



La Habra City School District

500 North Walnut, La Habra, California 90631-3769

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Administrative Services

Date: September 3, 2004

To: Frederick P. Horn, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court

Cc: Orange County Grand Jury

From: Tim Catlin, Child Welfare and Attendance, La Habra City School District *T.C.*

Re: Required response to recommendations of the Grand Jury report. "Combating Truancy in Orange County"

The La Habra City School District was notified on June 1, 2004 of findings and recommendations cited in the report, "Combating Truancy in Orange County" that pertains to the district. In meeting the requirement that the La Habra City School District provide a response to each of the findings and recommendations of the report the implementation status is as follows:

Finding # 1 (Recommendation # 1)

The improvement of the district Website with an enhanced treatment of attendance matters that includes explicit expectations for student's attendance.

The La Habra City School District Office of Child Welfare and Attendance produces an attendance fact sheet (see attached) for all parents and students distributed to all nine schools. We have added that page to our district website in a PDF format both in English and Spanish for parents to access at anytime as well. This will be updated on an as needed basis each year throughout the year.

Finding # 8, 15 (Recommendation # 14)

Membership on the County SAR Board is open to all County school districts, and all school districts – even those without SAR Board meetings. (8) School districts that budget or curtail participation because of budget constraints. (15)

The La Habra City School District Child Welfare and Attendance administrator has not been active in the County SAR Board for the last two years or has sent any representative prior to the creation of that position. However the district has always maintained connections with the County Child Welfare and Attendance Director regarding SARB. During the 2004 – 2005 school year the LHCSA CWA Officer will be an active member of the County SARB as the County Board Secretary and will maintain active participation in future years.

The La Habra City School District is aware of the reimbursement opportunity through State or federal funding, afforded by Education Code 48323 and does not curtail participation in the SARB process due to budget constraints.

Finding # 10 (Recommendation # 9)

The percentage of “Habitual Truants” referred to a SAR Board in the school district.

The La Habra City School District prior to 2002 held a formal SARB on an as needed basis. The district has always maintained a SAR Board, however attendance was addressed internally through a Pre-SARB (Informal process) procedure where a district representative would hold meetings at the school site with parents, teachers, and administrators. After 2002, the district created an administrative CWA position. At that time LHCSA adopted the Truancy Response Project (TRP) and reinstated the formal SARB process on a monthly basis. From 2002 -2004 the TRP has been our main focus of parent and child attendance intervention. One of the more powerful components to the TRP is an on-site Orange County District Attorney meeting which is scheduled three times a year and averages 40 to 50 families a meeting. Through the help of the District Attorney and the parent meetings, we have been able to eliminate a large percentage of our “Habitual Truants” by educating the students and families of the importance of good attendance. For the 2004 – 2005 school year, the LHCSA has scheduled monthly SARB hearings and will be making an even greater effort to intervene with as many attendance issues as possible through the formal SARB process.

Finding # 19

Periodic training of school administrators in preparing SARB-referral documentation packages would be beneficial.

The La Habra City School District Child Welfare and Attendance Officer for the third straight year, during the Superintendent’s weekly administrative meeting, presents the guidelines of the SARB process including how to prepare for a hearing. The 2004-2005 presentation is slated for September 21, 2004. Any and all questions can be directed to the Office of Child Welfare and Attendance throughout the year. Also, CWA will send monthly reminders to the nine schools as to the amount of truants as well as who should be referred to a SARB hearing.

If you have any questions regarding the responses you may call me at (562) 690-2392 or email me at tcattlin@lhcsd.k12.ca.us



La Habra City School District

"Every Day Counts"

Answers For Parents Regarding School Attendance

What does the law say about school attendance?

Compulsory attendance is required by Education Code § 46010 and mandates that all students 6 – 18 years of age attend school regularly. A student with 3 or more unexcused absences and/or excessive excused absences is considered in violation of this code. The law requires districts to refer such students to SARB for remediation. If the student then fails to attend school, the District Attorney will prosecute the student, parents, or both of them.

