

Breakout Session Notes:

Attendance Matters! Improving Attendance as a Crucial Strategy for Student Success and Graduation

A. Highlights/Themes

1. Community needs to understand importance of attendance. Implement a communications plan to get word out to parents and students. Students can help to reach out to other students; utilize radio, TV, and social media.
2. We need to simplify the language. People do not know what truancy means and how it affects the community, including economic viability and opportunities for students.
3. The entire community, not just the schools, needs to invest in this to make a real difference.

B. Notes from Session (Includes Flip Chart Notes)

Ideas to reduce truancy

- Campaign for Social Awareness (similar to NM PBS PSAs)
- Simplify the language
- Student engagement – make class time more interactive, hands-on, relevant
- Implement Truancy Court
- Follow through – Is the City and CYFD holding students and families accountable?
- Leverage the Student Wellness Action Team for campaigning
- Utilize Youth Media Project
- Working group for School Resource Officer
- Improve school staff and student relationships
- Social media awareness
- Posters, fliers, bus advertisements, newspaper advertisements, bench advertisements
- Incentives
- Choices
- Development of a truancy task force including members from the public and Chamber of Commerce
- List of volunteer opportunities publicized in newspaper and website
- Efficiency with processing volunteers with the district (less than several-4 mos.)
- Larger task force to include key community members (business relationships)
- Truancy team at school sites to include parents, youth, teachers, student government, etc.
- Monitor student bus use via video process – penalize students using the bus during school hours
- Staff from school present at the bus stop during peak hours
- Hotline for prevention and awareness – allows people to report truant students
- Bus passes – simplify with color code/research how other cities do it
- Attaching a hotline number to a resource officer

Target specific businesses where students frequent during school hours (e.g. Mall)