) process. Personalized guidance is also made available by appointment.

3. **Data collection** –Monthly attendance data is collected and disseminated to all sites. Attendance Coordinators monitor and provide interventions to sites where sites are not meeting attendance goals.
4. **Attendance Proficiency Pathways Strategy** – Performance expectations have been set for the Clerical staff and administrators this year to attend training to recognize the importance of student attendance, verify and document student absences, use the correct code to mark a student absent or tardy on how to correctly input attendance data on the student information system (AERIES). All clerical staff will be required to complete proficiency exams at the end of their courses.
5. **Parent education and outreach** -Focused outreach to parents and workshops inform parents on the following: the consequences of truancy (for students, educationally and legally, and for families, who may be held legally liable and suffer economic sanctions); ways to communicate realistic expectations about school achievement and respect for school and educators; and strategies for getting children to school. In addition, other valuable information for parents includes locally available childcare, public assistance, and other social service options (that free older children from having to miss school to meet family obligations).
6. **Truancy Assemblies**  
Assemblies targeted at the 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders in middle and high schools are offered throughout the first grading period. They are provided by the Deputy District Attorney, the Alameda County Probation Department and District personnel. The goal of the assemblies is to inform students of their rights, of the truancy laws and how these laws can affect their futures.
7. **Media/educational campaign** –the message is three fold: 1) The importance of attendance in school at all grade levels; 2) The entire community must partner with families and the District to ensure that our children and youth are in school every day; and, 3) What you can do to help our students stay in school.
  - ❖ Truancy Tip Line (510) 879-8172. The community has been encouraged to call and leave a message when they see school age children, not in school, during school hours.
  - ❖ Media: The Attend and Achieve Program has organized and participated in several media outreach venues that have featured the importance of regular attendance. Alameda County Education in Action, KDOL, Comcast commercial, Press conference and Radio Disney.
8. **Phone Master** –As soon as the school's computer generates an absent code for the student, the Phone Master system sends an automated recording to the student's home to inform the parent that the student was absent that day and an excuse needs to be generated by the parent if it was indeed an excused absence.
9. **Notification of Truancy (NOT) Letters** -After a student has three or more unexcused absences in a school year the District's computer system generates a NOT letter that informs the parent that their student has been classified as a truant. It is often the first time the parent is made aware that their child is not attending school.
10. **Student Attendance Review Teams (SART)**-The SART process is very effective and mandated by California Education Code. When students accumulate 3 unexcused absences in a school year, the school must hold a SART meeting with the parent, student and school personnel that have direct knowledge of the student to as a team find a solution for the student's attendance or lack there of. A decrease in absences following a SART meeting is

attributable to the active participation of the school personnel, parents and the use of daily contracts to ensure students are attending each class.

11. **School Attendance Review Board (SARB)**- The SARB is facilitated by a district staff member and consists of community and county representatives who receive referrals from the primary, secondary and alternative schools in Oakland Unified School District. When all efforts have been exhausted at the school site the students are referred to SARB for a hearing where the student may be referred to Social Services, Child Protective Services, Center for Family counseling, Scotlan Center or the Alameda County District Attorney's office.

The benefit of immediately available services, and the leverage provided by the County agencies has proven significantly effective. In addition, SARB offers support groups in anger management, truancy diversion, drug and alcohol intervention, and parent support.

SARB participates in various collaborations such as the Alameda County School Attendance Review Board hosted by the Alameda County Office of Education, The North County Collaborative, and the OUSD/Service Providers Network.

Table 1: SARB Dispositions, A five-year comparison

	School Year 02-03	School Year 03-04	School Year 04-05	School Year 05-06	School Year 06-07
SARB Referrals	814	1395	848	680	553
SARB Hearings/ Reviews Held	356	367	748	571	458
Referrals to Outside Agencies/Support Groups	120	125	173	221	189
Cases referred to the District Attorney	108	34	104	80	77

13. **Oakland Truancy Attendance Program (OTAP)**- OTAP was established as a Center where Law Enforcement Agencies can bring students ages 6-18 years old, found on the streets of the Oakland during school hours to complete a day of school and get needed resources from community agencies in order to meet their needs and attend school regularly.

The Center is comprised of two classrooms, an intake area, and two large office areas. The staff of the Center is comprised of: a credentialed teacher, a community services worker, an attendance clerk, two school security officers, an administrator and representatives from various community and county organizations.

