



# 2015 Pennsylvania State Roundtable Report



**Educational Success &  
Truancy Prevention Workgroup**



# Educational Success and Truancy Prevention Workgroup

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## **Background**

The Educational Success and Truancy Prevention Workgroup (*hereafter* “ESTP”) created by the Pennsylvania State Roundtable, began its work in 2009 focusing on truancy prevention. In starting their work on this issue, the ESTP Workgroup surveyed Leadership Roundtable members in 2009 to gain a better understanding of truancy issues at the local level and to determine if courts, child welfare agencies and schools were working collaboratively to address truancy. Based on the 2009 survey results, the ESTP Workgroup offered five core recommendations in its May 2010 State Roundtable Report, *Truancy: A Call to Action* to assist Local Children’s Roundtables in their efforts to effectively address truancy. The recommendations included: *collaboration; positive school climate; prevention and early intervention; data collection* and; *sustainability*. The recommendations were unanimously adopted by the State Roundtable and subsequently incorporated into the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services funding guidelines for truancy prevention programs.

In 2013, the ESTP Workgroup once again surveyed counties to determine whether or not Local Children’s Roundtables increased their sense of urgency about addressing truancy and if recommendations from the 2010 State Roundtable Report were helpful in their efforts. The 2013 survey results indicated an overwhelming YES! Local Children’s Roundtables have prioritized truancy, more Truancy Elimination Plans are being utilized, more collaborative truancy prevention protocols are being developed and truancy data is more accurate and being used more often than in 2009. With community attendance efforts well underway in Pennsylvania, the ESTP Workgroup turned its attention to legislative reform, enhancements to the Pennsylvania Toolkit for Attendance and Reduction (Pennsylvania Truancy Toolkit), a comprehensive truancy prevention training curriculum for child welfare professionals and Cyber Charter School reform.

The ESTP Workgroup’s mission was later expanded in 2011 to include education stability and success for foster children, and full implementation of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act. Early on, the Workgroup engaged the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Office of Children, Youth and Families (DHS/OCYF) and the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts Office of Children and Families in the Courts (AOPC/OCFC) to approve an action plan, *The Pennsylvania Blueprint for Education Success for Foster Youth*, and a strategy for implementation. The Blueprint was adopted by the 2013 Pennsylvania State Roundtable with a commitment to implementation from all three entities. The Blueprint includes the following five (5) objectives with multi-year timetables for completion:

1. Enhanced communication and collaboration between child welfare, education and the courts
2. Cross-systems education and resources
3. Legislative and policy reform
4. Data collection and sharing
5. Court competencies and best practices

To date, the workgroup has continued efforts to examine and implement 2014 recommendations on collecting/sharing data, cross-systems training related to education issues and legislative reform efforts. In 2014, the Workgroup decided to encompass all priorities and outstanding recommendations into the Pennsylvania Blueprint. The Workgroup also addressed specific components of the Pennsylvania Blueprint, many of which dovetail with on-going Workgroup recommendations. The information below outlines a synopsis of the Workgroup's efforts to date on progress made on the Pennsylvania Blueprint objectives.

#### ENHANCED COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN EDUCATION, CHILD WELFARE & COURTS

- **State leaders from education, child welfare and the courts meet regularly** to address multisystem issues related to educational success for foster youth.
- **ESTP Workgroup** which includes multidisciplinary members continues to meet regularly **to fully implement the Pennsylvania Blueprint which includes approved recommendations to the Pennsylvania State Roundtable.**
- **Many Local Children's Roundtables have developed subgroups** consisting of multidisciplinary members to collectively address truancy and educational success within their communities.

#### CROSS SYSTEMS EDUCATION AND RESOURCES

- In 2013, the PA State Roundtable approved and supported the Workgroup's **recommendation to hold the first Education Summit for Foster Youth.** The objective of the Summit would be to gather county teams consisting of cross-systems stakeholders to develop a plan to collaboratively improve educational success for foster youth. The Workgroup has engaged in initial discussions with the partners in planning the event slated to occur in 2016. To date, the ESTP

Workgroup is awaiting a response from partnering agencies on a commitment to support the Education Summit.

