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**OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
Community Schools, Thriving Students

Board Cover Memorandum

To Budget and Finance Committee

From Rachel Latta

April 2nd, 2026

Meeting Date Amended Board Policy 5113.1 Truancy (Current Name) Chronic Absence

Subject (Proposed New Name)

Ask of the Committee

Favorable recommendation of the proposed changes to Board Policy 5113.1, title updated to “Chronic Absence”

Background

Chronic absence, defined as missing 10% or more of instructional days, is a key indicator of student belonging and wellness, as well as a key metric for school accountability on the California School Dashboard.

Changes to policy include moving away from truancy and punitive models, to a tiered system of support, emphasizing trauma-informed responses. To effectively implement this, the amended policy mandates staff training on the high correlation between chronic absence and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). It also details specific early interventions - such as positive reinforcement and incentives for improved attendance - alongside interagency collaboration to provide wrap-around services for students with the highest needs.

Furthermore, the policy clarifies having a clear system for data tracking, reporting, and goal setting tied to the LCAP, with regular accountability reports to the Board of Education. Finally, it explicitly outlines protections stating that absence shall not be the basis for suspension or expulsion, and includes

clarifications regarding ADA recovery and Cal-WORKS provisions.

Discussion

These updates are meant to bring our policy in line with current state law, California School Boards Association model policy, and current district practice.

Fiscal Impact

None.

Attachment

Board Policy 5113.1 Truancy to Chronic Absence (Red-lined and Clean Copy)

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Policy

BP 5113.1 ~~— Truancy Chronic Absence~~

Students

~~To improve student attendance, the Superintendent or designee shall implement positive steps to identify the reasons for a student's unexcused absences and to help resolve the problems caused by truancy. Such strategies shall focus on early intervention and may include, but not be limited to, communication with parents/guardians and the use of student study teams.~~

~~(cf. 5113—Absences and Excuses)~~

~~(cf. 5147—Dropout Prevention)~~

~~(cf. 5149—At Risk Students)~~

~~(cf. 6164.5—Student Study Teams)~~

~~(cf. 6176—Weekend/Saturday Classes)~~

~~In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall cooperate with other agencies within the community to meet the needs of students who have serious school attendance or behavior problems and to maintain a continuing inventory of community resources, including alternative programs.~~

~~(cf. 1020—Youth Services)~~

~~(cf. 1400—Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)~~

~~Habitually truant students may be referred to a school attendance review board, a truancy mediation program operated by the county's district attorney or probation officer, and/or juvenile court in accordance with law.~~

~~For purposes of California's welfare system (Cal WORKS), a student shall be determined to be regularly attending school unless he/she has been referred to the county district attorney or probation office pursuant to Education Code 48263.~~

The Governing Board believes that absenteeism, whatever the cause, may be an early warning sign of poor academic achievement, disconnection from school community 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, and that students who are identified as chronically absent or truant receive appropriate support services and interventions as early as possible.

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. The

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

The Superintendent, attendance supervisor, or designee shall develop a tiered approach to reducing chronic absence. Such an approach shall include strategies for preventing attendance problems, which may include, but are not limited to, efforts to provide a safe and positive school environment, relevant and engaging learning experiences, school activities that help develop students' feelings of connectedness with the school, school-based health services, letters alerting parents/guardians to the value of regular school attendance, including the use of bilingual aides and communication in the primary language used by parents/guardians; and incentives and rewards to recognize students who achieve excellent attendance or demonstrate significant improvement in attendance. The tiered approach shall also provide for early outreach to students as soon as they show signs of poor attendance or if they were chronically absent in the prior school year. Early intervention may include personalized outreach, individual attendance plans, and/or mentoring to students with moderate levels of chronic absence, with additional intensive, interagency wrap-around services for students with the highest level of absence.

Students with serious attendance problems shall be provided with interventions specific to their needs, which may include, but are not limited to, health care referrals, transportation assistance, counseling for mental or emotional difficulties, academic supports, efforts to address school or community safety concerns, discussions with the student and parent/guardian about their attitudes regarding schooling, or other strategies to remove identified barriers to school attendance.

The Superintendent, attendance supervisor, or designee may collaborate with child welfare services, law enforcement, courts, public health care agencies, other government agencies, and/or medical, mental health, and oral health care providers to make alternative educational programs and support services available for students and families.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that staff assigned to fulfill attendance-related duties are trained in implementing a trauma-informed approach to chronic absence and receive information about the high correlation between chronic absence and exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Students who are identified as chronically absent or truant shall be subject to the interventions specified in law and administrative regulation.

To provide students with an opportunity to make up lost instructional time and offset absences, the Superintendent or designee is instructed to implement an attendance recovery program for students in grades transitional kindergarten-12. Any such attendance recovery program shall be operated in accordance with Education Code 46211 and as specified in the accompanying administrative regulation. A student's absence from school shall not be the basis for suspension or expulsion.

Alternative strategies and positive reinforcement for attendance shall be used whenever possible.

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

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

1740 Employment of personnel to supervise attendance (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)

48240-48246 Supervisors of attendance

48260-48273 Truants

48290-48296 Failure to comply; complaints against parents

48320-48324 School attendance review boards

48340-48341 Improvement of student attendance

49067 Unexcused absences as cause of failing grade

VEHICLE CODE

13202.7 Driving privileges; minors; suspension or delay for habitual truancy

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

601-601.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

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS

66 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 245, 249 (1983)

44

Management Resources:

CDE MANAGEMENT ADVISORIES

0114.98 School Attendance and Cal-WORKS, Management Bulletin 98-01

CDE PUBLICATIONS

School Attendance Review Board Handbook, 1995

CSBA ADVISORIES

520.97 Welfare Reform and Requirements for School Attendance

WEB SITES

CDE: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

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

| 7/14/04; [4/22/26A](#)

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Policy

BP 5113.1 – Chronic Absence

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