



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRUANCY PROGRAM

SHPD PROGRAM/SERVICE

“Truancy is the most powerful predictor of delinquent behavior. Students with the highest truancy rates have the lowest achievement scores and highest dropout rates. Regardless of grade or age, truancy has been linked to criminal activity, unemployment, substance use and mental health issues.”

- *“Truancy Reduction: Keeping Students in School”
Juvenile Justice Bulletin, 2001*

Historical Background: In response to San Francisco’s high truancy rates, the School Health Programs Department implemented a comprehensive elementary school truancy program with the goal of decreasing truancy rates amongst elementary-age students, improving test scores, and connecting students and families with supportive services.

What is a Truancy Program?

A truancy program works to improve student attendance by ensuring a school’s attendance policy is effective, assembling a school Student Attendance Review Team (SART), identifying chronically truant students, collaborating with community based organizations, providing appropriate support services for truant students and families (including on-site counseling services, staff mentors, truancy workshops, referrals to appropriate support agencies), and monitoring student progress.

What are the goals of the Truancy Program?

- Establish an effective SART at the school level and educate staff, students and families about truancy and its consequences
- Improve the attendance and academic performance of identified truant youth
- Collaborate with community based organizations and provide truant students and their families with appropriate support resources such as mentors, on-site counseling, referrals, etc.
- Work with SFUSD and city entities to help streamline truancy protocols on the district level

Current Status:

The Elementary School Truancy Program is currently working in 3 elementary schools and plans to be in a total of 5 elementary schools during its third year of implementation.

Elementary Schools Served:

1. Bret Harte Elementary School, Bayview/Hunter’s Point
2. Paul Revere Elementary School, Bernal Heights
3. Elementary schools with high truancy rates, sites TBD

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**For further information, contact:
School Health Programs Department
1515 Quintara Street, San Francisco, CA 94116-1273
(415) 242-2615 ▪ FAX (415) 242-2618**



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRUANCY PROGRAM (cont.)

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Truancy Program collaborations:

- Department of Public Health
- Edgewood School Based Programs
- Performing Arts Workshop
- School Health Programs Department
- Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF)
- Information, Services and Technology
- Pupil Services

Truancy Program Activities:

- Establish school SART team which focuses on attendance
- Ensure schools attendance policies are appropriate and effective
- Provide staff with professional development and training
- Provide truancy workshops for staff, students and families
- Collaborate with community based organizations
- Provide mentors and on-site support services for identified truant students and families
- Work with city entities on district truancy protocols

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