



Action Research

Mrs. Diane Wemlinger

Department/School Goal

- *Improve student attendance through a defined attendance policy and procedures for follow-up*

Action Research Question

- *Will having an attendance policy and procedures for follow up with home improve student attendance?*

Procedures

- Researched other districts policies/drafted ours
- Input from leadership team/finalized our plan
- Published plan in Newsletter, posted in main office, copies available in guidance office, and asked teachers to discuss policy in advisory
- Monitored policy by printing monthly attendance reports

Procedures

- Sent letters home:
 - 1st letter 6 or more days
 - 2nd letter 8 or more days
- Met with parents to develop plan for improvement
- If necessary filed truancy

Success School Attendance Policy

Excessive Absences – Excused or Unexcused

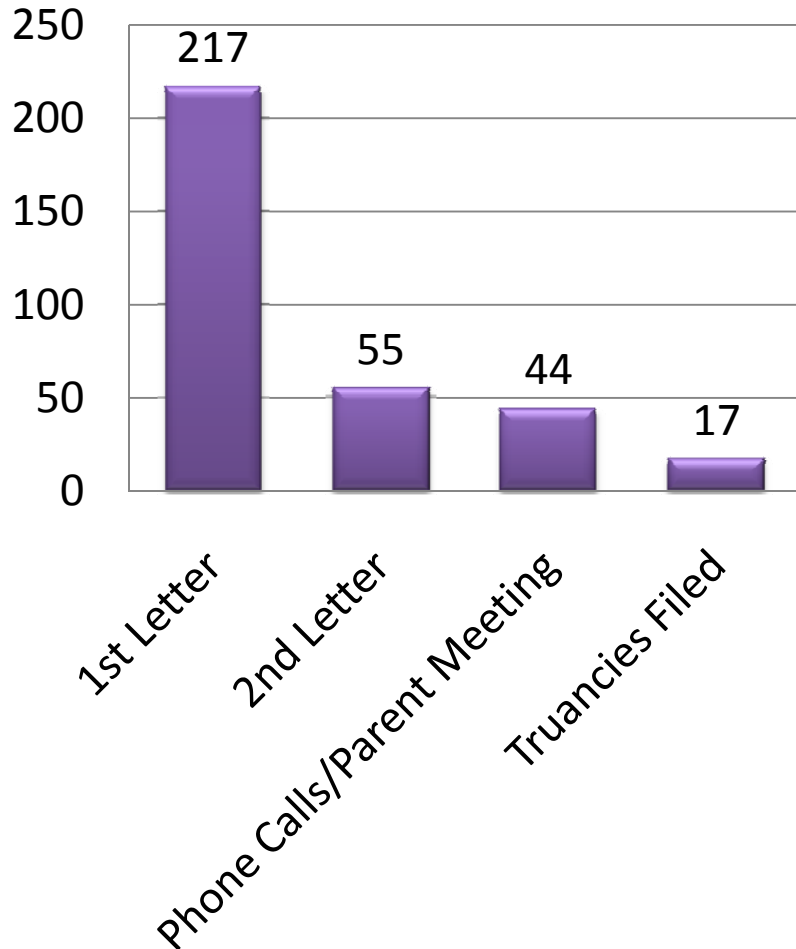
Step One	A teacher(s) will call home on the 3 rd -5 th absence in a marking period.
Step Two	The Counselor will send home a letter when the student has accumulated 6 or more days.
Step Three	The Counselor will mail home a certified, personal, letter when a student has accumulated 8 or more days absent. The letter will state a mandatory parent/guardian meeting will be scheduled to establish a plan for improved attendance.
Step Four	At the point a student accumulates 15 days, the parent/guardian will be notified that truancy may be filed with the Calhoun County Intermediate School District, which may result in a court appearance.

Resources/Bibliography

- Kube, B. & Ratigan, G. *Clearing House*. Does your school have a clue? Putting the Attendance Policy to the test.
 - “Simply impressing upon student the value of education will not make them improve their attendance pattern. ...should develop...policy that encourages students to have good attendance.”
- Holland, Ryan. *Battle Creek Enquirer*. Lakeview Writes New Plan for Truants: Schools Take Early Steps to Prevent Dropouts.
 - “Administrators stressed that the primary rational behind the standardization was to extend a hand before missing elementary school students that turn into high school dropouts.”
- Martinez, J. (2008, April 25). *Education World*. Retrieved 2008, from Triumph Over Truancy: Tips for Improving Student Attendance: http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin442.shtml
 - “A continuum of supports, including meaningful incentives for good attendance and consequences for poor attendance.”
 - “The key is finding out what is preventing the child from being in school, and working with the child and family to solve the problem.”
- Researched other districts policies