A student, after being dropped off by law enforcement, is turned over to a school security officer. Students sign the Rules and Regulations form and are searched. All personal items are confiscated until the end of the day. Students are then asked to wait until their personal information can be verified by the intake receptionist and a call is made to their

parent or guardian. The parent or guardian is informed that their child has been taken to the Truancy Center for the day and they can at that time choose to pick their child up or a bus ticket will be issued to them at the end of the day.

During the time that they are at the Center, the student is provided with Language Arts, Math, Science and Art instruction and is able to use computer technology throughout the day. The student is also given a Student Survey to gather basic information. If the child is found in need of counseling or in need of additional resources they will be able speak to or be referred to a resource person.

A Speaker Series is coordinated on site twice a month with up to 10 community agencies represented. Each agency shares with the students what services they have available to them and gives students time to interact and engage in conversations with them regarding their personal situations which most often have a direct correlation to their attendance and behavior.

Student drop-off hours are: **8:30 am- 2:45pm** The Center hours are **8:00 am- 3:30pm**. The school capacity is 40 students.

Month	Retrievals	Retrievals	Retrievals	Retrievals
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
September	26.00	153.00	251.00	261.00
October	267.00	212.00	222.00	331.00
November	149.00	189.00	274.00	158.00
December	94.00	84.00	172.00	186.00
January	401.00	108.00	213.00	
February	186.00	310.00	240.00	
March	334.00	294.00	416.00	
April	298.00	224.00	250.00	
May	227.00	243.00	297.00	
June	136.00	74.00	0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2118.00</b>	<b>1891.00</b>	<b>2335.00</b>	

14. **OTAP Truancy Task Force**-The Truancy Task Force formed in August 2003. The goals of the Task Force are the following:

- Increase attendance
- Reduce truancy
- Improve student achievement
- Address the psychosocial needs of truant students

The Task Force continues to meet every two months to discuss the ongoing strategies toward reducing truancy in Oakland Unified School District. The members of the Truancy Task Force are:

- Oakland City Councilmember, Jean Quan
- Oakland City Councilmember, Ignacio de La Fuente
- Alameda County Deputy District Attorney, Teresa Drenick
- Alameda County Office of Education
- International Children's Policy Council of Alameda County

- Oakland Police Department
- Oakland Unified School District
- Scotlan Center
- Measure Y organizations
  - Leadership Excellence
  - Youth Uprising
  - Youth Alive

### **FUTURE TRUANCY INTERVENTIONS**

The Oakland Unified School District is currently working with Alameda County Office of Education's Educational Partnership Grant Office to draft a grant proposal to philanthropic organizations to get three year gradual funding to:

- Continue to fund the OTAP Center
- Fund 11 Child Welfare and Attendance Workers (to replace the Attendance Compliance officers role in the schools)
- Hire an additional SARB facilitator
- Hold Attend and Achieve campaigns for the next three years.
- Provide base funding for a program design that was blind to insurance status, but that relied on EPSDT reimbursement. The model would be a mix of traditional clinical services, as well as community based case management and brokerage. We would have 4-6 FTE working with students directly on site at the Truancy Center.

### **SUMMARY**

Oakland Unified School District is the largest district in Alameda County and we are striving to be the best. We have been capturing our longitudinal data on attendance and we now know what strategies have proven most successful for our students and families. We want to provide them with the information, guidance and resources they need to succeed. We want the students of Oakland to meet their academic goals and prepare them for college. However, we know that it will take a community based effort to get them there. We are sure with the assistance of the City of Oakland, Alameda County, Oakland Community Agencies and philanthropic efforts we can *Expect Success!*

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Moran  
Chief Services Officer  
Oakland Unified School District

Ursula Reed  
Coordinator, Attend & Achieve  
Oakland Unified School District

**CITY OF OAKLAND**  
**AGENDA REPORT**

FILED  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
OAKLAND

2008 JAN 10 PM 3:37

**To:** Office of the City Administrator  
**Attn:** Deborah Edgerly  
**From:** Police Department  
**Date:** November 27, 2007

**Re: An Informational Report And Recommendation On The Oakland Police Department's Truancy Enforcement, Data On Crimes Involving School-Age Youth, And Strategies To Reduce The Likelihood of School-Age Youth Becoming Victims Of Crime Or Involved In Crime**

---

**SUMMARY**

As requested by the Education Partnership Committee on October 3, 2007, staff has prepared an informational report with recommendations detailing the Department's Truancy program, juvenile crime statistics, and existing youth programs.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This is an informational report.

