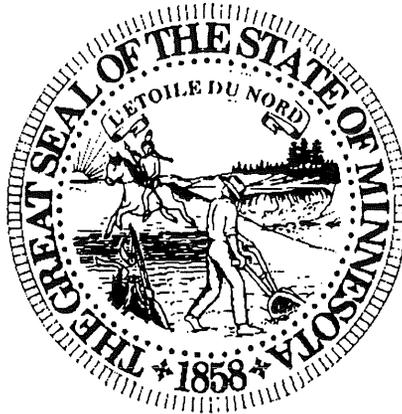


TRUANCY REDUCTION GRANTS

EVALUATION OF TWO PILOT PROGRAMS



Office of Minnesota Attorney General
Hubert H. Humphrey III
1997

MINNESOTA TRUANCY REDUCTION GRANT PILOT PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The 1995 Minnesota Legislature authorized funding for at least two programs designed to improve school attendance and reduce truancy. The Minnesota Commissioner of Public Safety, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Education, was charged with administering the program and awarding grants. The Minnesota Attorney General's Office was designated as responsible for reporting on the effectiveness of the programs. This report is based upon program summaries and interviews with program administrators. An overview of the findings is presented below:

In the fall of 1995, two grants were awarded: one to the Ramsey County Attorney's Truancy Intervention Program and one to the Blue Earth County Community Based Truancy Action Program. These programs represent two different approaches to the problem of truancy.

Ramsey County Attorney's Truancy Intervention Program

During the 1995-96 school year the Ramsey County program has intervened with over 2,000 students from 34 schools in five separate school districts. The program begins with a formal meeting in which students who have attendance problems and their parents meet with an assistant Ramsey County attorney to learn about the law. For most students, that meeting served to resolve the attendance problem. Follow-up in the form of a School Attendance Review Team hearing was required for about 20% of the students who attended the initial meeting. No further action was required for over half of the students who attended these hearings. Formal truancy petitions in juvenile court were required for less than 10% of the overall participants in the Truancy Intervention Program.

Blue Earth County Board Truancy Action Program

The Blue Earth County program is an intensive, multi-county, multi-disciplinary approach for a small number of particularly challenging students. Four different entities (community corrections, human services, law enforcement and the school district) from two separate counties (Blue Earth and Nicollet) came together to establish a Model School. The school has a capacity to serve 18 at-risk students in grades seven through nine. Not only does the school tailor its academic programming to the needs of individual students, it also emphasizes attendance and behavioral requirements. The results have been positive. The average attendance rate of the Model School has increased to 91%, up from an attendance rate of 10% to 50% at the student's home school. Some youths are transitioning back to their original schools. In addition, standardized tests indicate academic growth.

These programs demonstrate that intensive individualized efforts appear to hold great promise in addressing truancy and related problems. Because of the success of these pilot programs, both have been continued by their respective jurisdictions. This document describes the Minnesota legislation that authorized the programs, summarizes each, and presents detailed results of their impact during the 1995-96 school year.

TRUANCY REDUCTION GRANT PILOT PROGRAM

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Authorization

In 1995 the Minnesota Legislature made significant changes in truancy law, establishing a new chapter, Chapter 260A, focusing on truancy. Section 260A.01 of this chapter defines the purpose of truancy programs and services as follows:

The programs in this chapter are designed to provide a continuum of intervention and services to support families and children in keeping children in school and combating truancy and educational neglect. School districts, county attorneys and law enforcement may establish the programs and coordinate them with other community-based truancy services in order to provide the necessary and most effective intervention for children and their families. This continuum of intervention and services involves progressively intrusive intervention, beginning with strong service-oriented efforts at the school and community level and involving the court's authority only when necessary.

Accordingly, the legislature established a truancy reduction grant pilot program (Chapter 226, Article 3, Section 63 of the Laws of Minnesota for 1995). The program is summarized below:

- The purpose is to establish a pilot program to help school districts, county attorneys, and law enforcement officials work together to improve school attendance and reduce truancy.
- The programs should be designed to reduce truancy and educational neglect, and improve school attendance rates by:
 - providing early intervention and a continuum of intervention;
 - supporting parental involvement and responsibility;
 - working with students, families, school personnel and community resources to provide appropriate services that address the underlying causes of truancy; and
 - providing a speedy and effective alternative to juvenile court intervention.
- The commissioner of public safety, in conjunction with the commissioner of education, is responsible for making awards.
- At least two grants must be awarded for the 1995-96 school year, one for a program in the metropolitan area and one for a program outside of the metropolitan area.
- The attorney general is required to make a preliminary report on the effectiveness of the pilot programs as part of its 1996 annual report on school safety, and a final report as part of its 1997 annual report.

A total of \$100,000 was appropriated for the truancy reduction pilot programs.

Current Status

The Minnesota Commissioner of Public Safety awarded grants for two truancy reduction pilot programs. The first was for a program of the Ramsey County Attorney's Office. The second was for the Blue Earth County Model School program. The awards of \$50,000 each became available in the early fall of 1995. Presented below is a description of each program together with a report of its progress during the 1995-96 school year.

Ramsey County Attorney's Truancy Intervention Program (TIP)

The Ramsey County Attorney's Program was modeled after a highly successful program in the City of Los Angeles. The Ramsey County program began in September of 1995 and involves 34 schools in five separate school districts.

The program is a three-step process of intervention designed to compel students and their parents to address the problem of truancy in cases where initial school efforts have not succeeded. The three steps and results for the 1995-96 school year are described below:

Step One The county attorney's office worked with the schools to identify students who have three to five unexcused absences. These students and their parents are then invited to a large group meeting at which an assistant county attorney discusses the legal and social consequences of truancy.

During the 1995-96 school year, the county attorney's office received referrals for 2,078 students with three to five unexcused absences and sent letters requesting parents to attend meetings about the problem. Meeting attendance varied by school district with 83% attending in the Mounds View district, 86% in North St. Paul, 88% in Roseville, 85% in the White Bear Lake district, and 65% in the Saint Paul district.

Step Two If school attendance does not improve after the parent meeting, the county attorney's office convenes a School Attendance Review Team (SART). This meeting, attended by both the student and the parent, involved a specific discussion about the legal ramifications of truancy. More important, it included negotiation of a contract with both student and parent regarding improvement of attendance.

Of the 2,078 referrals to the initial meeting, follow-up in the form of School Attendance Review Team hearings were needed with only 409 (19.7%).

Step Three If attendance still failed to improve, the county attorney's office filed a truancy petition with an expedited hearing date.

During the first year of the program, there were 200 truancy petitions filed in Juvenile Court. This represents 9.6% of the total program participants and 48.9% of those who completed a SART. The office has been able to expedite these

cases. In the past, there was a four-week waiting period to appear in Juvenile Court; through this program it has been reduced to two weeks.

One advantage of TIP is that the same county attorney works with the students and their parents throughout the entire process. That county attorney is also the one that presents the petition in juvenile court.

The results of this process demonstrate that a system of graduated intervention is successful. Because students appear to be responsive to the initial steps of the intervention, more intrusive measures such as truancy petitions have been minimized. The Ramsey County Attorney's Truancy Intervention Program 1995-96 Year End Report appears in Appendix I.

Blue Earth County Community Based Truancy Action Program

The second grant was awarded to a Blue Earth County program called the Model School for chronic truants and behavior problems. The school was established in 1993 and is housed at the Blue Earth County Law Enforcement Center. It represents a well-coordinated effort of Blue Earth and Nicollet County community corrections, human services, law enforcement and the school district officials. It includes significant involvement by parents and community volunteers. The school is designed to meet the behavioral and educational needs of chronically delinquent and truant students from all Mankato middle, junior and senior high schools.

The school has two full-time teachers who work with an extensive group of volunteers. The maximum student capacity is 18 at-risk students in grades seven through nine. Curricula is designed to stress reading and mathematics, social studies, English, science, life skills, physical education and industrial arts are also included. Because of its small size, staff are able to tailor the curricula according to individual needs. Programming includes both educational and behavioral modification for each student.

The first objective of the Model School is to ensure mandatory attendance. During the 1995-96 school year, Model School students had average attendance rates of 91%; their average attendance rate in their home schools had been 10% - 50%.

