



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: 11/6/2012  
Placement: Administrative  
Estimated Tme: N/A  
Continued Item: No  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Department Joyce Dudley, District Attorney, 568-2308  
Director(s)  
Contact Info: David Chen, Deputy District Attorney, 568-2427

**SUBJECT: Truancy Program Implementation Status and Memorandum of Understanding Report**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

Receive and file a report on the District Attorney Truancy Program, including the signed Memorandum of Understanding with the school districts and the signed Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding with county departments and community organizations, all of which are participating with the County of Santa Barbara in the truancy prevention partnership program.

**Summary Text:**

The report will provide the Board with an update on the implementation status and enthusiastic support from school districts for the revised truancy prevention program.

**Background:**

Following a report by the Santa Barbara Grand Jury on the reported increase of truancy among students in Santa Barbara County, the Board of Supervisors created an Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Truancy in November 2011.

The Subcommittee concluded its work with many stakeholders and reported back in May 2012 to the Board about a unique agreement to form a partnership between school districts and county departments to reduce and prevent truancy. Among the components of the agreement were that the county would

fund positions in the District Attorney's Office and districts would sign a Memorandum of Understanding of their responsibilities to provide support for truancy reduction efforts.

This report provides the Board an update on the positive response and enthusiastic participation of school districts across the county for efforts to reduce truancy in cooperation with the Sheriff, District Attorney, Probation, Public Defender, Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health and Social Service Departments. School districts that sign the Memorandum of Understanding agree to implement a 5-step truancy intervention program—Community Leadership in Achieving Student Success (CLASS)—prior to referring a truancy case for prosecution. The CLASS program is designed to provide meaningful interventions to identify the root causes of truancy and determine appropriate solutions through Notification Letters, After School Meetings (ASM), Administrator Meetings (AM), Truancy Mediation Team (TMT) Meetings, and School Attendance Review Board (SARB) Meetings. During these intervention steps, the school districts may refer students and families to various resources provided by participating County Departments and community-based organizations where appropriate. Furthermore, the school districts agree to provide to the District Attorney all appropriate and necessary documentation should cases be referred for filing.

Since the assignment of a truancy Deputy District Attorney and Legal Office Professional at the end of July 2012, the school districts in the county have been organized into 6 regions for program implementation: Santa Maria Bonita Region; Santa Maria Joint Union Region; Lompoc Region; North County Region (consisting of Guadalupe, Orcutt, Blochman and Cuyama); Santa Ynez Valley Region (consisting of Los Olivos, College, Ballard, Buellton, Solvang and Vista del Mar); and South County Region (consisting of Goleta, Hope, Santa Barbara, Cold Spring, Montecito and Carpinteria). Currently, all school districts are implementing intervention steps 1 through 3. Santa Maria Bonita, Santa Maria Joint Union and South County regions are in the process of forming their respective SARB panels and schedules. Lompoc, North County and Santa Ynez Valley regions are fully operational with their respective SARB panels and schedules. In addition to attending ASM, TMT and SARB meetings, the truancy Deputy and Legal Office Professional have participated in presentations to students and families for Partners in Education Career Days, San Marcos High School's Gang Outreach program, Fighting Back and Rancho Hermosa Housing Authority.

Going forward, all of the partners behind the CLASS program plan to continue the current momentum in reducing truancy countywide with the assistance from the District Attorney's Office in the following areas: (1) Establishment of regional SARB panels for those districts currently lacking a regional SARB panel; (2) Determination of meeting schedules per region; (3) Coordination of county and community-based services available to students and their families; and (4) Prosecution of truancy cases.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

The Board provided \$170,000 in ongoing funding for the Truancy Program in the current fiscal year to cover expenses related to a 1.0 Deputy District Attorney and a .50 Legal Office Professional as well as travel expenses.

**Attachments:**

Signed Memorandum of Understanding  
Signed Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding

**Authored By:** David Chen, Deputy District Attorney