In fiscal year 2006-2007, the Campus Life And School Security (CLASS) and Police Activities League (PAL) Units received a cumulative appropriation of \$2,276,118 (O&M included). Of that appropriation, the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) provided the Department \$1 million for the CLASS Unit and does so annually.

In the 2006-2007 school year, the Measure Y Oversight Committee authorized the use of unspent Measure Y funds (\$135,000) for the overtime of truancy enforcement officers that supplement the CLASS Unit's truancy enforcement efforts. The Department intends to use an additional \$135,000 from this same funding source for the 2007-2008 school year or until the school resource officers are deployed.

PAL is primarily supported through donations from companies and individuals. The PAL Unit could not function without donor support.

**BACKGROUND**

*CLASS Unit*

The CLASS Unit was formed in September 2001 after the Oakland Public Schools Police Department was disbanded. The CLASS Unit originally consisted of one lieutenant, two

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Comte.  
January 22, 2008

sergeants, 13 school resource officers, and two juvenile crimes investigators. The Unit was responsible for patrolling high and middle schools. Currently the CLASS Unit consists of one lieutenant, two sergeants and nine officers. In the 2006-2007 school year, the CLASS Unit focused its enforcement efforts on the six traditional Oakland High Schools.

In addition to supervising CLASS officers, CLASS sergeants are responsible for the officers that staff the Juvenile Intake Desk and the PAL Unit.

#### *Truancy Enforcement*

The Oakland Truancy Abatement Program (OTAP) was created during the 2004-2005 school year, and a truancy center established at 900 12<sup>th</sup> St.

Truant youths are brought to the center where they are processed, and provided training and instruction on truancy. The youth are then placed in a classroom at the Center and given their normal instruction by an OUSD teacher. Parents of the respective truant(s) are responsible for picking up the youth at the center at the conclusion of the school day.

#### *Police Activities League (PAL)*

In 1981, the PAL program was formed to provide sports related activities for youth in Oakland. PAL has evolved to offer many after school activities. In addition to activities, officers and volunteers help students with their studies. The PAL program has been instrumental in forming bonds in the community, and has given kids the opportunity to excel in educational, recreational, and athletic programs. There are currently the two officers assigned to the PAL Unit. Retired police officers, current police officers and student interns all volunteer their time to keep the programs available to Oakland youth.

### **KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS**

Truancy and youth crime are ongoing issues in the City of Oakland. The Department has struggled with these issues for many years; the creation of the PAL and CLASS Units, along with truancy enforcement, has made an impact on truancy, youth crime, and activities for youth after school.

#### *CLASS Unit*

The CLASS Unit has made an impact on truancy over the last three school years. The CLASS Unit and truancy overtime officers located and returned 2335 truants for the 2006-2007 school year. CLASS officers located and returned approximately 25% of the total truants picked up. The truancy enforcement program located and returned 444 more truants in 2006-2007 school year over the 2005-2006 school year. As of October 26, 2007 there have been 528 students picked up this school year.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Comte.  
January 22, 2008

*Truants Enforcement Program*

<b>Officer Type</b>	<b>2006-2007 School Year</b>	<b>2005-2006 School Year</b>	<b>2004-2005 School Year</b>
OT Officers	1752	Not Available	Not Available
CLASS Officers	583	Not Available	Not Available
<b>Total</b>	<b>2335</b>	<b>1891</b>	<b>2118</b>

*Juvenile Crimes*

Traditionally, the Oakland Police Department sent youth offenders to Juvenile Hall; however the philosophy has changed since the inception of the juvenile intake desk. The goal now is to prevent youth offenders from being involved in future crimes. Qualified juvenile offenders are referred to various outside agencies that provide services to youth offenders and victims before incarceration, if possible. Depending on the circumstances, most juvenile offenders are referred to at least one of the service providers. From April 2007 through September 2007 the intake desk processed 402 juvenile offenders, referring 213 youth to the various services.