- In 2014, the ESTP Workgroup developed the **Considerations for Cyber Charter School Enrollment for Students before the Court brochure**. The brochure highlights a series of questions for students, parents, and courts to consider in determining if Cyber Charter School is the best academic option for a youth involved in the dependency system. **While the brochure was developed for youth involved in the dependency system, it may also benefit at-risk youth involved in the delinquency system or those who are dually adjudicated.** The brochure was approved by the Pennsylvania State Roundtable in 2014. In the fall of 2014, **OCFC distributed over 4,000 brochures to Pennsylvania county courts and children and youth agencies as well as some juvenile probation offices.** The brochure is also available for download on the AOPC/OCFC website.
- The ESTP Workgroup members provided guidance and direction in the revisions to the **Child Welfare Resource Center's Course 202: Truancy Prevention and Intervention** curriculum for child welfare professionals. The revised **curriculum targets enhancing child welfare professionals' understanding of truancy, its root causes and tools to work collaboratively in the prevention and intervention. The training was made available to counties in April 2015.** Information on the enhanced training was disseminated at the 2015 Spring Leadership Roundtable meetings.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education, Safe Schools Office, led efforts to **revise the Pennsylvania Truancy Toolkit**. During the past year volunteers from the ESTP Workgroup and other stakeholders met regularly to rewrite and reorganize the Toolkit. **The revised Toolkit was released in February 2015. Highlights include stakeholder specific sections and a model School Attendance Improvement Plan (formerly known as a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP)).** The revised Toolkit is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Education website.
- ESTP Workgroup was **invited to coordinate the 2015 Children's Summit's educational success presentations focusing on the importance of education as a critical component to child well-being.** Two education panel presentations were featured at the Summit. The first, **focused on the vision for educational success for Pennsylvania Foster Youth.** The second presentation **highlighted best practices from courts, child welfare, education and legal professionals with an emphasis on the importance of listening to and acting upon youth voice.** Presenters included: Honorable Max Baer, Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Deputy Secretary Cathy Utz, DHS/OCYF, Keith Snyder, Director, Juvenile Court Judges Commission, ESTP Workgroup Co-chairs and members and a Youth Support Partner Supervisor. Evaluation results were very favorable.

## LEGISLATIVE & POLICY REFORM

- The ESTP Workgroup, under the guidance of the Juvenile Court Judges Commission, **spent a considerable amount of time during 2014/2015 reviewing and discussing legislative proposals related to truancy and educational success for foster youth.** In addition to fine tuning the Workgroup's legislative recommendations, the ESTP discussed several legislative bills related to truancy, fines and incarceration for failure to pay fines. The following is a brief synopsis of the actions taken by the Pennsylvania Legislature in the past year.
  - On June, 18, 2014, Rep. Gillen (R-Berks) introduced **House Bill 2356.** The latest amended version of the bill would require that parents would have to "intentionally" fail to comply with the requirements of Section 1333 of the School Code before penalties are implemented. The bill also explicitly makes the incarceration of a parent for failing to pay a fine discretionary. An earlier version of the bill would have eliminated incarceration as a penalty for parents who fail to pay a fine under Section 1333 of the School Code. On Sept. 22, 2014, **a legislative hearing was held on the earlier version of HB 2356. Members of the Educational Success and Truancy Prevention Workgroup including Workgroup Co-chair, Honorable John Kuhn, Adams County, Court of Common Pleas and Sean Fields, Esq., Pennsylvania School Boards Association were invited to deliver legislative testimony at that hearing.** In addition, Shara B. Saveikis, M.S.W., Executive Director, Westmoreland County Children's Bureau also gave testimony.

"As a judge, I cannot comment on any specific legislative proposal before your committee, but would respectfully recommend that you consider taking a comprehensive, collaborative approach to reforming our truancy laws.

Since its inception, our workgroup has been a collaborative venture, including cross systems stakeholders from the courts, child welfare and education. After significant analysis and thoughtful consideration the workgroup concluded that truancy is no one entity's responsibility. Rather it is an issue that requires shared responsibility and a collaborative approach."

- Honorable John Kuhn, Adams County,  
Court of Common Pleas

- On Oct. 8, 2014, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives adopted **House Resolution No. 1032 (Attachment)**. The Resolution **directed the Joint State Commission to study the issue of truancy and school dropout prevention in Pennsylvania in consultation with an advisory committee**. After receiving testimony, the Joint State Commission is required to issue a report of findings and recommendations to the House no later than Oct. 8, 2015. The first meeting of the advisory committee occurred on March 6, 2015. **Several members of the ESTP Workgroup were also invited to be members of the advisory committee.**
  
- On Jan. 21, 2015, the Pennsylvania House of Representative introduced **House Bill 141**, a bill that changes the definition of “**Habitually truant**” **by stating the definition would mean an absence for more than three days or their equivalent following the first notice of truancy, “within a twelve-month period.”** The bill also adds the performance of **community service to the list sanctions under Section 1333**. Additionally, a parent could be incarcerated for the failure to perform such community service for no more than five (5) days.
  
- On Jan. 30, 2015, **Senate Bill 359** was referred to the Senate Education Committee. **The bill requires a district to develop a truancy elimination plan before the district refers a child for possible disposition as a dependent child or refers a case to a magisterial district judge.** The truancy elimination plan must assess and identify the causes of truancy and must be mutually agreed-upon. If the parent refuses to participate in the development of the plan, the district must document efforts to involve the family.

## DATA COLLECTION & DATA SHARING

- During 2014/2015, the ESTP Workgroup **continued discussion on how to collect and share data at both the state and local levels**. The Workgroup agrees that there continues to be a critical need to gather, share and analyze educational information for youth in the foster care system. **Without good data collection and sharing, we may never know the state of educational success for foster youth in Pennsylvania.**
  
- Despite the strong partnership between courts, education and child welfare, the Workgroup was **unable to obtain data from PDE about foster youth**. Despite

the best efforts of all stakeholders, **the lack of readily available data coupled with the absence of a formal data sharing agreement made it impossible to obtain information.** The Workgroup believes this issue will be addressed by the Pennsylvania Joint State Government Commission's Advisory Committee on Truancy and School Dropout Prevention and may likely require policy changes or legislative action.