Baseline Data 2008-2009

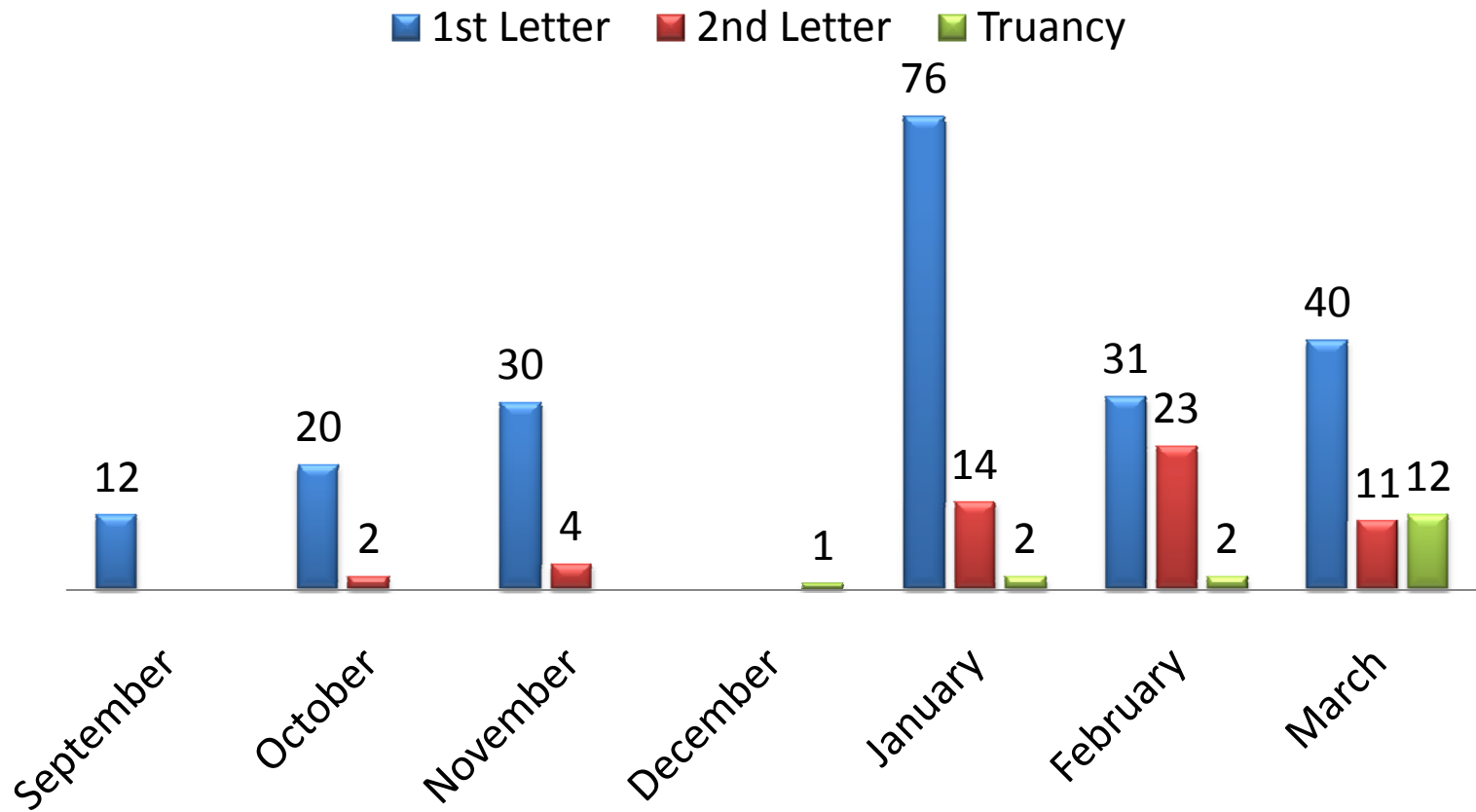
Students



- Average # of students at SMS is 430
- 217 students received a 1st letter home
- 55 of those 217 students received a 2nd letter home
- 44 phone calls and or personal conferences out of the total of 272 letters (1st letter and 2nd letter combined)
- 17 truancies filed out of 217 students

Monthly Attendance Report Data

217 Total Students



Case Studies

Aaron Brininstool

- 1st Letter Sent
- 2nd Letter Sent
- On March 17, 2009 met with parents to develop a plan for improved attendance. Previous attendance was 18.8 days absent and 9 tardies. As of April 20, 2009, Aaron has not missed one hour since March 17, 2009 meeting.

Travis Asher

- 1st Letter Sent
- 2nd Letter Sent
- On March 13, 2009 truancy meeting with CISD. Travis had missed 35 days. He has missed 4 days since this meeting.

Case Studies

Gage Gibbs

- 1st Letter Sent
 - Only letter mailed on November 21, 2008
 - Mom called on December 3, 2008 concerned with letter as most absences were excused
 - Discussed importance of good attendance.
 - Mom would not let him go home when sick.
 - Gage would come to Mrs. Wemlinger to let her know if he was sick and she would give him permission to go home
- Since December 3, 2008, Gage has missed 1.5 days.

Devon Santora

- 1st Letter Sent
- 2nd Letter Sent
- On February 18, 2009 truancy meeting with parents and CISD was held.
- Devon had missed 22.5 days.
- Plan was set in motion and Devon has not missed one day since. “I guess some parents just need a heavy hand to back them up”.
- Devon father stated, “I wish SMS had tracked attendance more carefully when my older son (Vaughn) was here...he may still be in school today.”

Conclusion

- For 2009-2010 School Year
 - Will keep policy as written in order to compare with baseline data collected 2008-2009 School Year.
- With this baseline data, it appears that careful tracking, monitoring and parent involvement improves student attendance.