The second objective is to modify the behavior of problem students so they can "transition," that is, to return to their original school. To "graduate" from the Model School, a student must meet the following four criteria:

1. Ninety days of appropriate behavior, measured by accumulating 85% of the possible behavior points available to be earned;
2. An attendance rate of 90% or better for 90 days;
3. Successful completion of 80% of their assignments for 90 days; and
4. During this time, there can be only a minimal need for interventions for the student's behavior or attendance by other agencies.

Last school year the Model School had a 50% transition rate (6 of 12 students). The school reports that students attending the school earned 36 credits in addition to the credits earned in the transition process. Standardized tests indicated academic growth for the students while attending school.

The Model School appears to have achieved its objectives of improving both school attendance and behavior. This program represents a very intensive effort to work with at-risk students. A copy of the progress report for this program from the final quarter of the 1995-96 school year is attached.

Conclusion

Truancy reduction programs have a positive impact on attendance problems. The two programs funded by the 1995 Legislature demonstrate two different approaches to truancy. The Ramsey County program systematically intervenes with a large group of juveniles who have exhibited attendance problems. The intervention is graduated according to the response of the youth. The intervention ranges from meetings describing consequences and hearings involving sanctions to juvenile court petitions. The program has been successful in reaching over 2,000 students during its first year of operation.

The Blue Earth County program is focused on a small group of at-risk students who have demonstrated both attendance and behavior problems. Through a specialized school, these students receive intensive, individualized supervision and instruction. The results have been very positive.

When asked what should be done to further improve response to truancy, the administrators of both programs independently and emphatically stressed the need to intervene with children at an early age. According to the Ramsey County Attorney's Office:

The prevention of chronic truancy, particularly in elementary school children is critical to long-term school success. The ramifications of children experiencing school failure are felt in the classroom by the disruptive behaviors these children display. If school climate and the classroom environment is to improve, if schools are going to be safe and encouraging places to learn, if school success is to be ensured, the issue of truancy must be addressed at the point it begins -- in elementary school.

The expansion of truancy prevention programs to elementary schools would require more than a simple replication of programs shown to be effective in the junior and senior high school. This is an area that merits further attention.

APPENDIX



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County Attorney

TRUANCY INTERVENTION PROGRAM 1995-96 YEAR END REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In 1995 the Minnesota Legislature enacted legislation empowering county governing bodies to establish programs to address the growing problem of truancy. In response to this legislation the Ramsey County Attorney's Office initiated the Truancy Intervention Program (TIP) in all five Ramsey County school districts for students 12-16 years old. TIP is a three-step process involving progressively intrusive interventions to improve a student's attendance.

The steps of the process are as follows: Step One consists of a large group meeting with parents and students at the school. Students with as few as three unexcused absences may be referred to the TIP program. The child and his/her parents are required by the County Attorney's Office to attend a parent meeting at school. At this meeting the Minnesota Compulsory Attendance law and the consequences of violating it are outlined. The social consequences of poor school attendance are explained as well as the TIP process and valid reasons for being absent from school. Students and families are warned that if the child's attendance does not improve they will be prosecuted by the County Attorney's Office.

Attendance is then monitored by school personnel and those students who fail to improve their attendance are referred to step-two of the program a School Attendance Review Team (SART) Hearing. At this hearing school administrators, school social workers or counselors, an assistant county attorney and the parents and student negotiate an attendance contract. Referrals to social service agencies are often made as a term of the contract in an attempt to assist the family in dealing with the problems causing the poor attendance.

If attendance does not improve after the SART Hearing the process moves to the third step of TIP, the filing of a truancy petition in Juvenile Court.

The Ramsey County Attorney's Office is committed to the theory that interventions by influential adults into student's lives frequently makes a positive impact on their behavior and attendance. The TIP process assisted school personnel in making meaningful interventions that successfully modified student's behavior, while preventing many children from becoming entangled in the juvenile justice system.

The following report outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the TIP program, provides feedback from school personnel, students and parents involved in the process and makes recommendations for the next year.

REPORT OVERVIEW

The Ramsey County Attorney's Office Truancy Intervention Program completed it's inaugural year of work on June 6, 1996. The process of comprehensively evaluating the program began in May 1996 when parents, students and school personnel were asked to respond to various questions about TIP. School personnel were asked the most questions due to their intimate and crucial involvement in the program and subsequently provided the most of the responses used to evaluate this program. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the school personnel surveyed responded. Three hundred (300) parents were sent surveys and the return rate has been low, approximately nine percent (9%) have returned their survey.

Students from the Harding High School FATE Program, a special program designed to improve attendance for at risk students, were asked by Jean Borax, program director, to comment on their involvement in the TIP process. These responses are included in this report.

The response to the TIP project from Ramsey County Schools has been overwhelmingly positive. All five Ramsey County School Districts participated in the program with fifty-nine (59) schools sending referrals. The five districts collectively referred two thousand and seventy-eight (2,078) students to the TIP process. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the referrals (1,843 students) came from St. Paul Public Schools. Attendance at the parent meeting, the first step of the process, ranged from approximately sixty percent (60%) in St. Paul Public Schools to nearly ninety percent (90%) in the four suburban districts.

Four hundred and nine (409) students were referred to School Attendance Review Team meetings or SART Meetings. Three hundred and six (306) of these students were St. Paul Public School students and the remaining one hundred and three (103) students attended school in one of the four suburban districts. The SART Hearings were successful with 52% of the the students referred. The attendance rate at the SART Hearings was over ninety percent (90%) for the entire county.

Students who failed to improve their attendance after a SART Hearing were petitioned to juvenile court with a Truancy Petition. Two hundred (200) truancy petitions were filed for the 1995-1996 school year. This represents a dramatic decrease in the number of truancy petitions filed in juvenile court over previous years. Our office estimates that the decrease is approximately 50-60%. We are unable to be more precise because all other statistics are run on a calendar year not the school year. Once TIP has statistics for a full calendar year a more precise number can be given.

(See Appendix A for a detailed breakdown of this years referrals to TIP).

A statistical breakdown of the students referred to TIP shows that over half of children referred to the program were of European ethnicity, while forty-six percent (46%) of the students were minorities. African-American students account for 20.6 % of the total referrals and Hmong students made up the next largest sub-group which accounted for 14.5 % of the total referrals. Referrals to the program were dominated slightly by male students which accounted for 52.8 % of the the students in the program. (See Appendix B for a detailed breakdown of the students by gender and ethnicity).

SCHOOL PERSONNEL EVALUATIONS OF TIP

School personnel were asked nineteen (19) questions about the TIP process, thirteen (13) of these questions used a 1-5 rating scale and six questions solicited written comments. Additional comments were also requested and welcomed from the evaluators.

The questions using the rating scale required the respondent to rate the TIP process, it's impact on students and family, the performance of the Assistant County Attorney responsible for TIP, and whether or not the program should be continued. (See Appendix C for the complete survey and responses).

Thirty-five surveys were completed and returned. Those responding represent all five Ramsey County School districts, with approximately two-thirds of the responses coming from St. Paul Public School personnel. Based on the breakdown of students involved in the program the responses appear to have a fair balance between suburban and inner-city schools.

School personnel were asked to rate each question on a scale of 1-5, 1= strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The average range of responses was from 4.0 to 4.9. The respondents gave the program high marks in all areas and were overwhelmingly in favor of continuing the program during the 1996-97 school year.

Most importantly, school personnel agreed that TIP assisted their school's efforts to improve attendance, and made a positive impact on overall school attendance in their building.

In the written responses to the survey the respondents continued to express strong approval for the TIP process and believed that the County Attorney's involvement in school attendance issues had a positive impact on efforts to improve attendance in their schools. Many school personnel also agreed that TIP positively impacted individual student's attendance. (See Appendix D for a complete listing of survey questions and responses).

Responses indicate that many schools believe that the TIP process has improved the way their school handles truancy and attendance matters, brought greater focus and attention to the problem of school attendance, and offered an improved system to help children and families deal with issues impacting attendance. Some also believe that the collaborative method of dealing with truancy has improved relationships between schools, courts, and corrections. When asked whether TIP assisted the school's efforts to improve student's attendance the responses typically were as follows:

"Yes, it was extremely helpful to have these specific interventions to use with students and their families." and "Yes, it made it possible to get parents on the school's side rather than on the defense. Also, assisted in prevention - getting kids back to where they belong instead of monkey business with court when they don't need to."