- In 2014, the Workgroup requested a summary of educational success data being collected through the **Quality Service Review (QSR) process.** A presentation was given to the Workgroup in September 2014 by Hornby Zeller Associates Inc. The presentation focused on the broad categories of Early Learning and Development, Academic Status and Stability in the School Setting. While the data was somewhat limited, QSR results did reveal that of the **approximate 400 QSR cases, the majority of the sample cases were in appropriate educational settings.** In addition, QSR data revealed that **middle school children/youth are the most at-risk group for unacceptable educational status.** Workgroup members agreed to **partner with Hornby Zeller Associates Inc. and the Child Welfare Resource Center to discuss additional educational success elements to be considered as part of the QSR process.**
- The Workgroup also discussed the **possibility of collecting educational data on children in foster care through phase two of the Child Welfare Information Management System.** Workgroup members agree that both the **Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Department of Human Services are in the best position to collect this information.** The chart below outlines the Workgroup's best thinking in what pieces of information at a minimum should be collected and shared between education, child welfare and the courts.

PA Department of Education	PA Department of Human Services	Administrative Office of PA Courts
English Language Learners/Limited English Proficiency	Home School District Y/N	Educational Decision Maker Appointed Y/N
School Enrollment Type	Number of School Moves	Educational Inquiry made during court hearings
Special Education Services	If School Change Occurs – Reasons?	
Scoring Below Basic on Math/English	Special Education Status	
Drop Out	Individual Education Plan Y/N	
Standardized test scores	Attendance/Truancy/Attendance Improvement Plan	
	School Discipline (Expulsions/Suspensions)	
	Academic Achievement	
	School Connectedness	
	Expected Post-Secondary Ed.	
	Post-Secondary Education	

- Until data sharing and related protocols exist at the State level, the Workgroup continues to **encourage communities, through their Local Children’s Roundtables adopt their own data sharing agreements.** In the ESTP 2014 Report to the Pennsylvania State Roundtable, the Workgroup provided example Memorandums of Understandings and specific elements local communities could consider collecting and sharing.
- In 2014, the ESTP Workgroup recommended exploring the possibility of creating a mechanism in the Common Pleas Case Management system and the Magisterial District Justice system to notify both Magisterial District courts and Common Pleas courts when a child is involved in either system due to truancy. **An initial meeting was held with Workgroup Co-chairs, AOPC Judicial Automation and the AOPC Legal Services Division to discuss the issue. At the time of issuing this report, the legal and technological parameters have not been fully assessed.**

## COURT COMPETENCIES AND BEST PRACTICES

- In 2011, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Juvenile Court Procedural Rules were amended to better address a juvenile's educational, health care and disability needs. The comments to the rules underscore the importance of the educational needs of a child as a key component to well-being and one that must be thoroughly addressed during court proceedings.

"Educational, health care, and disability needs of juveniles or children in the system must be met in order to ensure their welfare, health, and safety. The court's role in addressing these needs is not merely a matter of best practice, but rather an essential component to ensuring the fundamental needs of juveniles or children under its supervision are addressed...

... with the amendments regarding education, the Rules effectively address the educational needs by focusing on three key issues at every stage of the court proceedings: 1) minimizing school changes; 2) ensuring that a juvenile or child is attending school, receiving educational services, and making progress toward graduation; and 3) ensuring that each juvenile or child has a legally authorized educational decision maker. "

- Cynthia Stoltz Esq. ESTP Workgroup Co-chair  
And past Chair PA Supreme Court's Juvenile Procedural Rules Committee

- In 2013, the ESTP Workgroup submitted recommendations surrounding educational success for foster youth to the Benchbook Committee for consideration. **The majority of the recommendations were accepted by the Committee and incorporated into the 2014 revised Benchbook.** While there is not a specific chapter on education, this information is dispersed throughout emphasizing the importance of educational well-being at each stage of the dependency process. **Key information is included on keeping children/youth in the same school whenever possible, ensuring a smooth transition when a school move must occur, the importance of a strong school connection, appropriate classes, educational needs, academic progress, discipline and attendance.**
- In 2014, the AOPC/OCFC revised its dependency court observation form to collect data on specific indicators of a quality permanency review hearing. **The**

**revised court observation form contains key well-being indicators including education.** Court observations will help measure quantifiably whether or not a youth's education is prioritized and if there is a focus on educational success during a permanency review hearing. It should be noted that safety, permanency and well-being indicators are **measured by the collective discussion held in the court room by all stakeholders, not solely the judicial officer.** Both county specific and statewide data will be analyzed by the OCFC and will be shared with local courts in an effort to identify strengths and assist in enhancing courtroom practice.

