

# CSBA Sample Board Policy

Students

BP 5113.1(a)

## CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY

Note: The following **optional** policy addresses both chronic absence, which refers to students missing an excessive number of school days for any reason, whether excused or unexcused, and truancy, which refers to students missing school and/or being tardy without a valid excuse. Education Code 48260 defines a "valid excuse" for purposes of classifying students as truants; see the accompanying administrative regulation. Also see BP/AR 5113 - Absences and Excuses for information about methods of verification of student absences.

The Governing Board 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 district.

*(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)*

Note: The following paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice. Districts must monitor unexcused absences for the purpose of identifying students who are classified as truants pursuant to Education Code 48260-48273. In addition, Education Code 52060 requires districts to include the rates of school attendance, chronic absence, dropout, and graduation, as applicable, in their local control and accountability plan (LCAP); see BP/AR 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan. Pursuant to 5 CCR 15497.5, as added by Register 2015, No. 2, the chronic absence rate reported in the LCAP is the number of students who are absent on 10 percent or more of the school days in the academic year (July 1 through June 30) divided by the total enrollment during the academic year.

Other tools to calculate chronic absence are available, such as the [District Attendance Tracking Tool](#) and [School Attendance Tracking Tool](#) from Attendance Works and an online software application from OnTrackCA; see the management resources listed below in this policy.

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 district. He/she shall provide the Board with data on school attendance, chronic absence, and truancy rates for all district 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 district's local control and accountability plan and other applicable school and district plans.

*(cf. 0400 - Comprehensive Plans)*

*(cf. 0420 - School Plans/Site Councils)*

*(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)*

*(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)*

**CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

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.

*(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)*  
*(cf. 5126 - Awards for Achievement)*  
*(cf. 5131 - Conduct)*  
*(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)*  
*(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)*  
*(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)*  
*(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)*

Note: In developing strategies for addressing chronic absence and truancy, districts may consider reasons for absences given by individual students as well as survey data using tools such as the [California Healthy Kids Survey](#) and/or the [California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey System](#) available from WestEd.

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.

*(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)*  
*(cf. 5030 - Student Wellness)*  
*(cf. 5146 - Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)*  
*(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)*  
*(cf. 6158 - Independent Study)*  
*(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)*  
*(cf. 6164.5 - Student Success Teams)*  
*(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)*  
*(cf. 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth)*  
*(cf. 6173.2 - Education of Children of Military Families)*  
*(cf. 6175 - Migrant Education Program)*  
*(cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)*  
*(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)*  
*(cf. 6183 - Home and Hospital Instruction)*  
*(cf. 6184 - Continuation Education)*  
*(cf. 6185 - Community Day School)*

Note: State law establishes a series of interventions that the district is required or authorized to impose

**CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

depending on the number of trancies committed by a student; see the accompanying administrative regulation. Habitually truant students, as defined in Education Code 48262, may be referred to a school attendance review board (SARB) if established by the county or to a SARB established by the district Governing Board pursuant to Education Code 48321. Instead of the SARB process, students may be referred to a truancy mediation program operated by the county's district attorney or probation officer pursuant to Education Code 48260.6. Education Code 48264.5 authorizes, but does not require, students who continue to be truant after receiving these interventions to be referred to a juvenile court. Parents/guardians of truants may be subject to penalties pursuant to Education Code 48293, Penal Code 270.1, and/or Penal Code 272.

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

Note: Education Code 48900 expresses legislative intent that alternatives to suspension or expulsion be used with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities; see BP 5144 - Discipline and BP 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process.

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.

*(cf. 5144 - Discipline)*

*(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)*

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically report to the Board regarding the district'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**

Note: Education Code 48321 authorizes the establishment of a SARB in each county and also authorizes the county SARB to approve as many local SARBs as it deems necessary. If no county SARB exists, the district Board may establish a local SARB which operates in the same manner and under the same authority as a county SARB. The following section should be revised to reflect program(s) available to district students.

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

Note: The following **optional** paragraph is for use by districts whose county has established a SARB. Pursuant to Education Code 48321, the county SARB must include representative(s) of school districts who are to be nominated by the district Board and appointed by the County Superintendent of Schools.