*Service Providers*

- **McCullum Youth Court**  
This program provides the youthful offender an opportunity to have their case heard by their peers. If the youth completes the program, the case is not forwarded to the District Attorneys Office. The program is for first time offenders only who commit minor offenses.
- **Project First**  
This program is an informal probation for first Time Offender who commits more serious crimes.
- **Scotlan Center**  
This program assists minors who have been sexually exploited; they help with parental skills, support groups, GED assistance, and summer job placement.
- **Center for Family Counseling**  
This program offers counseling services for families.

*Youth Program Efforts*

In November 2007, the Department will send 20 officers to Gang Resistance and Education Training (GREAT). The officers will be trained to teach gang prevention and awareness classes to youth in Oakland Public Schools.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Comte.  
January 22, 2008

The Police Explores program engages Oakland and surrounding high school and college youth who are interested in careers in law enforcement. This program provides an opportunity to be exposed to most of the operations throughout the Department, and allows them a chance to become police cadets and possibly future police recruits for the Department.

#### *Police Activities League*

During the school year, PAL supports approximately 60 youth per day at the PAL center. The youth get help with homework, and are provided a variety of activities in which they are to participate. Some of the after school activities are African drumming, cheerleading, and basketball.

PAL sponsors a track team every year with over 100 participating youths. This year several youth competed in the National Junior Olympics in Kentucky.

During the summer, PAL has 60-100 youths per day participate in various camps that are offered. PAL receives numerous summer student interns who supervise the youth, some of whom were interns from the Mayor's Summer Jobs Program. The CLASS officers assist PAL during the summer break with leading numerous sports camps, which gives the youth an opportunity to see officers outside their uniforms.

On Halloween, PAL provides a safe venue for younger youths to *trick or treat*, and provides activities for them to have fun in the early evening. This year, the older PAL youths are holding a Halloween party at the Oakland Black Officers Association's meeting hall. This gives the older kids a safe and fun environment to enjoy time with their friends.

#### *Other 2007 PAL Events*

PAL chaperoned 50 youth to the California PAL snow day in the Sierra Nevada's and beach play day in Manhattan Beach in Southern California.

PAL partnered with Community Probation to administer court mandated "Life Skills" training for juvenile probationers.

PAL officers chaperoned 10 youth at the Annual California PAL Sacramento Experience where youth participated in activities and training at the State Capitol.

PAL hosted 9 female youth from Holy Names High School who are interested in careers in Law Enforcement in their Annual "Mid-session" Program (8 days).

PAL center was identified as a Safe Haven site for the Elmhurst Weed and Seed Initiative.

PAL established a Girl Scout Troop of the East Bay and had 15 girls inducted.

Officers and volunteers chaperoned 16 youths to the California PAL *Life After High School* program at Fresno State University. The students learned tools to help prepare them for college and life after high school.

Additionally, PAL offers the following services:

- Sponsor for needy families during the Thanksgiving holidays by providing them food baskets; and
- Sponsor for an Adopt-a Family program giving families assistance with food and toys during Christmas. In December, PAL holds an annual Christmas dinner for over 400 families.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CLASS Unit currently consists of one lieutenant, two sergeants and nine officers. The officer assignments are as follows:

Number of Officers	School
2	McClymonds High School
1	Oakland Technical High School
1	Oakland High School
1	Skyline High School
2	Fremont High School
2	Castlemont High School

CLASS officers provide police services to the six traditional Oakland high schools. CLASS officers are the lead unit in responding to major incidents at their respective high schools; they provide mentoring for students and conduct student/parent/teacher counseling sessions. In 2006 the Unit conducted over 3000 of these types of meetings. CLASS officers also teach classes in criminal justice, personal safety and, drug and gang prevention.

The PAL Unit consists of two full time officers who are based out of the Verdese Carter recreational Center, located at 9600 Sunnyside.

### *Truancy Program*

The CLASS Unit has been critical in assisting the OUSD in locating truant students and returning them to their studies, preventing the student from losing critical classroom instruction.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Comte.  
January 22, 2008

As a result, the School District receives a full day's credit from the state for having the respective student in class. The truancy program also provides a deterrent to youths who wish to be truant, as students are aware that CLASS and truancy enforcement officers are looking to return them back to school. The truancy enforcement program consists of up to four officers for a five hour overtime shift, five days per week.

