

ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Costa Mesa, California

SUPERINTENDENT'S POLICY

100-16

**Chronic Absence and Truancy**

The Orange County Department of Education believes that excessive absenteeism, whether caused by excused or unexcused absences, may be an early warning sign of poor academic achievement and may put students at risk of dropping out of school. The Board desires to ensure that all students attend school in accordance with the state's compulsory education law and take full advantage of educational opportunities provided by the Orange County Department of Education.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a system to accurately track student attendance in order to identify individual students who are chronic absentees and truants, as defined in law and administrative regulation, and to identify patterns of absence throughout the Orange County Department of Education. He/she shall provide the Board with data on school attendance, chronic absence, and truancy rates for all Orange County Department of Education students, for each school, and for each numerically significant student subgroup as defined in Education Code 52052. Such data shall be disaggregated and used in the development of annual goals and specific actions for student attendance and engagement and for inclusion in the Orange County Department of Education's local control and accountability plan and other applicable school and Orange County Department of Education plans.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies that focus on prevention of attendance problems, which may include, but are not limited to, efforts to provide a safe and positive school environment, relevant and engaging learning experiences, school activities that help develop students' feelings of connectedness with the school, school-based health services, and incentives and rewards to recognize students who achieve excellent attendance or demonstrate significant improvement in attendance. The Superintendent or designee also shall develop strategies that enable early outreach to students as soon as they show signs of poor attendance.

The Superintendent or designee shall work with students, parents/guardians, school staff, and community agencies, as appropriate, to identify factors contributing to chronic absence and truancy. He/she also may collaborate with child welfare services, law enforcement, courts, public health care agencies, other government agencies, and/or medical, mental health, and oral health care providers to ensure that alternative educational programs and nutrition, health care, and other support services are available for students and families and to intervene as necessary when students have serious attendance problems.

Students who are identified as truants shall be subject to the interventions specified in law and administrative regulation.

A student's truancy, tardiness, or other absence from school shall not be the basis for his/her out-of-school suspension or expulsion. Alternative disciplinary strategies and positive reinforcement for attendance shall be used whenever possible.

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically report the Orange County Department of Education's progress in improving student attendance rates for all students and for each numerically significant student population. Such information shall be used to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies implemented to reduce chronic absence and truancy and to make changes as needed. As appropriate, the Superintendent or designee shall engage school staff in program evaluation and improvement and in identification of how to best allocate available community resources.

#### *School Attendance Review Board*

In accordance with law and administrative regulation, habitual truants may be referred to a school attendance review board (SARB).

The Orange County Department of Education's SARB, may include, but is not limited to, a parent/guardian as well as representatives of the Orange County Department of Education; county probation department; county welfare department; law enforcement agencies; community-based youth service centers; school guidance personnel; child welfare and attendance personnel; school or county health care personnel; school, county, or community mental health personnel; the district attorney's office; and the county public defender's office.

The Orange County Department of Education's SARB shall operate in accordance with Education Code 48320-48325 and procedures established by the Superintendent or designee.

#### Legal Reference:

##### EDUCATION CODE

- 1740 Employment of personnel to supervise attendance (county superintendent)
- 37223 Weekend classes
- 41601 Reports of average daily attendance
- 46000 Records (attendance)
- 46010-46014 Absences
- 46110-46119 Attendance in kindergarten and elementary schools
- 46140-46147 Attendance in junior high and high schools
- 48200-48208 Children ages 6-18 (compulsory full-time attendance)
- 48225.5 Work permits, entertainment and allied industries
- 48240-48246 Supervisors of attendance
- 48260-48273 Truants
- 48290-482967 Failure to comply; complaints against parents
- 48320-48325 School attendance review boards
- 48340-48341 Improvement of student attendance
- 48400-48403 Compulsory continuation education

48900 Suspension and expulsion  
49067 Unexcused absences as cause of failing grade  
52052 Academic Performance Index; numerically significant student subgroups  
60901 Chronic absence  
GOVERNMENT CODE  
54950-54963 The Ralph M. Brown Act  
PENAL CODE  
270.1 Chronic truancy; parent/guardian misdemeanor  
272 Parent/guardian duty to supervise and control minor child; criminal liability for truancy  
830.1 Peace officers  
VEHICLE CODE  
13202.7 Driving privileges; minors; suspension or delay for habitual truancy  
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE  
256-258 Juvenile hearing officer  
601-601.4 Habitually truant minors  
11253.5 Compulsory school attendance  
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5  
306 Explanation of absence  
420-421 Record of verification of absence due to illness and other causes  
15497.5 Local control and accountability plan template