Why Is It Important to attend school?

Every Day Counts in a child's education. Every day a student misses school, he gets more than two days behind his peers, because he must make up missed learning and catch up with new learning at the same time. Every day a student is in school, she raises her chance to score well on tests. Every day a student goes to school, he learns a little more about responsibility. **Every Day Counts** toward funding for school supplies too. The law states clearly that schools do not receive money for excused absences. Schools will only receive funding for students who are actually in class. Every day a student misses school, even for excused absences, the school loses about \$35 in income, the equivalent of about two library books.

We want to ensure that every student can meet our rigorous academic criteria and promotion requirements. We also need to maintain and raise our standardized test scores in most subject areas. And we must get students who don't speak English into English classrooms sooner.

What is the La Habra City School District doing to prevent attendance problems?

- Phone calls to verify absences
 - Home visits regarding attendance problems
 - Letters, from the school and district, to notify parents of attendance problems
 - Student/parent meetings with principal and/or Child Welfare Attendance Officer
 - Parent Education Nights with the Orange County District Attorney
 - Preliminary School Attendance Review Board - Pre-SARB
 - School Attendance Review Board – SARB, involving the La Habra Police Department
- And finally, if all else fails...
- Prosecution of student's parents

What can you, the parents, do to prevent attendance problems?

- Stress with your child the importance of regular school attendance
- Teach your child to be on time for school each day
- Maintain reasonable and regular bedtime hours during the school week
- Ask your child's doctors to schedule appointments before or after school hours
- Bring your child to school before and after his daytime doctor appointment
- Plan your family vacations during the summer months or when school is on holiday

We know you want the very best education for your child, and we do too. Understanding that **Every Day Counts**, together we can give your child the very best education possible.

Who can you call for more information?

Tim Catlin, Child Welfare & Attendance Officer (562) 690-2392



El Distrito Escolar de La Habra

“Cada Día Cuenta”

Respuestas Para Padres Acerca de Asistencia Escolar

¿Qué dice la ley acerca de asistencia escolar?

El Código Educacional § 46010 requiere la asistencia regular obligatoria para todos los estudiantes de edad escolar de 6 a 18 años. Un estudiante con 3 o más ausencias no justificadas y/o ausencias justificadas excesivas está considerado en violación de este Código. La ley requiere que el distrito refiera a estos estudiantes para que SARB remedie este problema. Si el estudiante falla en asistir a la escuela en el futuro, el estudiante, los padres o ambos serán demandados por el Acusador Público del Condado de Orange.

¿Porqué es importante asistir a la escuela?

Cada Día Cuenta en la educación de un niño/a. Cada día que un estudiante falta a la escuela, él se atrasa dos días ante sus compañeros, porque él debe de reponer el aprendizaje perdido y ponerse al corriente con el nuevo aprendizaje al mismo tiempo. Cada día que el estudiante está en clases, él alcanza su oportunidad de sacar mejor calificación en sus pruebas. Cada día que el estudiante está en clases, él aprende un poco más acerca de la responsabilidad. Cada día también cuenta hacia fondos para artículos escolares. La ley dice claramente que las escuelas no recibirán fondos por los días que los estudiantes estén ausentes. Cada día que un estudiante pierde clases, aún por ausencia justificable, la escuela pierde cerca de \$35 en ingresos, el equivalente de dos libros de biblioteca.

Queremos asegurar que cada estudiante pueda cumplir con nuestro nuevo, riguroso criterio académico y requisitos de promoción. También necesitamos elevar las metas de pruebas normales en la mayoría de las materias. Y debemos hacer que los estudiantes que no hablan inglés estén más pronto en clases de inglés.

¿Qué es lo que el Distrito Escolar de La Habra está haciendo para prevenir los problemas de ausencias?:

- Llamadas telefónicas para verificar las ausencias
- Visitas a las casas para problemas de ausencias
- Cartas, de la escuela y del distrito, para notificar a los padres
- Juntas con los estudiantes y padres con el director o el Oficial de Asistencia del Distrito
- Noches de Información y Educación para Padres con el Acusador Publico del Condado de Orange
- Pre-Directiva de Evaluación de Asistencias Escolares
- Directiva de Evaluación de Asistencias Escolares, con un representante del Departamento de Policia

Y finalmente, si todo esto no tiene resultados...