The OTAP center has been instrumental in providing services to students, and holds parents and students accountable for youth who are habitually truant. The District Attorney's Office holds truancy court every Friday for parents of habitual truants. OTAP provides resources to kids and parents to help stop truancy and, ensure students have a successful school year. The OTAP center also provides youth with classroom instruction in their respective studies.

### *Police Activities League*

The PAL program was created to provide school age youth throughout the City with opportunities to participate in numerous activities during the school year. PAL helps students with homework, provides a computer and reading literacy program, and gives the students a safe environment to participate in activities after school. During the summer break, PAL provides camps that include basketball, football, soccer, baseball, cheerleading, reading, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) preparation, math, drumming, creative writing, and fishing.

## **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

*Economic:* Accurate screening and referral of youth offenders to the appropriate support services will enhance the Department's efforts to reduce juvenile crime through prevention before incarceration.

Aggressive truancy enforcement returns youth to the school so they can continue their education. In turn, the OUSD receives a full days of funding for every youth that is returned to the OTAP center.

*Environmental:* There are no environmental concerns associated with this report.

*Social Equity:* Continued commitment to truancy abatement, reducing juvenile crime, and connecting youth to support services will improve public safety and the welfare of children in the City of Oakland, making the City safer.

## **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

There are no Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or senior citizen access issues contained in this report.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Comte.  
January 22, 2008

**RECOMMENDATION/RATIONALE**

Truancy and youth crime is everyone’s problem. To raise community awareness of this issue, a concerted effort by the City, Oakland Unified School District, and Police Department must continue. It is vital to recognize that everyone in the community benefits from long term truancy and crime prevention that engage the youth of Oakland.

The plan for ongoing operations and maintenance of truancy include:

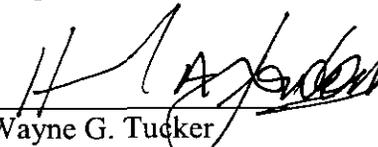
- The continued commitment by the Department to provide School Resource Officers at the high schools to ensure safe campuses;
- The ongoing funding of truancy overtime to ensure a dedicated police response to finding truants;
- The continued commitment to the PAL program to provide youth with programs to keep them from entering the criminal justice system.

Staff recommends acceptance of this report.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE COUNCIL**

This is an informational report; therefore no action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

*FOR*   
Wayne G. Tucker  
Chief of Police

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO  
THE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP  
COMMITTEE:

Reviewed by:  
Ms. Cynthia Perkins  
Bureau of Administration

\_\_\_\_\_  
Office of the City Administrator

Prepared by: Sgt. Jack Peterson  
CLASS/PAL Unit  
Field Services Section  
Youth and Family Services Division

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Comte.  
January 22, 2008



CITY HALL • 1 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

JANE BRUNNER  
Councilmember  
District One

(510) 238-7001  
FAX (510) 238-6910  
TDD (510) 238-7413

To: Chair Chang and Education Partnership Committee Members  
From: Councilmember Jane Brunner  
Date: January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008  
Re: Item 6: Truancy Enforcement

I request that the following questions be addressed in the Oakland Unified School District's (OUSD) report for the Education Partnership Committee meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008.

1. Please describe all programs that OUSD is implementing for truancy for the 2007-2008 school year.
2. Please provide any and all evaluations, including data review, of the current truancy programs.
3. Please provide any and all plans for truancy program for the future, including any programs with other agencies.
4. Please provide best practices from other cities dealing with truancy issues.

**CITY OF OAKLAND**  
**AGENDA REPORT**

FILED  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
OAKLAND

2008 JAN 10 PM 3:37

TO: Office of the City Administrator  
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly  
FROM: Department of Human Services  
DATE: January 22, 2008

RE: Informational Report On The Department's Efforts To Curb Truancy Through  
Measure Y And The Oakland Fund For Children And Youth

---

**SUMMARY**

Through the Oakland Fund for Children and Youth (OFCY) and Measure Y (The Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2004), the Department of Human Services supports an array of efforts to curb truancy throughout Oakland.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None. This is an informational report only.