When asked what they liked most about the TIP process school personnel responded:

"The structure - The three step process allows for the parent of the student to be informed about the law and their responsibilities, it allows time for correction; and it expedited the hearing of the truancy petition." and "Quick responsiveness to referrals (frequent informational meetings and easy to schedule SART Meetings); easy referral process, parent involvement and accountability; having someone at court who knew the history and background of the students for the actual hearing." and "It gave us a great way to intervene early with resources outside of the building. For some students and parents the initial referral was awake-up call".

There was general appreciation expressed for the involvement of the County Attorney's Office in this project. Nevertheless, many school personnel (primarily from St. Paul Public Schools) expressed frustration with the amount of work the process required of them. Many stated that additional resources were needed in their schools to handle the large volume of students that have attendance problems. Typical responses from St. Paul Public Schools personnel to the question, "What did you like least about the TIP process?" include: "Too much paper work, and tracking?" and "The time needed to monitor and follow through

with each student is overwhelming - even with the support of other school staff".

With the support of the Ramsey County Attorney's Office St. Paul Schools are seeking to remedy to this problem. Attempts are being made to hire aides in each of the schools to focus attention on attendance. These resources would be in addition to resources already in place in the schools and would support the efforts now being made to improve attendance in the St. Paul Pubic Schools.

The Ramsey County Attorneys Office is very pleased with the response of school personnel to the TIP project. According to the respondents surveyed, the program has been successful and merits continuation in the 1996-97 school year.

PARENTS RESPONSE TO THE TIP PROCESS

A goal of the TIP project was to support parents of truant students while strongly encouraging them to address their child's attendance problems. We informed all parents of their legal duty to see that their child is educated and what the consequences of failing to do so might mean for them as parent. Moreover, referrals were made to community-based social services agencies as well as school programs that might assist them in dealing with the problems that were at the root of their child's attendance problem.

This carrot and stick approach to dealing with parents and families obviously produced mixed results. Many parents genuinely wanted and appreciated our involvement in their lives. Others were angry and felt threatened by the County Attorney's Offices involvement. As stated above we sent out over 300 surveys to families that had reached the second or third level of the TIP process. At the writing of this report approximately nine percent (9%) of the surveys have been returned. Of those returned, the majority of the responses are positive and felt that the TIP project assisted them in parenting their child in a positive manner.

(See Appendix E for survey questions and responses from parents of students in the program).

STUDENT'S RESPONSE TO THE TIP PROCESS

Gathering reliable information from students in the program proved to be difficult. The quasi-prosecutorial approach used in this program did not lend itself to establishing relationships with students that were much more than politely adversarial. Therefore, we decided to ask the coordinator of the FATE Program (Fresh Approaches to Education) at a St. Paul High School to interview high-risk students with serious attendance problems about how TIP influenced their attendance and other areas of their lives. Seven students agreed to be interviewed. Four males

and three females gave responses. The students admitted that they changed their behavior because they wanted to earn the credits necessary to graduate and stay out of the juvenile justice system. Below you will find the "stories" of a few students who agreed to be interviewed for this report:

"R.V. was on the absence list virtually all of the first semester. We enrolled him in FATE second semester because J.L., his friend, recommended him. While R.V. was dismissed for smoking, he still has only eight absences for the semester and is earning credit in his classes. He is a model student in class and only needed to make the decision to come to school in order to be successful."

"A.V. is another ninth grader with a history of truancy. FATE enrolled her second semester. As she too had attended a TIP parent meeting last fall, we were able to move to the contract quickly. The contract seemed to be enough encouragement for A. She has been dismissed, but in the second week in May she has only seven absences for the entire semester. A. said she changed her behavior because, 'I didn't want to go to court.'"

Jean Borax, FATE Coordinator was particularly impressed with the TIP process because it supported her work in improving attendance and provided an outside authority that many school personnel believe is necessary to compel students to attend school regularly. Jean states, "The TIP process has been invaluable to me in my role as coordinator of the FATE program (Fresh Approaches to Education)...What I quickly learned this year was that students whose parents were unable to make their students attend school, or who were indifferent to their attendance, needed an outside agency to act as the authority. The TIP process has been that authority..."
(See Appendix F for written summaries of the coordinator comments and student interviews).

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED - WHERE WE WANT TO GO

The Ramsey County Attorney's Office in collaboration with many schools, community based agencies, corrections and the courts has learned a great deal about the problem of truancy in this county. This learning experience has prompted planning for future expansion of this program and provided first-hand experience in what is effective when working with truant students. The following paragraphs will outline what has been learned and where this program intends to go in years to come.

The TIP process has highlighted the long-held belief that better attendance equals better achievement. Many of the students involved in TIP were deficient credits due to poor attendance. Students in the program who improved their attendance clearly did

better academically and earned more course credits than students who failed to improve during the TIP process.

The TIP process has statistically shown that there is a significant disparity in the attendance rates between St. Paul Public Schools and suburban Ramsey County schools. St. Paul Public schools services just over half of the students in the county and accounts for nearly 90% of the TIP referrals for the entire county. It is clear that special focus must be placed on urban schools and the special challenges that face them as they attempt to improve attendance and achievement in years to come. Moreover, additional human resources must be allocated to address the magnitude of the attendance problem in St. Paul Public Schools.

School personnel agree that concerted school efforts, using a multi-level team approach to improving attendance, in conjunction with the TIP efforts produce the most dramatic results in improved attendance and behavior modification. Therefore, continued emphasis on several increasingly intrusive interventions in students and parents lives will have the greatest impact on individual attendance and overall school attendance.

With these lessons in mind the Ramsey County Attorney's Office plans to continue TIP during the 1996-97 school year. Concerted efforts will be made to encourage all schools to use a team approach to attendance that includes several levels of school personnel. Schools will also be encouraged to track student attendance in such a manner that no student is overlooked.

The Ramsey County Attorney's Office is also sensitive to the fact that poor attendance is not something that begins in middle school or junior high school. It often begins early in a child's education. Reversing attendance patterns of this nature is difficult and requires earlier intervention to interrupt the cycle of poor attendance. Therefore, the County Attorney's Office has requested funds from the County Board to expand TIP to include elementary schools in the county as well as the junior high and senior high schools. We hope to achieve this goal with in the next two years, thus providing services to schools, students and families from the beginning of a child's education through age sixteen.

CONCLUSION

The Ramsey County Attorney's Office is very pleased with the results of the Truancy Intervention Program for the 1995-96 school year. Response to the program and it's impact have been overwhelmingly positive from the five school districts being served by the program. Many parents have expressed gratitude for the program and feel it has enhanced their ability to responsibly parent their children.

Work is being done at this time to ensure additional resources are secured to aid school efforts at combating the problem of chronic truancy. Also, steps are being taken to more effectively refer parents and families to community resources to help them address their child's attendance problems.