- Prosecución de los padres del estudiante

Lo que ustedes, los padres, pueden hacer:

- Inculcar en su hijo/a la importancia de asistencia escolar regular
- Enseñar a su hijo/a a llegar a tiempo a la escuela todos los días
- Mantener para su hijo/a un horario regular y razonable de acostarse cada noche durante la semana
- Pedir citas de doctor de su hijo/a antes o después de horas escolares
- Traer a su hijo/a a la escuela antes y después de la cita del doctor
- Planear las vacaciones familiares durante los meses de verano o cuando la escuela tiene días festivos

Nosotros sabemos que usted quiere la mejor educación para su hijo/a, y nosotros también. Al entender que **Cada Día Cuenta**, juntos daremos a su hijo/a la mejor educación posible.

¿A quién pueden llamar para más información

Tim Catlin, Oficial del Bienestar del Niño y Asistencia Escolar (562) 690-2392

La Habra City School District

500 North Walnut St., La Habra, California 90631-3769
Phone: (562) 690 – 2392 Fax: (562) 690 – 4154 Email: tcatlin@lhcsd.k12.ca.us

Office of Child Welfare and Attendance

School Attendance/Truancy Procedures

8/22/04

3rd Unverified/Unexcused Absence or Tardy

Notify Principal or Assistant Principal

Site Administration should Attempt Pre-SARB (parent meeting)

First Letter sent to parents – Send copy to CWA

5th Unverified/Unexcused Absence or Tardy

Notify Principal or Assistant Principal

Notify Office of Child Welfare and Attendance

Site Administration should attempt a Pre-SARB

(Request CWA to do a Home Visit)

7th Unverified/Unexcused Absence or Tardy

Notify Principal or Assistant Principal

Site Administration should Attempt Pre-SARB

Second Letter sent to parents – Send copy to CWA Pre-SARB

(Request CWA to do a Home Visit)

10 – 12th Unverified/Unexcused Absence or Tardy

Notify Principal or Assistant Principal

Send names of students to the Office of Child Welfare and Attendance

Letter will be sent by CWA

CWA will notify Parents/ Students for **District Attorney Meeting**

15th Unverified/Unexcused Absence or Tardy

Notify Principal or Assistant Principal

File SARB* Referral to CWA

Prior to the 3rd unverified or unexcused absence and or Tardy over 30 minutes (1st letter) Individual School Interventions should include:

Phone Calls by Office Staff – Documented

Notify Principal or Assistant Principal of Excessive Absences

Student Conference

Attempted Phone Conferences by Site Administrator

Informal Letter of Excessive Absences

Attempted Parent Meetings/Pre- SARB's

La Habra City School District

Child Welfare and Attendance

500 N. Walnut St., La Habra CA 90631

-- Please FAX this completed form to (562) 690-4154 at least 5 days before hearing. --

SARB REFERRAL FORM:

School Referring: _____ Date _____

Student Name ID# DOB Grade

Siblings in District _____ ID# _____ Grade _____

_____ ID# _____ Grade _____

_____ ID# _____ Grade _____

Special Education: Y N RSP _____ SDC _____ 504 _____

Letter Sent in Spanish: Y N Interpreter: Y N

Referred by _____ Extension _____

The SARB Presenter needs to bring the following to the meeting:

- Cumulative Folder
- A *Packet and 9 copies for distribution. You may send a copy of the packet to CWA the day before the hearing and we will make the copies.

*Packet Checklist

- Cover Page (Name, Date, Grade, DOB, School)
- Summary of Attendance (No more than one page)
- Current Transcripts
- Current Attendance Sheet
- Discipline Record
- Activity Log of Parent Contacts

-- Please FAX this completed form to (562) 690-4154 at least 5 days before hearing. --