

2015-16 State of Attendance in OUSD

During the school years of 2010-11 & 2011-12, our attendance audits resulted in astronomical audit findings and increased within these years by approximately \$430,000.00. Some of the reasons for this outcome was that historically, our District did not have any systems, processes or procedures in place to comprehensively address this critical and important area of work. Furthermore, our clerical staff, *specifically our attendance clerks*, had been ignored in our system, not trained on our attendance processes and procedures, schools were under-staffed in this area, and the importance of attendance accounting and management de-emphasized.

- **2010-11 attendance audit findings: \$835,297.76**
- **2011-12 attendance audit findings: - \$1,263,965.79**

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND IMPLEMENTATION

In 2013-14, Mia Settles-Tidwell who was the Associate Superintendent and Strategic Advisor to Superintendent Gary Yee at that time, highlighted this as an important priority for our District to address in order to reduce/eliminate the financial audit findings and began to utilize those funds for student achievement and schools. Mia developed the comprehensive system, procedures, and processes and assigned Shelia White, Coordinator of Systems and Operations to manage, coordinate and implement the attendance management system. Mia initiated the first Quality Attendance Management Team that included: Diane Brenum (Technology Services), Theresa Clincy (Attendance/Discipline Office), Debra Long (Attendance/Discipline Office), Kara Oettinger (Programs for Exceptional Children), David Lewis (Accounting Dept.), Lauryn Cherry (Attendance/Discipline Office), Kevin Smith (Data Analyst), and Shelia White.

As a part of the Quality Attendance Management System, Shelia White's responsibilities included but was not limited to: On-Site assessment of attendance at all school sites (86 schools), conducting attendance reviews, utilizing an attendance assessment tool developed by Mia Settles-Tidwell, creating a spreadsheet of the secure location of attendance records at each school site for auditing purposes, hosting mock attendance audits, training principals on their role in attendance management per California Education Code and Board Policy, training teachers and clerical staff on their role in attendance accounting and reporting, maintaining performance records of attendance management of each school. Shelia White also attends the Audit Team meetings held weekly on Wednesdays and report out on the state of attendance.

The Quality Attendance Team reviewed and updated board policies and ensured that the internal systems wrapped around attendance management were in place resulting in an Attendance Management Pamphlet that is used as a training guide to this day. To further support attendance, in 2014-15, an Attendance Management Tool was developed to support attendance by identifying which teachers are failing to complete their weekly attendance reports. This information is gathered weekly and principals and Network Superintendent's are able to follow-up directly with specific teachers to ensure that reports are submitted for attendance accounting in a timely manner. Additionally, an Attendance Clerks Cohort was established to utilize the expertise of attendance clerks as practitioners in keeping attendance management relevant for the real context of schools. This group of experts discussed systems that work at their sites and an attendance clerk representative from each network participates in the cohort. At the end of 2014-15 school year, the inaugural Clerical Support celebration was held in June to further establish attendance and the work of our clerical staff as essential and a priority.

Based on the processes and procedures established above, our audit findings have dramatically improved resulting in over 1 million dollars of savings to our District:

- **2012-13 attendance audit findings \$152,166.00**
- **2013-14 attendance audit *preliminary* findings of \$44,173.00.**

Please note, VTD (a state approved firm that conducted the attendance audit), reported September 2015, that the State of California has accepted VTDs findings based on the documentation of attendance processes from the District's Comprehensive Attendance Management System established in 2013-14.

2013-14 STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED

2014-15 STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED

Development of Comprehensive Attendance Management System	Quality Attendance Team
Group & 1:1 Attendance Training for Principals, Teachers, and Attendance Clerks	Attendance Clerk Mentor/Mentee Program
Monthly Clerical Newsletter	Small Group Attendance Trainings as Needed
Mandatory Attendance Clerk Training	Attendance Management Tool
Google Spreadsheet Attendance Records Location	Attendance Management Pamphlet
Attendance Reviews at All Sites	Executive Summary on State of Attendance Senior Leadership Team & Network Superintendent for Follow-Up
Quality Attendance Team	Coordinator attends Weekly District Audit Meetings & Report Attendance Findings
Attendance Management Pamphlet	Attendance Cohort Team of Clerks
Clerical Yearly Training Calendar	

During the 2015-16 school year, attendance clerks will receive three Social/Emotional trainings so clerks can further support students and families in attending school daily. Also, all teachers will receive an attendance letter from Chief of Schools, reminding teachers of the importance and obligation of taking daily and period attendance and completing their weekly attendance reports timely.