

## VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

**BOARD POLICY NO. 5113.1**

**ADOPTED: 08/28/23**

**CLASSIFICATION: Students**

**SUBJECT: Chronic Absence and Truancy**

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The County Superintendent and the County Board believe that absenteeism, whatever the cause, may be an early warning sign of poor academic achievement and may put students at risk of dropping out of school. The County Superintendent and the County Board desire 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 Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE).

The County 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 VCOE schools.

The County Superintendent, attendance supervisor, or designee shall consult with students, parents/guardians, school staff, and community agencies, as appropriate, to identify factors contributing to chronic absence and truancy.

The County Superintendent, attendance supervisor, or designee shall develop a tiered approach to reducing chronic absence. Such an approach shall include strategies for preventing 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, letters alerting parents/guardians to the value of regular school attendance, and incentives and rewards to recognize students who achieve excellent attendance or demonstrate significant improvement in attendance.

The tiered approach shall also provide for early outreach to students as soon as they show signs of poor attendance or if they were chronically absent in the prior school year. Early intervention may include personalized outreach, individual attendance plans, and/or mentoring to students with moderate levels of chronic absence, with additional intensive, interagency wrap-around services for students with the highest level of absence.

Students with serious attendance problems shall be provided with interventions specific to their needs, which may include, but are not limited to, health care referrals, transportation assistance, counseling for mental or emotional difficulties, academic supports, efforts to address school or

community safety concerns, discussions with the student and parent/guardian about their attitudes regarding schooling, or other strategies to remove identified barriers to school attendance. The County Superintendent, attendance supervisor, or designee 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 make alternative educational programs and support services available for students and families.

The County Superintendent or designee shall ensure that staff assigned to fulfill attendance-related duties are trained in implementing a trauma-informed approach to chronic absence and receive information about the high correlation between chronic absence and exposure to adverse childhood experiences.

Students who are identified as chronically absent or truant 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 suspension. Alternative strategies and positive reinforcement for attendance shall be used whenever possible.

The County Superintendent, attendance supervisor, or designee shall periodically report to the County Board regarding student attendance patterns in the county, including rates of chronic absence and truancy countywide and for each school, grade level, and numerically significant student subgroup as defined in Education Code 52052. Such information shall be used to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies implemented to reduce chronic absence and truancy and to develop annual goals and specific actions for student attendance and engagement to be included in the VCOE's local control and accountability plan and other applicable school and VCOE plans. As appropriate, the County Superintendent or designee shall engage school staff in program evaluation and improvement and in the determination of how to best allocate available community resources.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

1740	Employment of personnel to supervise attendance
37223	Weekend classes
46000	Attendance records
46010-46015	Absences
46110-46120	Attendance in kindergarten and elementary schools
46140-46148	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
48290-48297	Failure to comply; complaints against parents

48320-48325	School attendance review boards
48340-48341	Improvement of student attendance
48400-48403	Compulsory continuation education
48900	Grounds for suspension or exp
49067	Unexcused absences as cause of failing grade
52052	Accountability; numerically significant student subgroups
60901	Chronic absence

#### GOVERNMENT CODE

54950-54963	The Ralph M. Brown Act
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#### 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

#### WELFARE & INSTITUTIONS CODE

256-258	Juvenile hearing officer
601-601.5	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

#### COURT DECISION

L.A. v. Superior Court of San Diego County, (2012) 209 Cal.App.4th 976