The Board may submit a nomination to the County Superintendent of Schools for a person

**CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

who will serve on the county SARB as a representative of school districts. (Education Code 48321)

Note: The remainder of this section is for use by districts that have established a local SARB instead of, or in addition to, the county SARB. The CDE's School Attendance Review Board Handbook provides guidance to SARBs on effective operations.

Education Code 48321 lists persons the Board may, but is not required to, appoint to the local SARB, as provided in the following paragraph. AB 1643 (Ch. 879, Statutes of 2014) amended Education Code 48321 to add that the local SARB may include representatives from at least one county district attorney's office and one county public defender's office.

The Board shall appoint members of the district's SARB, who may include, but are not limited to, a parent/guardian as well as representatives of the district; county probation department; county welfare department; county office of education; 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 county district attorney's office; and the county public defender's office. (Education Code 48321)

The district'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*

*Legal Reference continued: (see next page)*

## **CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY (continued)**

*Legal Reference: (continued)*

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*

COURT DECISIONS

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

*Management Resources:*

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

*Attendance Awareness Month, Fact Sheet, September 2014*

ATTENDANCE WORKS PUBLICATIONS

*Count Us In! Working Together to Show that Every School Day Matters, 2014*

*The Power of Positive Connections: Reducing Chronic Absence Through PEOPLE: Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement, 2014*

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

*School Attendance Review Board Handbook, 2015*

*School Attendance Improvement Handbook, 2000*

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

Attendance Works: <http://www.attendanceworks.org>

California Association of Supervisors of Child Welfare and Attendance: <http://www.cascwa.org>

California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

California Healthy Kids Survey: <http://chks.wested.org>

California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey System: <http://www.cal-schls.wested.org>

OnTrackCA: <http://www.ontrackca.org>

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# CSBA Sample Administrative Regulation

Students

AR 5113.1(a)

## CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY

### Definitions

Note: The following definition of "chronic absentee" is provided in Education Code 60901 for purposes of reporting student attendance within the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System and in 5 CCR 15497.5, as added by Register 2015, No. 2, for reporting the chronic absence rate in the local control and accountability plan. Chronic absence includes absence for any reason (i.e., excused and/or unexcused absences).

*Chronic absentee* means a student who is absent for any reason on 10 percent or more of the school days in the school year, when the total number of days the student is absent is divided by the total number of days the student is enrolled and school was actually taught in the regular schools of the district, exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays. (Education Code 60901; 5 CCR 15497.5)

*Truant* means a student who is absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. (Education Code 48260)

*Habitual truant* means a student who has been reported as a truant three or more times within the same school year, provided the district has made a conscientious effort to hold at least one conference with the student and his/her parent/guardian. (Education Code 48262, 48264.5)

*Chronic truant* means a student who has been absent from school without a valid excuse for 10 percent or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date, provided the district has met the requirements of Education Code 48260-48263 and 48291. (Education Code 48263.6)

Note: As provided above, definitions of the various categories of truancy are based on the number of absences from school without a valid excuse. As amended by AB 2616 (Ch. 432, Statutes of 2012), Education Code 48260 defines a "valid excuse," for purposes of classifying a student as a truant, as any of the reasons specified in Education Code 48205 (i.e., illness, quarantine, health services appointments, funeral service attendance, jury duty, illness or medical appointment of student's child, justifiable personal reasons, service on precinct board, time with family member called to active duty or on leave from active duty, and religious exercises), Education Code 48225.5 (i.e., entertainment or allied industries work permits and nonprofit organization performances), or other reasons at the discretion of school administrators. AR 5113 - Absences and Excuses reflects the reasons that students may be excused from school pursuant to Education Code 48205 and provides information about methods of verification of student absences.

For purposes of classifying a student as a truant, *valid excuse* includes, but is not limited to, the reasons for which a student shall be excused from school pursuant to Education Code 48205

## **CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

and 48225.5. A valid excuse also may include other reasons that are within the discretion of school administrators and, based on the facts of the student's circumstances, are deemed to constitute a valid excuse. (Education Code 48260)

*(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)*

*(cf. 5113.2 - Work Permits)*

### **Attendance Supervisor(s)**

Note: The following **optional** section may be revised to reflect district practice. Pursuant to Education Code 48240-48246, the district may appoint an attendance supervisor, join a consortium of districts to employ an attendance supervisor, or, with approval of the County Board of Education, contract with the County Superintendent of Schools to supervise the attendance of district students. The following section may be revised to specify which duties will be assumed by the attendance supervisor.