**Recommendations:**

**The Educational Success and Truancy Prevention Workgroup respectfully submits to the Pennsylvania State Roundtable the following recommendations:**

- 1. Finalize, publish and implement the Pennsylvania Blueprint for Education Success for Foster Youth focusing on its five priority areas including: enhanced communication and collaboration; cross systems education and resources; legislative and policy reform; data collection and sharing; and court competencies and best practices.**
- 2. Urge PDE, DHS and the courts to prioritize data and develop and implement concrete polices around collection, sharing and analyzing educational data for foster youth.**
- 3. Inform and support the Joint State Government Commission's Committee on Truancy and School Dropout Prevention;**
- 4. Continue to support Local Children's Roundtables in implementation of the Workgroup's recommendation;**
- 5. Develop a comprehensive evaluation strategy for the ESTP Workgroup's efforts.**



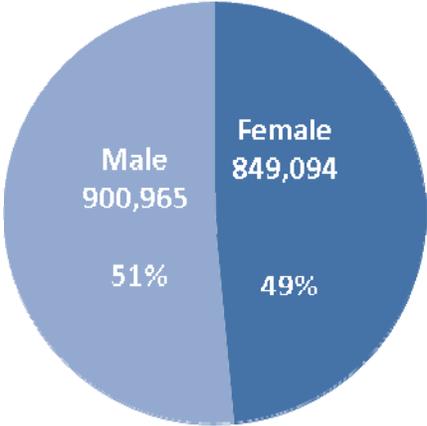
# Truancy Data Notable Observations

- Although the **total school population decreased** from 1,757,678 during SY 2012/13 to 1,750,059 during SY 2013/14 **the number of truant students increased**. The total number of **truant students for SY 2013/14 was 167,412**.
- Pennsylvania experienced an **overall increase in truancy rates** from SY 2012/13 to SY 2013/14 of **.8%** which equates to **10,965 more** truant students.
- During SY 2013/14 there were **slightly more truant males 87,762 (52%)** than **truant females 79,650 (48%)**.
- **Disproportionality continues to exist between the overall student population and the truant population**. In SY 2013/2014, 15% of the total school enrollment was African American. African American students represented 41% of the truant population. Ten percent (10%) of the SY 2013/14 overall student population was Hispanic and Hispanic students represented 18% of the overall truant population. Conversely, Caucasians represented 69% of the total enrollment but only 35% of truant students.
- Pennsylvania experienced a **1.8% (6,408) increase** in the number of truant students in **grades 1-5** between SY 2012/13 and SY 2013/14. The number of **truant students in grades 1-5 during SY 2013/14 was 53,271**.
- During SY 2013/14 the **highest population of truant students** were in **grades 1-5 representing 32% (53,271)** of the total truant population.
- There were **1,486 more truant students in grades 9-11** during SY 2013/14 than in SY 2012/13. **Despite the decrease in this age group in the overall student population**, the number of truant students increased. The number of **truant students in grades 9-11 was 50,703**.
- During SY 2013/14, **Kindergarten students and 12th grade students tied as the lowest population of truant students**. Kindergarteners represent 7% (12,410) and 12th graders also represent 7% (12,560) of the truant population. Both have increased from SY 2012/13.
- **42 Pennsylvania Counties have experienced an increase in their overall truancy population** from SY 2012/13 to SY 2013.14.
- **19 Pennsylvania Counties have experienced a 25% increase or more in their overall truancy population** from SY 2012/13 to SY 2013/14.
- **10 Pennsylvania Counties** experienced a **25% decrease or more** in their **overall truancy population** from SY 2012/13 to SY 2013/14.
- The following **counties reported a 50% or greater reduction** in truant students: **Cambria, Huntingdon, Lancaster, Montour, Perry and Union**.

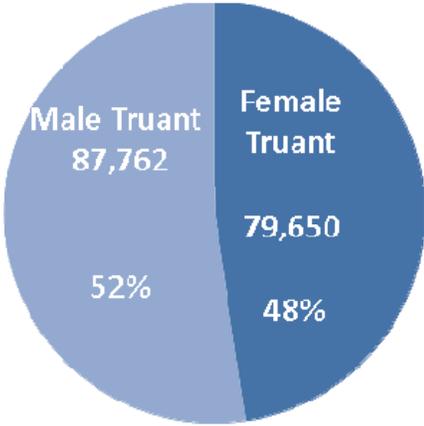
Pennsylvania State Habitually Truant\* SY 2008/2009—SY2013/2014

Year	Total PA School Population (Grades Pre K-12)	Total PA Habitually Truant (Grades Pre K-12)	Percent of School Population Habitually Truant
2008-2009	1,801,760	137,009	7.6%
2009-2010	1,787,351	142,281	8.0%
2010-2011	1,780,413	124,272	7.0%
2011-2012	1,779,145	169,057	9.5%
2012-2013	1,757,678	156,447	8.8%
2013-2014	1,750,059	167,412	9.6%

