



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: District Attorney  
Department No.: 021  
For Agenda Of: 10/7/08  
Placement: Set Hearing for 10/14/08  
Estimated Tme: 30 minutes  
Continued Item: Select\_Continued  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required:

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** District Attorney Name & Phone: Christie Stanley, x2308  
Contact Info: Name & Phone: Gene Martinez, x7544  
Marnie Pinsker, x2304

**SUBJECT: Core Truancy Program Extension**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: No

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: No

**Other Concurrence:**

As to form: Select\_Concurrence

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors set a hearing for October 14, 2008 to consider the following:

- a) Receive and file the District Attorney's report regarding County of Santa Barbara School Districts' participation in the Truancy Intervention and Parent Accountability Program; and
- b) Authorize the District Attorney to retain the Truancy Program Supervisors to sustain core services for the Truancy Intervention and Parent Accountability Program in Santa Barbara County, at a cost of \$166,000 for the balance of FY 2008-09.

**Summary Text:**

At Budget Hearings, \$50,000 in funding was provided to sustain two of the three Truancy Program Supervisors through the end of September, with the third Supervisor financed via the Juvenile Justice Community Planning Act (JJCPA). As directed by the Board of Supervisors, the District Attorney's Office held meetings with school district Boards of Trustees countywide to elicit their financial participation in the Truancy Intervention and Parent Accountability (TIPA). By request, our office also met with the School Superintendents to discuss the program's future. As detailed in the attached report, there was consensus that the program should be sustained as a collaborative effort. Interim measures were recommended to sustain this valuable program until sufficient resources are restored by the State. An additional \$166,000 would be required to finance the two positions through fiscal year end.

**Background:**

Since the last appearance before the Board of Supervisors, District Attorney Executive staff and members of the District Attorney's Truancy Intervention and Parent Accountability Program (TIPA), commonly called the Truancy Program, met with nine school district Boards of Trustees. The goal of these meetings was to inform the school districts about the need for a financial partnership between the school districts and the County to fund the Truancy Program. County budget curtailments would eliminate five of the six professional Social Worker staff, substantially reducing the service level provided. Comments indicated the school boards recognized the need for the Truancy Program and acknowledged the viability of the core concepts of the present program. While the school boards strongly favored the continuation of the program, the timing is problematic. School district budgets have already been finalized with most Districts having suffered serious budget reductions that resulted in cuts to their own ongoing programs and personnel. Moreover, the school districts had established restoration priorities.

By request, the District Attorney's Office also met with a group of district superintendents from the various school districts. All parties were strongly committed to engaging in a collaborative process to re-design truancy services that meet the individual needs of various school districts. A comprehensive effort to accomplish this with funding by the schools and the county would require a longer period of strategic planning than envisioned by the Board of Supervisors. There was enthusiastic support for this unique opportunity to mobilize interested parties to develop a truly community engineered vehicle for abating the truancy problem. The County Superintendent of Schools authored a letter to the Board of Supervisors expressing the collective support of the Superintendents for a collaborative effort to study and redesign an improved county wide truancy program and requesting the Board of Supervisors to fund the present program for the remainder of this year to accomplish this.

As an interim measure, the schools will take a more active role in the program and assign responsibility for follow up services to guidance counselors or staff already assigned to other specialized programs. The three Social Worker positions in the District Attorney's Office were removed from the budget, with the schools providing these in-kind services. While the service level will not be as strong as the dedicated efforts of Truancy Social Workers, as an interim effort, it will ensure that some level of needed follow-up with the truant students is sustained. The three DA Truancy Supervisors will focus on leading the After School (ASM) and Truancy Mediation Team (TMT) meetings, then participate in the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) sessions.

In conclusion, the benefits of a collaborative effort to abate truancy are immeasurable not only to the schools, the county and the criminal justice system, but also to the parents of children struggling with a truancy problem, to general health, welfare and public safety of the community at large and, most of all, to the children whose lives it touches and changes for the better.

**Performance Measure:**

These will be re-defined once the service level is determined.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

The FY 08-09 budget includes one time Truancy Supervisor largely financed by JJCPA, with the two remaining Supervisors financed through the end of September 2008. An additional \$166,000 would be required to sustain the positions for the balance of the year. If approved, a budget revision will be submitted to make this adjustment. The in-kind contribution of the schools for providing follow up services to truant students can be calculated as the savings from the three DA Truancy Social Worker positions eliminated in the budget. The total value of these services is estimated at \$268,700.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

<b><u>Funding Sources</u></b>	<b><u>Current FY Cost:</u></b>	<b><u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u></b>	<b><u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u></b>
General Fund	\$ 66,250.00	\$ 226,900.00	
State	\$ 88,100.00	\$ 88,100.00	
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 154,350.00</b>	<b>\$ 315,000.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

**Staffing Impacts:**

<b><u>Legal Positions:</u></b>	<b><u>FTEs:</u></b>
Truancy Prog. Supervisor	3.0

**Attachments:**

District Attorney Report of Meetings with School Boards of Trustees and Superintendents  
PowerPoint Presentation made to School Boards

**Authored by:**

Gene Martinez, Chief Assistant Director  
Marnie Pinsker, DA Administrative Director