

August 14, 2002

Truancy Problems

The school district approached the department concerning a truancy problem. The district was looking at the problem from a couple of perspectives, one being the loss of ADA money they receive for each attending student.

We looked at exactly where the problem was and found that it was primarily with junior high and high school aged students. A large percentage of the attendance problems came from off campus suspensions. The SARB (Student Attendance Review Board) was not meeting as frequent as needed, and the part time truancy officer had been out several months ill with no temp replacement. Many other things factored into the problem such as budget (position) cuts within the district. The Police Department met with the district several times and created the following plan for the upcoming school year:

- Rejuvenate the SARB and hold regular meetings
- Move the part time truancy officer to full time
- Create an on campus suspension program
- Install software that generates student attendance reports daily
- Provide the School Resource Officers with Palm Pilots with a list and photos of truant students
- Designate Community Contact employees from the school who can respond to homes and evaluate attendance problems from the child's home and transport children to school as needed
- The Police Department, in conjunction with Probation, will conduct truancy sweeps a minimum of two times per year during peak absences
- Local merchants will call a designated number to report school aged children who are in their businesses during school hours
- Information outlining this collaborative effort will go out to all parents
- Ads will run in the local paper with same information
- An attendance requirement policy for graduation will also be created
- We will reevaluate the progress on a monthly basis or as needed

I appreciate all the agencies that responded with information. They were very helpful.

Thank you,

Reuben P. Shortnacy
Chief of Police
Corcoran Police Department