SY 2013-2014 Enrollment by Gender



SY 2013-2014 Habitually Truant by Gender

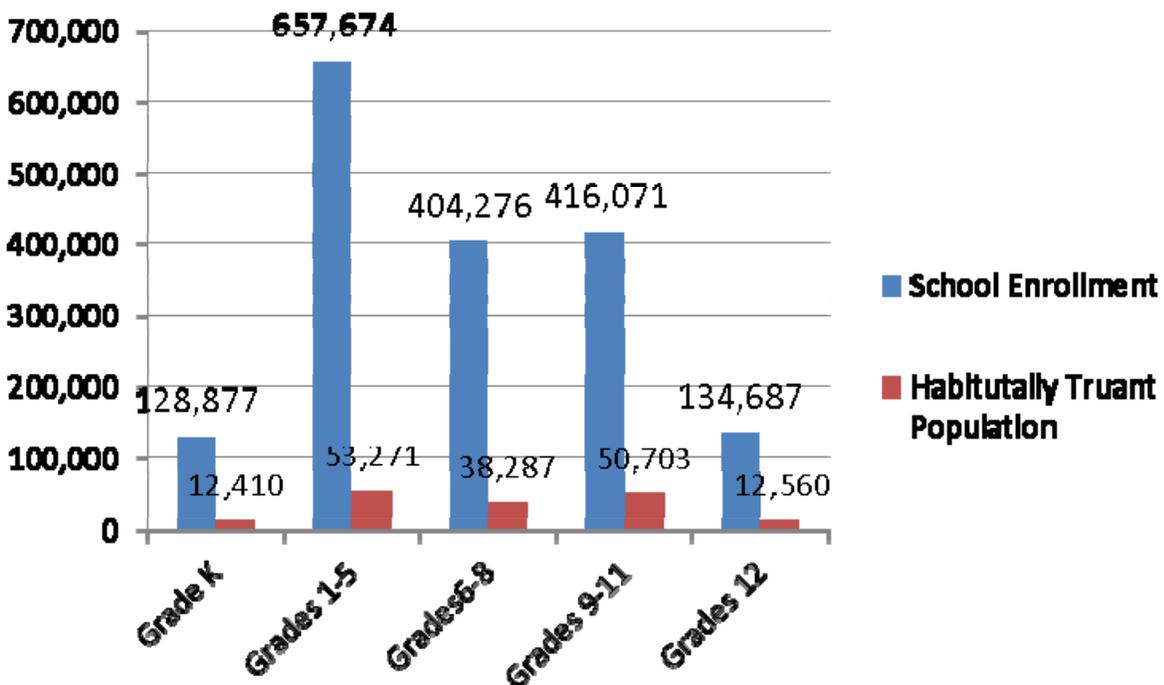


\*Habitually Truant is defined as six or more unexcused absences  
Data Provided by the PA Department of Education

SY 2013-2014 PA Habitually Truant by Grade Level for SY 2012/2013 and 2013/2014

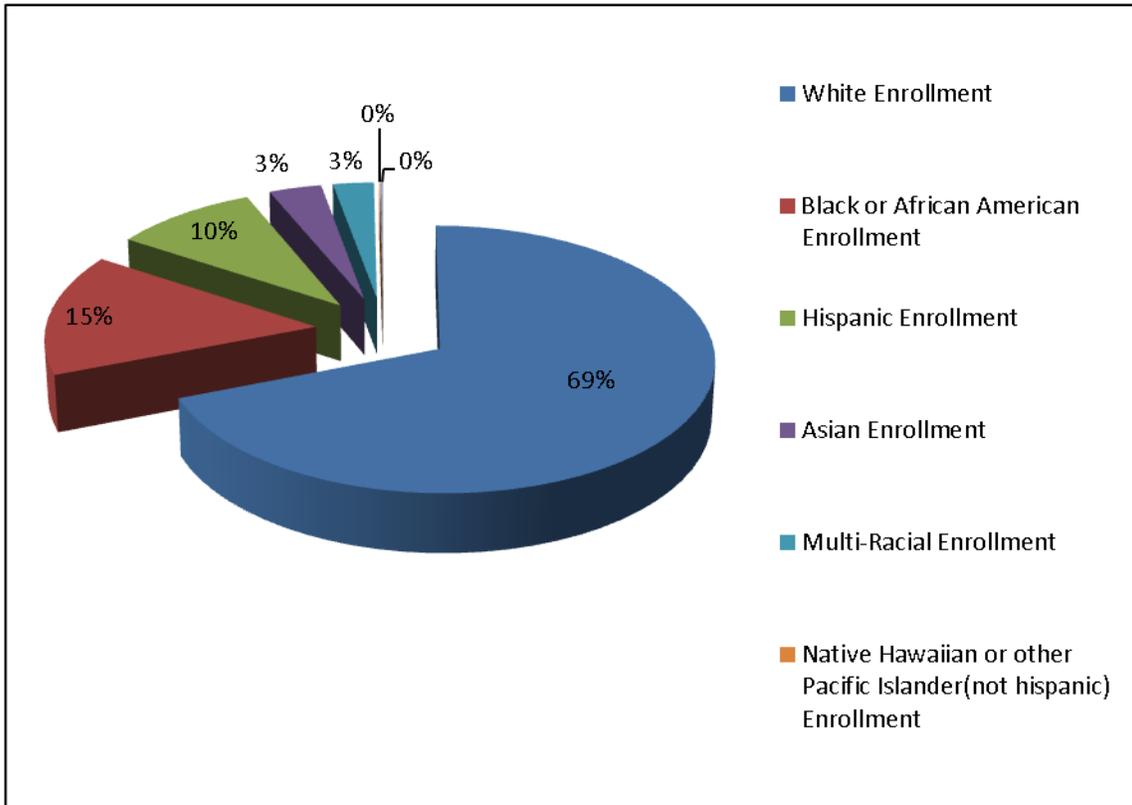
Grade Level	SY 2012/13 Total School Population	Habitually Truant during SY12/13	Percent Truant by Grade Level during SY 12/13	SY 2013/14 Total School Population	Habitually Truant during SY13/14	Percent Truant by Grade Level during SY13/14	Percent Change between SY 12/13 and SY13/14
Grade K	129,344	10,613	7%	128,877	12,410	7.4%	+0.4%
Grades 1-5	653,539	46,863	30%	657,674	53,271	31.8%	+1.8%
Grades 6-8	407,676	36,134	23%	404,276	38,287	22.9%	-0.1%
Grades 9-11	418,387	49,217	32%	416,071	50,703	30.3%	-1.7%
Grade 12	135,685	11,626	7%	134,678	12,560	7.5%	+0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,744,631</b>	<b>154,453</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,741,576</b>	<b>167,231</b>	<b>100%</b>	