We look forward to the 1996-97 school year in hopes that the program will continue its successes and improve its service to schools, students and parents.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Gaertner
Ramsey County Attorney

APPENDIX A

Ramsey County Attorney's
 Truancy Intervention Program
 Status Report
 9-5-95 thru 6-6-96

| | |
|---|------|
| 1. Total referrals/letters sent to attend parent meeting- | 2078 |
| 2. School Attendance Review Team Hearings held - | 409 |
| 3. Truancy petitions filed in Juvenile Court- | 200 |

Breakdown by school and school district:

District 621/Mounds View

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Capitol View Middle School | 1 referral |
| Chippewa Middle School | 4 referrals |
| Edgewood Elementary | 6 referrals |
| Irondale High School | 23 referrals |
| Highview Middle School | 19 referrals |
| Mounds View High School | 4 referrals |
| Mounds View Area Learning Center | 10 referrals |
| Oak Grove Middle School | <u>1 referral</u> |
| | 68 total |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Meeting attendance- | 83% |
| Unscheduled referrals- | 0 |
| Total referrals to date- | 68 |
| School Attendance Review Team hearings held- | 22 |
| School Attendance Review Team hearing scheduled- | 0 |
| Truancy Petitions Filed- | 13 |

District 622/North St. Paul

| | |
|--|--------------|
| North High School | 19 referrals |
| Oak Grove High School | 2 referral |
| John Glenn Middle School | 14 referrals |
| Maplewood Middle School | 1 referral |
| FCAS North | 1 referral |
| | 37 total |
| Meeting Attendance- | 86% |
| Unscheduled referrals- | 0 |
| Total referrals to date- | 37 |
| School Attendance Review Team hearings held- | 25 |
| Truancy Petitions Filed- | 12 |

District 623/Roseville Area Schools

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Roseville Area Middle School | 36 referrals |
| Roseville Area High School | 23 referrals |
| Parkview Elementary | 1 referrals |
| Northeast Metro Intermediate | <u>2 referrals</u> |
| | 62 total |
| Meeting Attendance- | 88% |
| Unscheduled referrals- | 0 |
| Total referrals- | 62 |
| School Attendance Review Team hearings held- | 29 |
| Truancy Petitions Filed- | 11 |

District 624/White Bear Lake

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| White Bear Lake North Campus | 48 referrals |
| Tartan High School | 4 referrals |
| Sunrise Middle School | 3 referral |
| Central Middle School | <u>13 referrals</u> |
| | 68 total |
| Meeting Attendance- | 85% |
| Unscheduled referrals- | 0 |
| Total referrals- | 68 |
| School Attendance review Team hearings held- | 15 |
| Truancy Petitions Filed- | 4 |

District 625/ St. Paul Public Schools

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Agape Alternative Program | 31 referrals |
| ALC Fresh Start | 10 referrals |
| Battle Creek Middle School | 107 referrals |
| Capitol Hill Magnet | 6 referrals |
| Central High School | 120 referrals |
| Cherokee Heights Elem. | 2 referrals |
| Cleveland Middle School | 100 referrals |
| Como Park Elem. | 1 referral |
| Como Park High School | 246 referrals |
| Dayton's Bluff Elementary | 4 referral |
| Expo for Excellence Middle School | 71 referrals |
| Focus on Five | 2 referrals |
| Harding High School | 300 referrals |
| Hancock/Hamline Magnet | 1 referral |
| Hayden Heights Elementary | 1 referral |
| Hazel Park Academy | 164 referrals |
| Highland Park Junior High School | 53 referrals |
| Highland Park Senior High School | 110 referrals |
| Humboldt Junior High School | 83 referrals |

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Humboldt Senior High School | 53 referrals |
| Indian Education Program | 5 referrals |
| Jackson Elementary | 2 referral |
| Johnson High School | 177 referrals |
| Monroe Community School | 6 referrals |
| Mounds Park All Nations | 12 referral |
| Horace Mann | 1 referral |
| Murray Junior High School | 48 referrals |
| Phalen Lake Elem. | 2 referrals |
| St. Paul Open School | 17 referrals |
| Ramsey Junior High School | 15 referrals |
| Saturn School of Technology | 8 referrals |
| Washington Technology Middle School | 73 referrals |
| <u>Webster Elementary</u> | <u>2 referral</u> |
| FCAS | 1 referral |
| GAP | 1 referral |
| Frances M. Grass Junior High | 3 referrals |
| Henry Sibley High School | 4 referrals |
| St. Bernard's High School | 1 referral |
| Meeting Attendance- | 65% (approx.) |
| Unscheduled referrals- | 0 |
| Total referrals to date- | 1843 |
| School Attendance Review Team hearings held- | 306 |
| Truancy Petitions filed- | 160 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|------------|
| St. Paul District 625 Referrals | = | 1843 |
| Suburban District Referrals | = | <u>235</u> |
| Total referrals | = | 2078 |
| Total SART Hearings | = | 409 |

Total Truancy Petitions Filed = 200

(8 petitions were filed on Ramsey County students attending out of county schools.)

APPENDIX B

Please rate the following statements/questions using the 5 point scale. 5 indicating you strongly agree, 4 agree, 3 undecided, 2 disagree, 1 strongly disagree. Please feel free to return this portion of the evaluation in a separate envelope if you wish to remain anonymous.

| RESPONSE AVERAGE | | Strongly Agree | | | | Strongly Disagree |
|------------------|--|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------------|
| 4.5 | The presentation at the initial parent meeting is appropriate, persuasive and informative. | 5 (16) | 4 (7) | 3 (2) | 2 (1) | 1 |
| 4.7 | The presentation by the Assistant County Attorney is organized and effectively communicated to the parents and students. | 5 (19) | 4 (5) | 3 (2) | | 1 |
| 4.7 | The Assistant County Attorney effectively answers questions following the presentation. | 5 (22) | 4 (5) | 3 (2) | | 1 |
| 4.5 | The Assistant County Attorney was responsive to inquiries from school personnel. | 5 (21) | 4 (5) | 3 (2) | 2 (2) | 1 |
| 4.7 | The Assistant County Attorney responded in a timely manner to initial referrals from your school. | 5 (23) | 4 (3) | 3 (1) | 2 (1) | 1 |
| 4.9 | The Assistant County Attorney responded in a timely manner to referrals to SART hearings. | 5 (21) | 4 (5) | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4.3 | Truancy Petitions were filed promptly once they reached the County Attorney's Office. | 5 (16) | 4 (7) | 3 (3) | 2 (2) | 1 |
| 4.7 | Court dates were scheduled within reasonable amount of time compared to previous years. | 5 (19) | 4 (7) | 3 (1) | | 1 |
| 4.7 | Phone calls made to the Assistant County Attorney were returned in timely manner. | 5 (25) | 4 (3) | 3 (3) | | 1 |
| 4.4 | TIP enhanced your efforts to improve attendance for chronic truants. | 5 (15) | 4 (9) | 3 (6) | | 1 |
| 4.0 | TIP made a n impact on overall school attendance in your building. | 5 (13) | 4 (5) | 3 (8) | 2 (1) | 1 |
| 4.0 | TIP was easy to understand and use for the staff of your school. | 5 (11) | 4 (13) | 3 (4) | 2 (4) | 1 |
| 4.6 | TIP should be continued in the 1996-97 school year. | 5 (24) | 4 (5) | 3 | 2 (1) | 1 (1) |

APPENDIX C

TRUANCY INTERVENTION PROJECT
YEAR-END REPORT

GENDER AND ETHIC BACKGROUND STATISTICS

The statistics listed below are estimates based on information provided by school personnel on referral forms. Some referrals did not include this requested information so the numbers below represent our best estimates based on the 1911 referrals that provided sufficient information.

| | MALES | FEMALES |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| AFRICAN AMERICAN | 10.6% | 10% |
| EUROPEAN AMERICAN | 29% | 25% |
| HISPANIC | 3.6% | 4.2% |
| NATIVE AMERICAN | .8% | 1% |
| S. E. ASIAN (HMONG) | 7.7 % | 6.8% |
| S. E. ASIAN (OTHER) | <u>1%</u> | <u>.4%</u> |
| | 52.7% | 47.4 % |

APPENDIX D

1995-1996 EVALUATION OF THE TIP PROCESS

*Below you will find the responses of school personnel surveyed at the end of the first year of TIP's implementation: The respondents represent all five Ramsey County school districts, nevertheless St. Paul Public Schools represent a large majority of all responses.

1. DID TIP ASSIST IN YOUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS ATTENDANCE?
 - A. 15 - Yes
 - B. Absolutely- I had confidence the county would invest in attendance the way we have been for years! This is a partnership.
 - C. Yes, It was extremely helpful to have these specific interventions to use with students and their families. Parents appeared to find it helpful.
 - D. Yes, although the chronically truant kids we see at the ALC are less likely to respond favorably than the ones "riding the fence."
 - E. Yes, it made it possible to get parents on the school's side rather than on the defense. Also, assisted in prevention-getting kids back to where they belong instead of monkey business with court-when they don't need to.
 - F. Yes, we were able to back up our efforts to improve attendance. For some families, the additional support and clear consequences is necessary. TIP provides the piece we have been lacking in the past.
 - G. Yes. (1) Parents were more responsive to working with the school, (2) Students were held more accountable and processed more quickly for court.
 - H. No, (1) the intervention of the court was no more effective than before, (2) The TIP Process is too time consuming to permit the referral of all the students who have attendance issues.
 - I. Parents are more aware of their responsibility for attendance and the consequences for them and their child. School personnel's efforts were more coordinated as result of being involved in TIP.
 - J. Yes. Very helpful to have PSD students participate in mainstream effort. Eye-opener for parents.