The Superintendent or designee shall appoint or contract with a supervisor of attendance and assistant supervisors as necessary to supervise the attendance of district students. Such supervisors shall perform duties related to compulsory full-time education, truancy, compulsory continuation education, work permits, and any additional duties prescribed by the Superintendent. (Education Code 48240, 48243, 48244)

### **Addressing Chronic Absence**

Note: The following **optional** section may be revised to reflect district practice. For further information about strategies to address chronic absence, see CSBA's policy brief [Improving Student Achievement by Addressing Chronic Absence](#) and the California Department of Education's (CDE) [School Attendance Improvement Handbook](#). Also see AR 5113 - Absences and Excuses for language requiring students with frequent absences due to illness to provide written verification from a health care practitioner.

When a student is identified as a chronic absentee, the attendance supervisor shall communicate with the student and his/her parents/guardians to determine the reason(s) for the excessive absences, ensure the student and parents/guardians are aware of the adverse consequences of poor attendance, and jointly develop a plan for improving the student's school attendance.

*(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)*

The student may be referred to a student success team or school-site attendance review team to assist in evaluating his/her needs and identifying strategies and programs to assist him/her.

*(cf. 5146 - Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)*

*(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)*

*(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)*

*(cf. 6164.5 - Student Success Teams)*

*(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)*

*(cf. 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth)*

## **CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY (continued)**

*(cf. 6173.2 - Education of Children of Military Families)*  
*(cf. 6175 - Migrant Education Program)*

A student who is struggling academically may be offered tutoring or other supplemental instruction, extended learning opportunities, and/or alternative educational options as appropriate.

*(cf. 6158 - Independent Study)*  
*(cf. 6176 - Weekend/Saturday Classes)*  
*(cf. 6178.1 - Work-Based Learning)*  
*(cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)*  
*(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)*  
*(cf. 6183 - Home and Hospital Instruction)*  
*(cf. 6184 - Continuation Education)*

Whenever chronic absenteeism is linked to a health issue or nonschool condition, the attendance supervisor may recommend school or community resources and/or collaborate with community agencies and organizations to address the needs of the student and his/her family.

*(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)*  
*(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)*

### **Addressing Truancy**

An attendance supervisor or designee, peace officer, probation officer, or school administrator or designee may, as applicable, arrest or assume temporary custody during school hours of any minor student found away from his/her home who is absent from school without a valid excuse. Any person arresting or assuming temporary custody of a minor student shall deliver the student and make reports in accordance with Education Code 48265 and 48266. (Education Code 48264, 48265, 48266)

*(cf. 3515.3 - District Police/Security Department)*

The attendance supervisor shall investigate a complaint from any person that a parent/guardian has violated the state compulsory education laws contained in Education Code 48200-48341. (Education Code 48290)

When a student has been identified as a truant as defined above, the following steps shall be implemented based on the number of trancies he/she has committed:

1. Initial truancy
  - a. The student shall be reported to the attendance supervisor. (Education Code 48260)



**CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

Note: When a student is classified as truant, Education Code 48260.5 requires notification of his/her parents/guardians by the most cost-effective method possible, which may include email or a telephone call. The CDE's web site and School Attendance Improvement Handbook provide sample letters.

- b. The student's parent/guardian shall be notified by the most cost-effective method possible, which may include email or a telephone call, that: (Education Code 48260.5)
- (1) The student is truant.
  - (2) The parent/guardian is obligated to compel the student to attend school. If the parent/guardian fails to meet this obligation, he/she may be guilty of an infraction of the law and subject to prosecution pursuant to Education Code 48290-48296.
  - (3) Alternative educational programs are available in the district.
  - (4) The parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the student's truancy.
  - (5) The student may be subject to arrest or held in temporary custody by a probation officer, a peace officer, a school administrator or attendance supervisor or his/her designee under Education Code 48264 if found away from home and absent from school without a valid excuse.
  - (6) The student may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of his/her driving privilege pursuant to Vehicle Code 13202.7.
  - (7) It is recommended that the parent/guardian accompany the student to school and attend classes with the student for one day.