SY 2013-2014 Total Scholl Enrollment vs. Total Habitually Truant Population

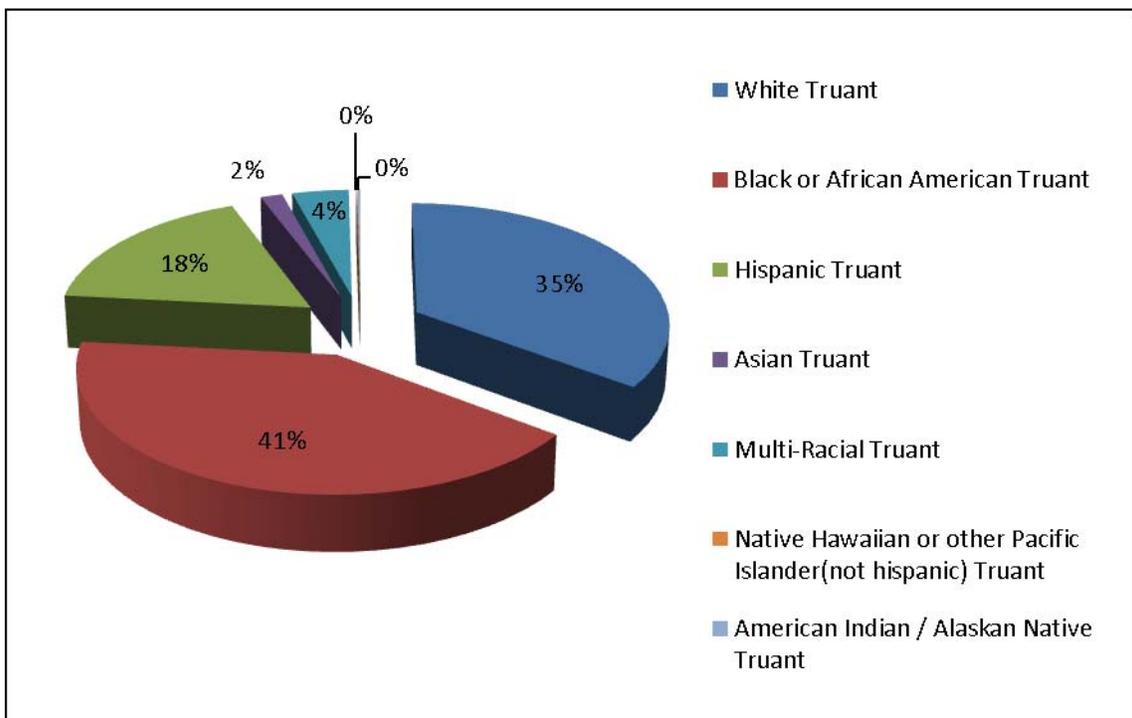


# SY 2013-2014 School Enrollment vs. Habitually Truant by Ethnicity

## Total School Enrollment SY 2013-2014 Grades K-12



## Total Habitually Truant SY 2013-2014 Grades K-12



## SY 2013-2014 Total Habitually Truant Rate by County

County	Total Enrolled	Total Truant	Truancy Rate
Adams	13,655	498	3.65%
Allegheny	142,783	14,228	9.96%
Armstrong	9,347	84	0.90%
Beaver	22,136	1,868	8.44%
Bedford	6,982	450	6.45%
Berks	67,914	6,093	8.97%
Blair	17,594	1,258	7.15%
Bradford	9,528	998	10.47%
Bucks	85,561	2,544	2.97%
Butler	25,253	1,527	6.05%
Cambria	17,504	440	2.51%
Cameron	630	20	3.17%
Carbon	8,646	287	3.32%
Centre	12,725	136	1.07%
Chester	70,008	1,281	1.83%
Clarion	5,803	44	0.76%
Clearfield	12,201	761	6.24%
Clinton	4,223	322	7.62%
Columbia	9,209	162	1.76%
Crawford	9,146	451	4.93%
Cumberland	29,339	424	1.45%
Dauphin	34,145	4,032	11.81%
Delaware	68,979	5,254	7.62%
Elk	3,642	186	5.11%
Erie	37,877	3,615	9.54%
Fayette	17,019	2,399	14.10%
Forest	515	0	0.00%
Franklin	19,410	823	4.24%
Fulton	2,166	64	2.95%
Greene	5,188	392	7.56%
Huntingdon	5,514	46	0.83%
Indiana	9,833	219	2.23%
Jefferson	4,797	36	0.75%
Juniata	2,965	446	15.04%
Lackawanna	27,693	422	1.52%