- K. It gave us a great way to intervene early with resources outside of the building. For some students and parents the initial referral was a wake-up call.
- L. Unbelievable job from Frank, Vivian, Jeanne ALWAYS available. I appreciate your help.
- M. Yes, I think it did. I haven't stats but I don't remember attendance in 90% last year. We had 90% for several months. It has, however dropped off in last two weeks.
- N. Because this was my first year, and TIP was new-it was utilized by myself as a reactive tool. If it continues for next year I feel I can use it more pro-actively. There were improvements for students that had a SART Meeting.
- O. Somewhat, however; I'm questioning how effective it really is for Level 5 program students. These students were not ranked as first priority in many ways??
- P. No, can't say that it did
- Q. Very helpful; most of the students seemed to respond to the SART Meetings.
- R. My experience with TIP is not extensive, but in the one case we felt TIP supported our efforts greatly.
- S. Not sure
- T. Yes, we especially appreciated having an attendance liaison for this program! Her consistent and organized approach was an asset!
- U. To some degree. The initial parent meeting is an effective intervention. The additional processes (i.e. paper work, additional meetings-did not necessarily assist in increasing student attendance.
- V. Yes, the process is very clear.
- W. Empowered the school to take the first intervention steps. Initial first letter improved attendance for a number of students. We did not have to go further in the process.
- 2. DID THE INTERVENTIONS MADE BY THE RAMSEY COUNTY ATTORNEY IMPACT STUDENT ATTENDANCE?**
- A. 7 - Yes
- B. Yes, again collaborative work and consistency were keys.

- C. The impact varied greatly from student to student we have not had time to accurately assess or evaluate the overall impact, or to compare with previous years attendance.
- D. Yes. In cases, attendance improved.
- E. Yes. There were definitely some who had their agenda to not be a part of school or the process, but others responded in appropriate behavior.
- F. Usually
- G. Yes, for a number of students. Having the message come from the County Attorney's Office directly has a powerful impact than just hearing from school staff. It is especially helpful to have court hearings scheduled promptly when initial interventions have not resolved the problem.
- H. For some students there was a positive impact & for others there was not any noticeable impact on attendance. For students with a less severe truancy problem initially the program had more of an impact.
- I. Yes. Presents balances of responsibility between parents and kids which helps PSD students
- J. Yes, I think that attendance improved in most students as well as it would have on probation or not.
- K. Yes. The letter was effective in some cases. I had several parents contact me about the letter. Not everyone went to their meetings with the County Attorney, but everyone attended the SART Meeting.
- L. Somewhat, but students shown little remorse about it even after court hearing.
- M. Undecided
- N. Yes, some students bought in after SART others needed to go to court.
- O. In some instances it helped, but not everyone.
- P. Not in this case.
- Q. Not sure
- R. Yes (we do have some exceptional students with this student population, however.)
- S. Not much difference.

- T. In half of the cases the others were probably immune to any intervention.
- U. Yes, except for 10th graders who are close to 16, by this time many of them drop out; attend an ALC or evening high school.
- V. Yes, definitely I believe the parents and students understood state truancy laws and the future impact of continued truancy.

3. WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE TIP?

- A. I can communicate to students and parents the consequences/results of truancy and know there is follow through. County is there to respond in a timely fashion.
- B. The structure - The 3 step process allows for the parent of the student to be informed about the law and their responsibilities, it allows time for correction; and it expedited the hearing of the truancy petition.
- C. Timely responses to questions. Timely action oriented interventions. Teaming/working together to accomplish goals.
- D. The prompt response for initial referrals.
- E. Quick responses. Prevention
- F. You can start the process early.
- G. Quick responsiveness to referrals (frequent informational meetings & easy to schedule SART Meetings); easy referral process parent involvement and accountability; having someone at court who knew the history and background of the students for the actual hearing.
- H. How quickly a student went to court after they broke the SART Contract & that consequences were administered by the court at the first court hearing.
- I. It improved and worked better as the year went on. i.e. solved a lot of past problems that were ineffective and wasted resources. It began to get the schools thinking about their role in attendance and restored some of the relationships with Corrections.
- J. Early Intervention from the Attorney's Office, more timely petitions when necessary, no cut off date.
- K. Preventive measures.
- L. Ramsey County Attorney had more influence on encouraging school attendance than the school social worker.

- M. I liked that there were 2-3 interventions before going to court. Also more involvement with student. Three previous interventions before court. (1) TIP Referral, (2) Contract, (3) SART
- N. The SART Meeting intervention-it seemed to be the most effective.
- O. It's the law and students must learn to be responsible for their own actions.
- P. Jeanne Hall providing court updates
Jeanne Hall filing petitions
Jeanne Hall going to court
- Q. It was fairly smooth, going from poor attendance to the SART Meetings and then, if necessary to court. Also, the speed in which court hearings were set up. Frank Miley was very helpful.
- R. N/A
- S. Appreciate the promptness of the referred. Definite improvement over old system.
- T. - continuing referrals right to end of the school year
- being able to consult Jeanne Hall as needed
- step process
- not spending long hours on court (except for other matters) on truancy petitions
- seems to be a good fix with our program!
- parent/student SART Meetings were very productive. Good opportunity to express concerns and do some planning.
- U. Quick entry into the system.
- V. The initial meeting.
- W. County Attorney talk and encouraged communication both ways between parents and school.
- X. TIP staff
Well organized
Having a process with clear guidelines
Having a good school liaison person
Readily available
- Y. Simple process
- Z. It gave instant support to school personnel. It was a great collaborative with school and court.

- AA. Limited paperwork: It was a comprehensive system for dealing with truancy. The early intervention and visibility by the County Attorney's Office strengthened the school's position.
4. WHAT DID YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT THE TIP?
- A. 5 - Nothing, we thought it worked very smoothly.
- B. The time needed to monitor and follow through with each student is overwhelming- even with the support of there school staff.
- C. The process slowed down in the spring and became less effective than it was in the fall and winter. One court hearing was canceled due to a no show by student & parent and it was never re-scheduled.
- D. Some kids needed to jump to step 3 first of all.
- E. Not as effective with the hard core truant kids.
- F. Increased amount of monitoring and paperwork needed to bring a student through the process to a court hearing.
- G. Gaps in training for the players, i.e. attendance Liaisons, Assistant Principals, Social Workers. lack of resources and good interventions without court.
- H. Not enough help at this end, but that is not something you can deal with.
- I. Too much paperwork, and tracking!!
- J. After the initial meeting it takes too much time tracking students-arranging meetings/contracts etc.
- K. Lots of paperwork and follow-up letter. Referral to TIP, warning reference to TIP, letter for contract, etc.
- L. I did not realize until the end that I should be attending the County Attorney's Meetings and SART Meetings with my families. Something I personally overlooked.
- M. The system loses it's power (review for the student as they go through the process. This may be because 1. The process is difficult to understand, 2. Too many people get involved.
- N. The attitude of Jeanne Hall and Frank Miley, To not take truants to court. No clear definition as to what a truant is. Having to argue with Jeanne Hall about following through with SART Referrals, arguing with Frank Miley about prosecuting truants.
- O. The contract with the school too many chances.