**BACKGROUND**

The Oakland City Charter KidsFirst! amendment authorized by Measure K in 1996 allocates 2.5% of unrestricted general fund revenues toward children and youth programming. This set-aside is administered by the Oakland Fund for Children and Youth. OFCY's vision, established with numerous public participants, OFCY's commissioners, and key departmental stakeholders is that all children and youth (ages 0-20) are powerful, engaged residents creating a vibrant and prosperous community life and a safe, equitable, and culturally rich city. OFCY's Mission is to provide opportunities and resources for Oakland's young people to become healthy, productive, honorable and successful community members. OFCY funding has grown with the General Fund revenues. Currently it awards over \$10 million annually in contracts to nonprofit and public agency providers of direct services to children and youth.

Passed by Oakland voters on November 2, 2004, Measure Y – the Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2004 – provides approximately \$19 million every year for ten years to fund violence prevention programs, additional police officers, and fire services. Measure Y funds are generated through a new parcel tax along with a parking surcharge in commercial lots. Approximately \$6 million per year of the funds set aside through Measure Y support targeted violence prevention programs administered by the Department of Human Services in coordination with the Community and Economic Development Agency. One of the target populations and key issues for program focus mentioned in the legislation is truants and truancy. The mission of Measure Y is to create a safe Oakland by dramatically reducing violence among youth and adults. The Measure Y network weaves together social services, nonprofits, police,

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Committee  
January 22, 2008

employment, schools, criminal justice, faith based agencies and community members at the neighborhood level to address the causes and symptoms of violence, including truancy.

## KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

### Oakland Fund for Children and Youth

In 2006-2007, OFCY funded 80 programs that support over 17,000 of Oakland's children and youth. For the 2007-2008 fiscal year, with the addition of after school matching grants to school sites with new Prop 49 state funded after school grants, that number has grown to over 110 programs serving approximately 20,000 young people. The majority of funded programs fall under one of four of OFCY's five strategy areas. More than half of OFCY's programs are funded under the **After School** strategy. Another 33 programs are funded either under OFCY's **Career and College Readiness and Youth Leadership** strategy for older youth, the **Physical and Behavioral Health** strategy for youth of all ages, or OFCY's **Summer Enrichment** strategy.

The reduction of truancy is not an overarching performance goal for OFCY grantmaking. Nonetheless, OFCY does work with the Oakland Unified School District to track school-day attendance rates of children and youth who participate in the school-based after school programs. (This data for 2006-2007 will be released in a supplemental report when OUSD data is available.) Additionally, a significant number of grantees, each of which selects their own outcomes for their children and youth participants, identify improved attendance in school, and/or improved academic performance during the school days as indicators of their program's impact on the children they serve. As some examples, the Kids Rock after school program at Hoover elementary reports 70% of parents cite an improvement in their child's school attendance. At Emerson and Peralta middle schools, of the 226 youth served by the Bay Community Resources After School program, 75% report improved attendance. At Sankofa Academy middle school, 64% of 149 participants report that their desire to go to school is better as a result of their participation in the after school program. Within OFCY's strategy serving older youth, the Youth Together program serving 424 youth finds that 90% of parents report their child's increased attendance in school.

Other indicators of success in reducing truancy can be found in the reports by children, youth, and parents on the impact OFCY funded programs have on school performance. Improved academic performance is one of the top 11 indicators selected by OFCY grantees to measure their program's success. Seventy-one percent of child and youth respondents report their success in school (or job training) is better as a result of their participation in an OFCY funded program. Additionally, of the after school programs alone, an average of 62% of parents, youth, and their parents report improvement among at least one of the following: skills in reading, math, confidence, and homework completion.

## Measure Y

### *Vision*

The overall vision for the violence prevention programs funded by Measure Y is to holistically address the issues that affect young people (ages 0-35) that are the most at risk for being victims and/or perpetrators of violence. Young people who are chronically truant are not only much more likely to fail to achieve educational and vocational goals, they are also more likely to become exposed to violence, and to be involved in the criminal justice system.

All of the Measure Y strategies listed below that work with the most at-risk children and youth use reduction in unexcused absences as an outcome benchmark. Please note that Measure Y used reduction in unexcused absences, not reduction of truancy per se, as a benchmark. This is because the very high risk youth served by Measure Y – such as students who are in gangs, or who have been expelled from school for violence, or who are being sexually exploited on the streets, or who already involved in the juvenile justice system – are not only truant, but extremely so. For a student who has 50 unexcused absences per year, it is a significant outcome to reduce those absences to only 10, even though this still exceeds the threshold for Oakland Unified School District to classify them as truant. Reattachment to school is a priority for all the Measure Y programs listed below, because it positively impacts all of the other risk factors affecting the Measure Y target population.