County	Total Enrolled	Total Truant	Truancy Rate
Lancaster	67,252	2,514	3.74%
Lawrence	12,286	1,392	11.33%
Lebanon	19,026	1,287	6.76%
Lehigh	48,622	3,711	7.63%
Luzerne	40,841	2,555	6.26%
Lycoming	16,079	512	3.18%
McKean	6,273	95	1.51%
Mercer	15,779	704	4.46%
Mifflin	5,273	480	9.10%
Monroe	27,003	2,836	10.50%
Montgomery	105,105	3,740	3.56%
Montour	2,261	52	2.30%
Northampton	41,982	1,757	4.19%
Northumberland	12,007	371	3.09%
Perry	6,104	93	1.52%
Philadelphia	137,674	55,799	40.53%
Pike	8,169	1,012	12.39%
Potter	2,441	14	0.57%
Schuylkill	18,370	395	2.15%
Snyder	4,889	124	2.54%
Somerset	9,520	277	2.91%
Sullivan	604	2	0.33%
Susquehanna	6,405	434	6.78%
Tioga	5,429	269	4.95%
Union	3,978	16	0.40%
Venango	8,239	549	6.66%
Warren	4,574	97	2.12%
Washington	27,934	2,224	7.96%
Wayne	4,866	25	0.51%
Westmoreland	48,079	2,323	4.83%
Wyoming	3,665	323	8.81%
York	64,633	3,298	5.10%

Truancy Percent Differences SY 2012/2013 to SY 2013/2014

County	Total Truant	Truancy Rate	Total Truant	Truancy Rate	Percent Difference SY12/13 to SY13/14
Adams	605	0.04	498	0.04	-16.9%
Allegheny	14,868	0.10	14,228	0.10	-3.4%
Armstrong	38	0.00	84	0.01	125.0%
Beaver	1,971	0.09	1,868	0.08	-3.9%
Bedford	416	0.06	450	0.06	8.6%
Berks	4,643	0.07	6,093	0.09	32.9%
Blair	1,122	0.06	1,258	0.07	12.2%
Bradford	1,076	0.11	998	0.10	-6.1%
Bucks	1,834	0.02	2,544	0.03	40.1%
Butler	1,294	0.05	1,527	0.06	19.6%
Cambria	2,692	0.15	440	0.03	-83.6%
Cameron	25	0.04	20	0.03	-12.7%
Carbon	294	0.03	287	0.03	0.3%
Centre	207	0.02	136	0.01	-33.1%
Chester	1,776	0.03	1,281	0.02	-28.2%
Clarion	40	0.01	44	0.01	11.8%
Clearfield	554	0.04	761	0.06	39.0%
Clinton	287	0.07	322	0.08	14.4%
Columbia	235	0.03	162	0.02	-29.9%
Crawford	170	0.02	451	0.05	173.9%
Cumberland	328	0.01	424	0.01	28.3%
Dauphin	2,945	0.09	4,032	0.12	38.0%
Delaware	5,391	0.08	5,254	0.08	-2.1%
Elk	200	0.05	186	0.05	-4.3%
Erie	3,381	0.09	3,615	0.10	8.3%
Fayette	2,821	0.16	2,399	0.14	-13.8%
Forest	-	0.00	-	0.00	0.0%
Franklin	657	0.03	823	0.04	25.1%
Fulton	16	0.01	64	0.03	309.7%
Greene	407	0.08	392	0.08	-2.6%
Huntingdon	103	0.02	46	0.01	-54.6%
Indiana	186	0.02	219	0.02	18.0%
Jefferson	39	0.01	36	0.01	-6.3%
Juniata	79	0.03	446	0.15	463.3%
Lackawanna	332	0.01	422	0.02	27.7%

Truancy Percent Differences SY 2012/2013 to SY 2013/2014

County	Total Truant SY 12/13	Truancy Rate SY 12/13	Total Truant SY 13/14	Truancy Rate SY 13/14	Percent Difference SY12/13 to SY13/14
Lancaster	5,553	0.08	2,514	0.04	<b>-54.3%</b>
Lawrence	1,707	0.14	1,392	0.11	<b>-17.4%</b>
Lebanon	707	0.04	1,287	0.07	<b>83.2%</b>
Lehigh	2,051	0.04	3,711	0.08	<b>81.2%</b>
Luzerne	2,046	0.05	2,555	0.06	<b>25.2%</b>
Lycoming	435	0.03	512	0.03	<b>18.2%</b>
McKean	70	0.01	95	0.02	<b>36.0%</b>
Mercer	741	0.05	704	0.04	<b>-3.0%</b>
Mifflin	513	0.10	480	0.09	<b>-6.1%</b>
Monroe	2,118	0.08	2,836	0.11	<b>38.9%</b>
Montgomery	4,082	0.04	3,740	0.04	<b>-8.5%</b>
Montour	144	0.06	52	0.02	<b>-62.4%</b>
Northampton	1,488	0.03	1,757	0.04	<b>20.4%</b>
Northumberland	323	0.03	371	0.03	<b>14.4%</b>
Perry	198	0.03	93	0.02	<b>-52.1%</b>
Philadelphia	51,143	0.36	55,799	0.41	<b>14.0%</b>
Pike	1,006	0.12	1,012	0.12	<b>3.8%</b>
Potter	2	0.00	14	0.01	<b>612.5%</b>
Schuylkill	458	0.02	395	0.02	<b>-13.3%</b>
Snyder	40	0.01	124	0.03	<b>213.6%</b>
Somerset	271	0.03	277	0.03	<b>4.3%</b>
Sullivan	-	0.00	2	0.00	<b>0.0%</b>
Susquehanna	399	0.06	434	0.07	<b>13.6%</b>
Tioga	268	0.05	269	0.05	<b>2.5%</b>
Union	49	0.01	16	0.00	<b>-67.5%</b>
Venango	406	0.05	549	0.07	<b>36.2%</b>
Warren	97	0.02	97	0.02	<b>1.9%</b>
Washington	2,063	0.07	2,224	0.08	<b>8.7%</b>
Wayne	15	0.00	25	0.01	<b>70.0%</b>
Westmoreland	1,991	0.04	2,323	0.05	<b>18.1%</b>
Wyoming	484	0.13	323	0.09	<b>-31.2%</b>
York	2,013	0.03	3,298	0.05	<b>64.0%</b>







## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 1032 Session of  
2014

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INTRODUCED BY BENNINGHOFF, V. BROWN, CALTAGIRONE, D. COSTA,  
GINGRICH, GRELL, JAMES, W. KELLER, KILLION, KIM, KORTZ,  
LONGIETTI, MAHONEY, MARSICO, MURT, PAINTER, PEIFER, PICKETT,  
READSHAW, ROCK, SAYLOR, SCHLOSSBERG, THOMAS, TOOHIL, WATSON,  
YOUNGBLOOD, GROVE, COHEN, HARHART AND QUINN,  
SEPTEMBER 22, 2014

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AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, OCTOBER 8, 2014

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## A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to study, in  
2 consultation with an advisory committee, the issue of truancy  
3 and school dropout prevention in this Commonwealth.

4 WHEREAS, Chronic truancy and school dropout rates continue to  
5 be critical problems nationally and in this Commonwealth, and  
6 educators, parents, community leaders and policymakers at all  
7 levels of government have focused attention on the need to  
8 address the academic achievement gap and the declining high  
9 school graduation rate; and

10 WHEREAS, Students who have unexcused absences from school and  
11 become truant are more likely to fail to maintain academic pace  
12 with their peers and to be at risk of dropping out of school;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Research indicates that truancy is a barrier to  
15 opportunities for future employment success and contributes to  
16 involvement in drug use, daytime crime and violence; and

1 WHEREAS, Adopting court performance measures for children in  
2 foster care may provide educational stability and success; and

3 WHEREAS, Current truancy policy and laws may not apply  
4 equally to all public schools, as the enforcement standards  
5 differ for traditional school districts and for charter and  
6 cyber charter schools; and

7 WHEREAS, Current truancy penalties may need further scrutiny  
8 and revision, as penalties and practices may not be effective at  
9 curtailing truancy; and

10 WHEREAS, The current collection of truancy data may be  
11 insufficient; and

12 WHEREAS, Schools, law enforcement, parents and courts may  
13 have insufficient authority to deal with truancy issues; and

14 WHEREAS, Current detention programs for truants may not be  
15 effective; therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint  
17 State Government Commission to do the following:

18 (1) Conduct a comprehensive study of the issues of  
19 truancy and school dropout prevention in this Commonwealth.

20 (2) Establish an advisory committee comprised of  
21 representatives of the Department of Education, educational  
22 organizations, the judiciary, district attorneys, law  
23 enforcement, public organizations involved in truancy issues, <--  
24 REPRESENTATIVES OF COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENCIES AND  
25 JUVENILE JUSTICE AGENCIES and other organizations selected by  
26 the Joint State Government Commission to consult with the  
27 Joint State Government Commission in conducting the study;  
28 and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the study to be conducted by the Joint State  
30 Government Commission include, but not be limited to, the

1 following:

2 (1) A thorough and comprehensive study of current  
3 truancy laws and policy.

4 (2) Barriers and best practices regarding education  
5 success and stability.

6 (3) Court competencies.

7 (4) Data collection.

8 (5) Measurement of educational outcomes for children in  
9 foster care.

10 (6) Statutes, best practices and legislative initiatives  
11 in other states.

12 (7) Studies or initiatives promoted by national  
13 educational advocacy organizations relating to truancy.

14 ~~(8) Specific enforcement in charter and cyber charter~~ <--  
15 ~~schools be reviewed by charter and cyber charter operatives;~~  
16 THE MANNER IN WHICH CHARTER AND CYBER CHARTER SCHOOLS ENFORCE <--  
17 THE TRUANCY LAWS OF THIS COMMONWEALTH AND IMPEDIMENTS TO  
18 ENFORCEMENT;

19 and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission hold  
21 informational meetings to receive testimony from professionals  
22 or organizations with expertise in truancy and truancy  
23 prevention; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission issue a  
25 report of its findings and recommendations to the House of  
26 Representatives not later than one year after the date of  
27 adoption of this resolution.