- P. I can't blame TIP, but there is still a lot of paper work, preparing for SART, and court. Also, there are some students who do not get picked up until too late.
- Q. Finding time to complete TIP tasks!
- R. A lot of work added to other duties.
- S. Paperwork - to many responsibilities delegated to too many individuals (e.g. attendance liaison, social worker, assistant principals).
- T. Improvement isn't good enough criteria for failing to move to next level.
PO threat still a joke to many
Increased workload with mixed results for social worker.
Follow-up letter form County Attorney Office. Parents are to bring it up to the school to be signed. I saw only about 4. Some students I never saw any letters. What happens if parents don't return then - inconsistencies.
- U. Having the principal sign the contract - not always available - much time wasted waiting for signature. Why can't the social worker sign it?
- V. Long waits, we had to send over to North Campus and frequently had to wait until they had enough to send in.
5. WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST TO IMPROVE TIP?
- A. If we intend to make this a meaningful process-we need to have staff exclusively assigned to the attendance task and to develop a more effective way of monitoring the student & SART Contracts.
- B. We need better follow-through from the probation officers after court hearings especially for chemical use/abuse.
- C. For kids who come to the ALC with over 15-20 truancies, that they have an immediate SART meeting upon enrollment.
- D. School social worker need a person in the building who can help with the daily monitoring of attendance, identification of students, monitoring after the first TIP meeting, and home visits of students who've missed 3-5 days.
- E. Training efforts.
More school based interventions, and better process management.
Computer training and link up between Hall & Miley.

- F. We need more staff assigned at our end-possibly a report from you to the superintendent would be helpful to stress volume.
- G. Provide schools with attendance staff to assist in this process.
- H. Get more help in the schools to monitor student attendance progress.
- I. Be able to continue process next year not start all over.
- J. To be pro-active for next year I would like to have a meeting right away when school starts with the 6th grade to explain the importance of attendance and what happens when they don't come to school. Maybe someone from the County Attorney's Office could also come?
- K. I do not understand Miley or the P/O's role , or the P/O and the court. My experience is TIP boils down to some kind of a restriction to the kids and when we lack the reinforcement, I don't know how we can improve their attendance.
- L. Pay for attendance specialist/liaisons and secretarial help to the school system. Intervene major emphasis in Grades 6,7, & 8th!
- M. Drop the school contract.
- N. If the administration could pick up on the contracts a bit sooner more students could be referred to TIP and SART, and court.
- O. Shorten time intervals between steps. A student potentially misses a lot of the school before getting to the truancy hearing (if that student continues to truant).
- P. Any way to reduce the amount of paper required?
More outreach (i.e. if no answer at home or disconnect, car, the attendance liaison conduct home visits?)
- Q. There needs to be some intermediate steps once petitions are filed and kids adjudicated to discourage continued truancy.
- R. Clarification of individuals roles and their responsibilities. The bulk of the work usually fell on social worker and attendance liaison.
Assistant principals never followed through. Were they inserviced?
- S. Mandatory city-wide parent/student meetings re:
Gang involvement and intervention strategies
Drug and alcohol involvement and intervention strategies
Empowering parents to parent
Involve community agencies and dialogue with school personnel

Focus on younger kids

Change laws to have consequences for younger age

All schools need hourly attendance.

Need a team effort.

Do not send 100 to attendance meetings too many to deal with and already puts us behind.

Pick worst 50 truants and deal with them.

More consequences for worst truants where court and probation don't mean anything.

- T. Attendance monitors to assist professional school staff.
 - U. Don't have any ideas.
 - V. Let's outline in a clear fashion all the steps and who is responsible, maybe a flow chart for school personnel.
 - W. I would like to be able to send directly to Frank and not wait for other buildings.
 - X. Keep doing everything as Frank Miley did. It really went well from my perspective.
6. WOULD YOU WELCOME THE TIP IN YOUR SCHOOL NEXT YEAR? WHY OR WHY NOT?
- A. 4 - Yes, definitely!
 - B. Absolutely- I have confidence in Frank Miley. He is to be commended for his efforts - as is the county.
 - C. Yes, I think the program has been more effective than our previous methods of addressing attendance truancy. However, we need more staff to make it truly an effective program or process.
 - D. Absolutely! See Above!
 - E. Yes - because of all the things I've mentioned above.
 - F. Yes. Great incentive to keep kids in school. We now understand it better too so we could utilize it more effectively.
 - G. Yes - I feel that the process encourages more coordinated efforts on the part of parents and their school and addresses the truancy issue.
 - H. Absolutely. Greatly appreciated the help, understanding, energy, and competence of Frank and Vivian to help kids.
 - I. Yes - helpful

- J. Yes. Has proved to be an effective deterrent for many students and helps to get parents more involved and taking more responsibility.
- K. Yes, because parents and their kids feel we are serious about good attendance.
- L. Yes, I feel (even though a lot of work) that it was very effective.
- M. Yes, because I feel it definitely had an impact.
- N. No! The real truants are not getting into court. Jeanne Hall & Frank Miley spent too much effort in trying to save them from the court system.
- O. Yes - some students need some outside push to attend, but not serious enough for court, and this is a nice option.
- P. Yes, it was most helpful in my opinion; if, as I mentioned in the previous statement, the administration picked up on the contracts sooner, there would have been less students who slipped by.
- Q. Yes! with the implementation of Junior High at GAP the need for TIP at GAP will increase.
- R. Yes, such an important issue.
- S. Yes, this brings an organized system to our program that does assist us with attendance issues. The message is clear to our students and their families that we are concerned-partnership approach.
- T. Yes. A system which gets students and parents involved quickly is essential.
- U. If refined.
- V. Yes, step in right direction. We're optimistic that over-time it will get better.
- W. Yes, I believe that most students and parents regard the County Attorney's Office as having more authority and power to enforce school attendance rules. And it's better for the school staff to avoid an adversarial role.
- X. Yes, I think it will go better year 2, it was difficult to understand at first.
- Y. Yes, don't even consider dropping the program. In a school of 1300 we only had 1 student to court.

Z. Yes, it clearly made a difference. It gave the school permission to be more honest.

7. OTHER COMMENTS:

- A. We thank you for your commitment of time & resources. The partnership with the county gives school administrators the "teeth we need".
- B. The third group of students we referred to TIP were monitored individually by teacher volunteers. This group showed the most improvement in their attendance. This may suggest that the "personalized" attention is more effective than other programs and/or consequences.
- C. We enjoyed working with Frank.
- D. Frank Miley was extremely responsive and easy to work with!
- E. We would like to have Mr. Miley meet with our Sophomore class early in the school year.
- F. We need a program in the schools that would not allow students who are truanting to leave a building before we go to court. More efforts need to be made on intervening sooner, and more intensely in the beginning of the process in the schools.
- G. I noticed that kids on probation had poor attendance compared to kids in TIP Process. I wish I would have started some kids sooner in process of SART.
- H. Because not all of the families went to the meeting with the Ramsey County Attorney, It might be helpful to have someone come to our school right at the beginning of the year to meet with the kids (we could invite parents) and then maybe again half way through the year. (We could have a lot of transitional families.
- I. It makes better sense to me if the TIP Contract is written between administrators, students, parents, during the SART.
- J. While on probation-students averaged all or part of 59 days of absence. What good is it to refer kids for truancy and probation office has no power to do anything in the way of consequences for truancy?
- K. I'd suggest that the school district have more "late start" schools 9:30 as an example.
- L. If we are really serious about this there needs to be a person assigned to a building or group of buildings such as

the old attendance liaison person who can devote enough time to coordinating efforts regarding truancy.

- M. The huge amount of referrals made filing petitions a full-time job. This should be delegated to being the responsibility for a single individual to process and follow through. There needs to be a team meeting of all individuals expected to be a part of this process. i.e. attendance liaisons, social workers, assistant principals.
- N. Too much work falls on social worker. What's your idea of improvement? Mine is only when the student attends school enough to be successful and pass classes. Because they improve and are now missing 18 days a semester instead of 45 just isn't good enough.
- O. Court seems overly lenient with those few students who have attended only a handful of days and who really seem to need placement away from very dysfunctional and neglectful families. Probation officers have expressed similar concerns to me about a particular student.
- P. As well as giving authority and power to school, it helped parents. It made fence riding parents behave.

APPENDIX E

1995 - 1996 STUDENT RESPONSE TO TIP

The TIP process has been invaluable to me in my role as coordinator of the FATE program (Fresh Approaches to Education). FATE was designed for 9th grade students with a history of truancy. What I quickly learned this year was that students whose parents were unable to make their students attend school, or who were indifferent to their attendance, needed an outside agency to act as the authority. The TIP process has been that authority. All the school can do is dismiss or suspend a student for truancy, which seems illogical. However the courts has had the power to demand that parents show for a meeting with the county attorney, and has made them sign attendance contracts with their students. At the very least, the TIP process has forced reluctant parents to reassert their role as authority figures in their children's lives. I think many parents find the first parent meeting affirming. They feel less isolated when they see other parents and children, and they learn that something can be done about their child's irresponsible behavior. Parents need support in raising their children, and the TIP is one successful tool we have in place now.