*(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)*

- c. The student may be required to attend makeup classes on one day of a weekend pursuant to Education Code 37223. (Education Code 48264.5)

Note: AB 2616 (Ch. 432, Statutes of 2012) amended Education Code 48264.5 to add the following strategy for addressing initial truancy.

- d. The student and, as appropriate, his/her parent/guardian may be requested to attend a meeting with a school counselor or other school designee to discuss the root causes of the attendance issue and develop a joint plan to improve the student's attendance. (Education Code 48264.5)

**CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

Note: The following **optional** item is for use by districts in which there is no county school attendance review board (SARB) and the county's district attorney or probation officer has elected to participate in a truancy mediation program pursuant to Education Code 48260.6.

- e. The attendance supervisor may notify the district attorney and/or probation officer of the student's name and the name and address of his/her parents/guardians. (Education Code 48260.6)
2. Second truancy
- a. Any student who has once been reported as a truant shall again be reported to the attendance supervisor as a truant if he/she is absent from school without a valid excuse one or more days or is tardy on one or more days during the school year. (Education Code 48261)
  - b. The student may be required to attend makeup classes on one day of a weekend pursuant to Education Code 37223. (Education Code 48264.5)
  - c. The student may be assigned to an after-school or weekend study program within the county. If the student fails to successfully complete this study program, he/she shall be subject to item #3 below. (Education Code 48264.5)

Note: Education Code 48262 provides that a student cannot be classified as a habitual truant (item #3 below) until the district has made a conscientious effort to hold at least one conference with the student and his/her parent/guardian after the attendance supervisor has been notified of either the first or second truancy. Education Code 48262 defines "conscientious effort," for purposes of this section, as attempting to communicate with the parent/guardian at least once using the most cost-effective method possible, which may include email or a telephone call. Thus, the following paragraph requires such communication in the event of the second truancy.

- d. An appropriate district staff member shall make a conscientious effort to hold at least one conference with the student and his/her parent/guardian by communicating with the parent/guardian at least once using the most cost-effective method possible, which may include email or a telephone call. (Education Code 48262)

Note: As amended by AB 2616 (Ch. 432, Statutes of 2012), Education Code 48264.5 eliminated a written warning by a peace officer as a response to initial truancy and instead provides that the peace officer's warning may be a response to the second truancy, as provided below.

- e. The student may be given a written warning by a peace officer. A record of that warning may be kept at the school for not less than two years or until the student graduates or transfers from the school. If the student transfers, the record may be forwarded to the new school. (Education Code 48264.5)

**CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

Note: The following **optional** item is for use by districts in which there is no county SARB and the county's district attorney or probation officer has elected to participate in a truancy mediation program. Pursuant to Education Code 48260.6, if the district notifies the district attorney and/or probation officer that a student continues to be classified as a truant after proper notification to the parents/guardians as described in #1b above, the district attorney or probation officer may request a meeting with the student and his/her parents/guardians to discuss the possible legal consequences of the student's truancy.

- f. The attendance supervisor may notify the district attorney and/or probation officer when the student continues to be classified as a truant after the parents/guardians have been notified in accordance with item #1b above. (Education Code 48260.6)
3. Third truancy (habitual truancy)

Note: Education Code 48263 and 48264.5 authorize the district to refer habitual truants to a SARB, a county truancy mediation program, or a comparable program for services. The district should revise the following items to reflect the option(s) available in the district.

According to the CDE's School Attendance Improvement Handbook, prior to referring a truant student to a SARB or county truancy mediation program, some districts initiate an intermediate step, such as a school-site attendance review team or student success team. Districts that have established such an intermediate step may revise the following item accordingly.

- a. A student who is habitually truant, irregular in school attendance, or habitually insubordinate or disorderly during attendance at school may be referred to, and required to attend, a school attendance review board (SARB) program, a truancy mediation program established by the district attorney or the probation officer, or a comparable program deemed acceptable by the district's attendance supervisor. (Education Code 48263, 48264.5)
- b. Upon making a referral to the SARB or the probation department, the attendance supervisor shall provide the student and parent/guardian, in writing, the name and address of the SARB or probation department and the reason for the referral. This notice shall indicate that the student and parent/guardian shall be required, along with the district staff person making the referral, to meet with the SARB or a probation officer to consider a proper disposition of the referral. (Education Code 48263)
- c. If the student does not successfully complete the truancy mediation program or other similar program, he/she shall be subject to item #4 below. (Education Code 48264.5)