### *Current Measure Y Strategies*

In 2006-07, Measure Y invested \$3,579,014 in sixteen (16) agencies either directly or through subcontracts, to provide intensive services to prevent and/or reduce truancy among a population at the highest risk for school failure, including those with a history of chronic truancy (6 or more unexcused absences per year), previous suspensions or expulsions, gang association, sexual exploitation, and/or involvement in the juvenile justice system. The Measure Y programs at these agencies cover a number of strategies.

- **Youth Outreach** is strategy supporting school and/or community based outreach workers who provide mentoring, case management and support services for truants, school drop-outs, juvenile probationers, and other disengaged youth. Implementing this strategy are East Bay Agency for Children, East Bay Asian Youth Center, Leadership Excellence, Youth ALIVE!, and Youth UpRising. (In addition to the Street Outreach funding, Measure Y supports Youth UpRising with \$300,000 per year for basic operational support in order to keep this critical Teen Center resource. Among these programs, all work with truants, and all accept referrals, directly from school staff, of young people identified as chronically truant and/or subject to disciplinary procedures. Leadership Excellence specifically works with the Oakland Truancy Attendance Program to identify truant youth who are picked up by police. In Fiscal Year

2006-07, however, this method of outreaching to youth was determined to be not as cost- and time- effective as other methods, including street outreach and school based outreach at McClymonds High School, which are more predominantly emphasized in FY 2007-08.

- **The OUR Kids Middle School Model**, implemented by the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency, provides school-based assessment, case management and referrals to needed services, including mental health, for high-risk students at 21 Oakland public middle schools. Referrals of highly truant students come directly from school staff to OUR Kids.
- **Sports and Recreational Programs** intervene with high risk youth 18 and under to develop pro-social behaviors and connection to adults via recreational programs that provide a high intensity of mentorship. Sports programs are implemented by Destiny Arts Center in partnership with Youth UpRising, the Urban Services YMCA in partnership with Leadership Excellence, Sports4Kids, and the Office of Parks and Recreation's Radical Roving Recreation Program.
- **Pathways to Change** is a diversion program for repeat juvenile offenders who are often completely disconnected from school, implemented by the Mentoring Center with six subcontracted partners, that is highly comprehensive, with low caseloads for case workers, frequent contact, family contact and support, and careful coordination of community services, including assistance in school reengagement.
- **After-School Job Training** helps the high-risk youth identified through other Measure Y services acquire skills and stay connected to school, and contributes financially as well. After School Jobs providers are Bay Area Video Coalition/Youth Sounds, Youth Employment Partnership, and Youth Radio.
- **Subsidized Summer Youth Employment** provides job placements through Youth Employment Partnership for high risk youth in Oakland's Mayor's Summer Jobs Program (MSJP). All MSJP placements funded by Measure Y are for students who were chronically truant in the school year prior, and have as a performance measure the reengagement of these students in school in the following fall term.
- Measure Y also supports OUSD's **Peer Conflict Resolution Program** for middle schools with high rates of truancy, a best practice shown to reduce playground and classroom conflicts, office referrals, and suspensions by preventing the escalation of conflicts that could otherwise lead to disruption of learning. When schools become safer for students, they are more likely to come to school rather than avoid them for fear of conflict.
- **Gang Intervention and Prevention** is implemented by Oakland Unified School District Alternative Education Schools with California Youth Outreach to provide **Gang Intervention Services** to 75 gang involved youth at five of Oakland's toughest Alternative

Schools. Gang members are often chronically truant and disengaged, which is how they end up at Alternative Schools in the first place.

In Fiscal Year 2006-07, these Measure Y programs worked with 1,894 children and youth who had some kind of identified risk factor (i.e. criminal justice involvement, exposure to violence, school disconnection), of whom 928 were specifically identified as chronically truant. OUSD defines a “chronic truant” as a student who had six or more unexcused absences in the past year. Of these children and youth served through Measure Y, a large number had several risk factors, including connection to juvenile justice, sexual exploitation, gang association, and exposure to violence. Although only 928 were identified as chronic truants, it is likely that many others fit this criteria but were not logged as such because other risk factors were higher priority for the staff logging the information in the database.