TIP IMPACT ON FATE STUDENTS

The FATE program is designed for 9th grade students who have demonstrated a history of truancy and/or extreme absence from school. Approximately 20 of the 40 students enrolled in the FATE program this spring have been through some phase of the TIP program. Overall, TIP has had a very positive impact in FATE students.

J.L. was absent or truant from his first semester classes very frequently. When we enrolled him in the program second semester, at the behest of teachers, we quickly moved him through the TIP levels. As he had attended a parent meeting in the fall, we were able to write a contract, which he violated. The social worker called in his father who was apprised of the SART meeting. At that meeting J.L. was assigned to shelter for ten days. When he was returned home he was given a probation officer and an intensive supervision officer. Since the time, J.L. has been absent from school one day. J.L. is now earning credits in all his classes. When asked why he attends school regularly now he responds, "Cause I don't want to get in trouble." Clearly the TIP program was instrumental in helping J.L. make good decisions this spring.

A.V. is another 9th grader with a history of truancy. FATE enrolled her second semester. As she too had attended a TIP meeting last fall, we were able to move to the contract quickly. The contract seemed to be enough encouragement for A.V.. She has been on monitor slips and is earning credit in

her classes. She has been dismissed, but in the second week in May she has only 7 absences for the entire semester. A.V. said she changed her behavior because, "I didn't want to go to court."

R.V. was on the the absences list virtually all of the first semester. We enrolled him in FATE second semester because J.L. his friend, recommended him. While R.V. was dismissed for smoking, he still has only 8 absences for the semester and he is earning credit in his classes. He is a model student in class and only needed to make the decision to come to school in order to be successful.

T.W. has a long history of truancy, but just this semester he is beginning to try and turn his behavior around. He has decided to join a drug support group at school. When I asked Tony why he is changing he replied, "I want to pass so I can graduate. I want to get passing grades."

M.H. was brought into the FATE program second semester. As she had attended a TIP parent meeting in the fall, we were able to move onto the contract and then the SART hearing by April. M.H. is attending her classes and carrying home a monitor slip to show her mother each day. The TIP program is the mechanism that has brought this student to school. Without it M.H. would not be attending school at this time.

M.H. has a long history of truancy. We took M.H. to a hearing in late February. While his attendance improved for awhile, he has been out ill for the past three weeks. However, M.H. is very unhappy about being sixteen and not having a drivers license. Without a drivers license is something that students understand. And they will alter their behavior in order to earn the right to drive.

M.G.S. started truanting several years ago. This year we enrolled her in FATE in the second semester. As she has attended a TIP parent meeting in April. As M.G.S. is pregnant her truancy has been a great concern to the Harding Health Clinic. Without the threat of a probation officer, M.S.G would not be in school now. She is a very bright young woman whose parents do not have the time or energy to run after her all day. The TIP program has helped encourage and discipline M.G.S.

APPENDIX F

1995 - 1996 PARENT INFORMATION AND EVALUATION FORM

*Below you will find the responses of parent surveyed at the end of the first year of TIP's implementation.

1. WAS THE INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE PARENT MEETING VALUABLE?
 - A. 12 - Yes
 - B. Some
 - C. Yes, I don't think a lot of parents of aware of their rights.
 - D. Yes, I think Frank Miley did an excellent job of presenting the information.
 - E. We never had a parent meeting. Problems escalated child is now living in a group home.
 - F. Don't know what you are referring to.
 - G. Didn't see the need to attend.
 - H. I was unable to attend because of my work hours.
2. DID THE SART HEARING AT THE JUVENILE SERVICE CENTER AID YOU IN PARENTING YOUR CHILD?
 - A. 9 - Yes
 - B. 4 - No
 - C. My child only followed through for about 2 weeks.
 - D. Yes, and the parenting meeting through Youth Service Bureau were good. I wish they held them more frequently than once a month.
 - E. No, It was more intimidating than supportive.
3. DID THE TIP PROJECT SUPPORT YOU IN YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT?
 - A. 10 - Yes
 - B. 1 - No
 - C. Yes, It was helpful.
 - D. Yes, very well
 - E. Yes, somewhat
 - F. Never received anything about it.

4. WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE TIP PROJECT?

- A. Project assist - Someone to come out and talk to me, and to support parents to join groups.
- B. Getting the rules.
- C. I liked the whole project.
- D. Keeping parents informed, however some school records aren't accurate.
- E. Don't know about it.
- F. It gave me the control of being the parent again.
- G. Getting kids to go to school everyday.
- H. The support I get in trying too enforce attendance and the importance of attending school.
- I. It was thoroughly explained.
- J. It was ok
- K. There was only two choices either go to school, or to court and probation.

5. WHAT DID YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT THE TIP PROJECT?

- A. 2- Nothing
- B. The school's lack and failure to account for attendance and follow through to County Attorney's Office.
- C. Not threatening enough. To many chances.
- D. Child should not have been put on Intensive Probation Program. Regular probation as she was already 16 years old.
- E. Never involved in program.
- F. A lot of parents aren't to blame for child's truancy.
- G. It did little to change our daughter's thinking about her obligations. She went to school grudgingly.
- H. When my daughter was sick with a bad cold she still had to go to school to see the nurse, and come back home.
- I. Notice to parent is too late.
- J. They didn't tell you about the Fresh Start School earlier.

6. WHAT SERVICES FROM THE SCHOOL DID YOU RECEIVE TO HELP ADDRESS YOUR CHILD'S ATTENDANCE PROBLEM?

- A. Worked with social worker Cynthia Loveland, at Highland School to get truancy report.
- B. Support from the teacher, and from her social worker.
- C. Counseling meeting with child and social worker meeting with parent.
- D. The Truancy Program.
- E. Daily monitoring.
- F. Worked closely with Anita Denny and Tom Meyer to make sure daughter was attending classes.
- G. When they said they could take the child from the home without parents ok.
- H. Telephone call from school, and I call to school.
- I The social worker was helpful in checking attendance and work progress. The teachers were not. For example, their failure to return phone calls and report absences accurately.
- J. They went looking for her.
- K. Daughter got monitor slips for a couple of days.
- L. Reported to the PO when not there. Social worker talked to her.
- M. Not much
- N. If my child got in any kind of trouble they worked with me so they wouldn't dismiss her, so she wouldn't miss any more school.

7. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- A. Daughter is no longer living with me. She now resides with her father. Thank-you for your help to daughter and me in regards to her education. I just received her report card for the second semester and although her attendance was intolerable she received all the credits she was required to earn. Again, thank-you.
- B. The process is too slow! Many of son's problems would not have taken place if action by all involved was quicker. The system needs change!

- C. The parenting meetings should be available more and also as preventative services not just after the truancy becomes detrimental.
- D. I find the system should just step-in and take over instead of punishing the parent and making them take the child to school. I've lost time off work due to this and I will not risk my job to take a child to school to have them walk in the front door and out the back!
- E. Thank to the TIP Program I now have gotten back the responsible and respectful daughter that I have spent 16 years in raising to be just that. We are a smiling happy family again. I also thank and commend Jill Harkness for her hard work and dedication in aiding families of problem teens. She will always remain in my thoughts of thankfulness.
- F. Out of state. Spoke with Frank Miley June 10, 1996. Son became more out of control so he is staying with someone else.
- G. Children need help early on, if they don't have consequences they keep getting in trouble.
- H. Daughter was sent to St. Croix Girls Camp on May 24, 1996 to August 30, 1996. She will be doing summer school at St. Croix Girls Camp.
- I. Son is in group home placement in Harris, attends Rush City High School, no transportation for summer school.
- J. Dear Frank, Thank-you for your help with my son, and for your advice on my daughter. I have been doing 12-14 hours volunteer work the past 4 years working with kids, young men and women. I know how great the need is for level headed legal minds for attempting to channel young adults and juveniles into constructive, or at least non self-damaging activities and behavior. Incidentally, my daughter has come back and is doing well so far. I did not need to contact Vic Ellington, at least not yet. I will do so in the future if necessary. I appreciate the time you spent and the referral you gave me. We are not certain which school our son will attend next year. It will depend on large part upon the type of environment present at those schools that offer EBD and LD Program. He is going to summer school at STEPS for automotive work. Hopefully, he will one day go to Dunwoody on TOI. Keep the faith.