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 48263, the SARB or probation officer may direct a student and/or the student's parents/guardians to make use of available community services and may require satisfactory

**CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

evidence of participation. If the SARB or probation officer determines that available community resources cannot resolve the problem, or if the student and/or parents/guardians have failed to respond to the directives of the SARB or probation officer, the SARB may so notify the district attorney and/or probation officer, or the probation officer may notify the district attorney provided the district attorney or probation officer participates in a truancy mediation program. If the county has not established a SARB, the district may make this finding and notification.

The following paragraph is for use by districts in which the county has not established a SARB and the county's district attorney or probation officer has elected to participate in a truancy mediation program.

- d. If the attendance supervisor determines that available community services cannot resolve the problem of the truant or insubordinate student or if the student and/or his/her parents/guardians have failed to respond to the directives of the district or to services provided, the attendance supervisor may so notify the district attorney and/or the probation officer. (Education Code 48263)

## 4. Fourth truancy

Note: AB 2616 (Ch. 432, Statutes of 2012) amended Education Code 48264.5 to authorize, rather than require, a student to be referred to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court upon the fourth truancy report.

- a. Upon his/her fourth truancy within the same school year, the student may be referred to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. (Education Code 48264.5; Welfare and Institutions Code 601)

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 48264.5 and Welfare and Institutions Code 601, a student coming within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court may be adjudged a ward of the court and required to perform community service, pay a fine, attend a court-approved truancy prevention program, and/or lose driving privileges. AB 2616 (Ch. 432, Statutes of 2012) amended Education Code 48264.5 to lower the maximum amount of the fine that can be imposed from \$100 to \$50.

In L.A. v. Superior Court of San Diego County, a court of appeal held that juvenile court judges have the authority to imprison a truant as a last resort if the student commits an egregious violation of a court order, less restrictive alternatives have proved ineffective, and the student is confined separately from youths held for criminal violations.

- b. If a student has been adjudged by the county juvenile court to be a habitual truant, the attendance supervisor shall notify the juvenile court and the student's probation or parole officer whenever the student is truant or tardy on one or more days without a valid excuse in the same or succeeding school year, or is habitually insubordinate or disorderly at school. The juvenile court and probation or parole officer shall be notified within 10 days of the violation. (Education Code 48267)

**CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY** (continued)

Note: Item #5 below is for use by districts that offer any of grades K-8. Penal Code 270.1 states that a parent/guardian of a "chronic truant" who is at least age 6 years and is in any of grades K-8 is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment if he/she has failed to reasonably supervise and encourage the student's school attendance and has been offered language-accessible support services to address the student's truancy. Pursuant to Penal Code 270.1, a parent/guardian found guilty of a misdemeanor may participate in a program established by a superior court, if available, which includes periodic meetings with district representatives and service referrals.

5. Absence for 10 percent of school days (chronic truancy)
  - a. The attendance supervisor shall ensure that the student's parents/guardians are offered language-accessible support services to address the student's truancy.
  - b. If a chronically truant student is at least age 6 years and is in any of grades K-8, the attendance supervisor shall notify the student's parents/guardians that failure to reasonably supervise and encourage the student's school attendance may result in the parent/guardian being found guilty of a misdemeanor pursuant to Penal Code 270.1.

**Records**

Note: The following **optional** paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice. The CDE's School Attendance Review Board Handbook cautions that it is important to keep accurate and complete records of any violations of compulsory school attendance laws because such records may ultimately be introduced as evidence in a trial for truancy.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain accurate attendance records for students identified as habitual or chronic truants. The Superintendent or designee also shall document all contacts with a student and his/her parent/guardian regarding the student's attendance, including a summary of all conversations and a record of all intervention efforts.

*(cf. 5125 - Student Records)*

Note: Education Code 48273 **mandates** that the district adopt rules and regulations for the purpose of gathering data and making a report to the County Superintendent of Schools regarding SARB referrals. The CDE's web site provides a model annual summary report form.

The Superintendent or designee shall gather and transmit to the County Superintendent of Schools the number and types of referrals made to the SARB and of requests for petitions made to the juvenile court. (Education Code 48273)

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