A major goal of Measure Y is to increase school attendance among this highest risk population. As with OFCY, Measure Y is working with the Oakland Unified School District to track school-day attendance rates of children and youth who participate in the Measure Y programs. These data for 2006-2007 will be analyzed by the Measure Y outside evaluator. Previous evaluations of Measure Y program strategies have shown significant positive impacts on recidivism and suspensions (see below), and are likely to also demonstrate positive effects on truancy.

#### *Previous Evaluations of Two Measure Y Strategies*

**Pathways to Change:** The Pathways to Change program works with repeat juvenile offenders - those youth most likely to re-offend again and cause crime. This program has been successful in decreasing crime throughout Oakland by decreasing arrests and offenses of its participants. Not only does this program prevent crime, it saves money. Pathways to Change’s average cost per youth is \$5,000. Without the program, a youth awaiting placement in detention would have an average stay of 55 days in juvenile hall, at a cost of \$156 per day, for an average cost of \$8,580 per youth. According to an evaluation:

Overall, during both the 6-month and 12-month follow-up periods, there were decreases in the number of youth with new referrals and the frequency of arrests. There was also a significant decrease in the proportion of sustained charges for violent crimes within both follow-up periods. More specifically, the percentage of youth with at least one new referral to the Probation Department was 36% during the 6-month follow-up period and 49% during the 12-month follow-up period. This represents a 60% decrease in recidivism during the 6-month follow-up period and 45% decrease in recidivism during the 12-month follow-up period.<sup>1</sup>

**Middle School Peer Conflict Mediation Program:** Data for School Year 2006-07 are not yet available. However, in 2005-06 the suspensions for fighting went down at 13 of 15 middle schools with new Peer Conflict Mediation programs, when compared to the previous year. This is especially notable, since across OUSD, suspensions rose in 2005-06. There were some dramatic decreases in the percentage of suspensions for fighting at some middle schools with

---

<sup>1</sup> Safe Passages, Violence Prevention and Intervention Strategies: Outcome Evaluation Report, released May 10, 2004 and revised June 8, 2004.

new Peer Conflict Mediation programs, such as a 37% decrease at Frick and a 26% decrease at Havenscourt. Even where the number of suspensions for fighting went up (for example Elmhurst increased from 146 to 180), the percentage of suspensions for fighting actually went down from 56% of all suspensions to 32% of all suspensions -- a 24% decrease in the percentage of suspensions for fighting.<sup>2</sup>

### **Summary**

OFCY and Measure Y invest a significant amount of funding in programs that strive to reduce truancy. Preliminary evidence suggests that these programs have had, and will continue to have, a positive effect on reducing truancy throughout Oakland.

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** No economic impacts are expected at this time.

**Environmental:** No environmental impacts are expected at this time.

**Social Equity:** Children and youth programs increase the likelihood that young people will graduate from school, and avoid arrest and incarceration later in life.

### **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

All programs funded through OFCY and Measure Y will be accessible to persons with disabilities and mobility impaired seniors, although Measure Y and OFCY programs focus on interventions with children and young adults under 30. Measure Y and OFCY programs contribute to increasing the safety of Oakland communities which is particularly beneficial to residents with disabilities and to seniors.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S) AND RATIONALE**

Staff recommends that City Council accept this report on the anti-truancy efforts of the Department of Human Services and continue to support the efforts of OFCY and Measure Y.

---

<sup>2</sup> OUSD Department of Student, Family & Community Services, *K-8 Second Step Program and Grade 6-8 Conflict Resolution Program Evaluation Report*, released on June 30, 2006.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

That City Council accept this report on the anti-truancy efforts of the Department of Human Services and continue to support the efforts of OFCY and Measure Y.

Respectfully submitted,



**ANDREA YOUNGDAHL**  
**Director, Department of Human Services**

Reviewed by:  
Sara Bedford, Policy & Planning Manager  
Sandra Taylor, Children & Youth Services Manager

Prepared by:  
Anne Marks, Violence Prevention Planner  
Kelsey Crowe, Children & Youth Services Planner

**APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE  
EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Office of the City Administrator

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Partnership Committee  
January 22, 2008