COMMUNITY-BASED TRUANCY ACTION PROGRAMS 1995-1996 Quarterly Progress Report

| | |
|--|---|
| ORGANIZATION NAME: Blue Earth County | ADDRESS: 204 S 2nd St Mankato MN 56001 |
| PROGRAM DIRECTOR NAME: | TELEPHONE: |

REPORTING PERIOD:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 1 - September 30, 1995 <input type="checkbox"/> Oct. 1 - December 31, 1995 <input type="checkbox"/> Jan. 1 - March 31, 1996 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> April 1 - June 30, 1996 <input type="checkbox"/> July 1 - Sept 30, 1996 <input type="checkbox"/> Oct. 1 - December 31, 1996 |
|---|---|

ETHNICITY (number of participants only)

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| _____ American Indian/Alaskan Native | <u> 15 </u> White, not of Hispanic origin |
| <u> 1 </u> African American | _____ Other _____ |
| <u> 1 </u> Hispanic | _____ Unknown _____ |
| _____ Asian/Pacific Islander | |

Signature of Project Director

6/30/96

Date

Please send two (2) copies to:

Denise Garcia
Minnesota Children
550 Cedar Street, Room 981
St. Paul, MN 55101

SERVICES PROVIDED BY YOUR PROGRAM

| DOCUMENTATION OF SERVICES | THIS PERIOD (New) Jan 1 - March 31 | | YEAR TO DATE (Total) | |
|---|--|--------|-------------------------|--------|
| | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE |
| NUMBER OF YOUTH (21 YEARS & UNDER) SERVED BY THE PROGRAM | 10 | 7 | 13 | 10 |
| NUMBER OF ADULTS SERVED BY THE PROGRAM | 0 | | 0 | |
| NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER HOURS CONTRIBUTED | 654 hrs | | 1314 hrs | |
| NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES PROVIDED: (List below the # of sessions provided, not participants served) | - | | - | |
| Classes/Workshops/Presentations | 12 | | 32 | |
| Support groups | - | | - | |
| Events (field trips, recreational activities) | 12 | | 18 | |
| Counseling sessions (individual, family) | 7 | | 24 | |
| Hours of community service provided by participants | N/A | | N/A | |
| Assessment/referral session | 2 | | 8 | |
| Community meetings: e.g. strategic planning Board Meetings | 3 | | 7 | |
| Mentoring sessions | 4 | | 16 | |
| Vocational training or employment sessions | 2 | | 10 | |
| Home visits | 6 | | 18 | |
| Number of habitual truancy and educational neglect petitions referred to the courts | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE |
| | | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Average daily attendance for school year (complete only at end of school year, 4/1-6/30/95 report) | 91% | | 91% | |
| Other services (please list) | | | | |

PLEASE ATTACH NARRATIVE, ANSWERING EACH QUESTION

1. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

What activities, tasks listed on your workplan were conducted during this quarter? Explain any changes that have occurred.

2. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

Tell us, in your own words, how you now see the program unfolding or working? Describe some special moments, stories, or anecdotes that seem to capture the essence of your program.

3. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As truancy action grantees, it is recommended that law enforcement, elementary and middle schools, parent and neighborhood associations are involved in your program. Please describe this involvement, if it occurs.

4. PROGRAM RESULTS

What results/impact has been documented this quarter that were listed in your workplan?

5. BARRIERS

Describe any difficulties or problems that limited your program's success this quarter. How did you resolve them? If they are not resolved, what are the implications for your program?

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 77



● PHONE: (507) 387-3047
● 110 FULTON STREET
● MANKATO, MINNESOTA 56001

Area Learning Center

1.

During the 1995-96 school year, the Model School for Chronic truants provided an educational setting coupled with a behavior modification program for 23 different students. Individual learning plans based on the Woodcock-Johnson reading test and math placement test were developed for each student and instruction was delivered according to the students needs as determined by these plans.

Four complete transitions have been accomplished during this quarter. Three of these students attained the age of sixteen and are transitioning to the Alternative High School. One student is transitioning back to Dakota Meadow Middle School. We have increased the limit on our class size from twelve to fifteen students and find this to be manageable.

Fifty-four police/corrections interventions were required during the 95-96 school year. These were used to calm students who were exhibiting inappropriate behavior, to enforce attendance, or to develop appropriate interagency responses to special needs of our students.

Attendance at the Model School is 91% for the 95-96 school year. Students who fail to achieve the 90% requirement for attendance must make up their absences to achieve the minimum 90% for hours in attendance. Parental cooperation with the interagency team has enhanced our success in improving student attendance this year.

Three different types of behavior modification points are awarded for appropriate behavior. Points are awarded for Friday afternoon outings, for monthly auctions and for long range activities.

Every Friday afternoon students who have demonstrated appropriate behavior for the week are given the opportunity to be taken by staff members on an educational outing. These include canoeing, visiting historical sites, attending movies, etc. During the 95-96 school year, we have averaged nearly 70% attendance on these Friday outings.

Students are awarded clips for school accomplishment in academics. These are used to purchase goods from monthly auctions. School supplies and school spirit activities are sold for clips the last Friday of each month. Grant money is used to purchase the items for the auction.

Long range points are kept to determine long range activities that happen once a year. This year we are planning a day long trip to the Minnesota Zoo/Valley Fair.

Students continue to be excited about earning points which result in tangible material for them.

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 77



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2.

Several exciting things are happening in our program that provide our students with improved opportunity for success in their lives. Partnerships with Senior Citizens have been developed.

Senior citizen mentors work with our students in shop providing them with guidance in developing and making their shop projects. During Peter Benson's presentation on "Building Assets for Children" he advocated for partnerships like this. Children must have intergenerational relationships to live healthy lives. These are being provided in our curriculum.

The interagency partnership resolved an issue with a student who continually ran away when he was frustrated. The student's social worker arranged to "hire" another student to run with him and to report on their whereabouts to the staff. If no runaways occurred during the school week, the budgeted money was utilized for "treats" for the entire student body. There were no runaways for six months.

A local police officer who has been heavily involved with the program became a foster parent to one of the students. The student and his mother moved to another community and the student's attendance and behavior surfaced as an issue immediately. The mother contacted this young officer for help and he volunteered to serve as a foster parent. The arrangement was legalized through Human Services. This student has now successfully transitioned to the Alternative High School.

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3.

Monthly board meetings are held to monitor the Model School Program. Personnel from School District #77, Blue Earth and Nciollet County Human Services, Corrections, Law Enforcement, County Attorneys, parents, and students attend these meetings.

At these meetings:

1. New students are admitted by an interagency intake process.
2. Parent and student issues are addressed.
3. Interagency curriculum is developed.
4. Attendance and behavioral rewards are planned.
5. Program progress is monitored.

Interagency presentations occur every Thursday afternoon. These are designed to provide students with information related to the specialities of each agency. For example, law enforcement might present for an hour on shoplifting.

The partnership in our program clearly is helpful to students.

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 77



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4.

Our students are maintaining 91% attendance in school. Four students have attained the age of sixteen this year and none of these have dropped out of school. One fourteen year old has successfully completed a full transition to her "home" school. Student success in behavior points is indicated by a 70% attendance on the earned Friday outings.

Although we have not "solved" the problem of truancy, one parent shared with us that his fifteen year old daughter made it to school some days when she hadn't made it home the night before.

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Area Learning Center

5.

Developing and providing a full curriculum for twelve students with a vast range in age and ability for one educational generalists is a very difficult assignment. Providing time for a teacher to do this, while still requiring him/her to accomplish record keeping, supervision, interagency communication, parental communications, monitor progress on Individual Learning plans etc. is a consuming responsibility. Sometimes, some of these areas must be given less attention than others.

C.

C.

C.