

## August 2015 <br> Supplement to Annual Truancy Report

## Truancy Referrals

## Data on Repeat CFSA, Court and SST Referrals

Council requested an analysis of the subsequent re-enrollment and truancy patterns of students referred to an Attendance Student Support Team (SST) or to another agency, namely Child and Family Services (CFSA) or the Court Social Services (CSS, or court), for truancy in SY13-14. Our analysis of the data shows the number of students who (1) re-enrolled in or withdraw from DCPS in SY14-15, as well as (2) those who were truant in the next school year.

## Student Support Team Referrals

Students who accrue five or more unexcused absences should be referred to an attendance SST. The chart below delineates the number of students for whom an attendance Student Support Team (SST) meeting was held in SY13-14. The data is disaggregated to show which of those $13,700^{1}$ students (a) did not return to DCPS in SY14-15; (b) returned in SY14-15, but were no longer registered at the end of the year (EOY); (c) were registered at the end of the year; and (d) students for whom an attendance SST meeting was held in SY13-14, were registered at the end of SY14-15 and ended up being truant. ${ }^{2}$

Of the 13,700 DCPS students who had an SST meeting in SY13-14, 1,998 (14\%) did not return to DCPS in SY14-15. 1,625 (12\%) returned to the district, but were not registered at the end of SY14-15. 10,077 (74\%) returned to DCPS in SY14-15 and remained registered at the end of SY14-15. Of those 10,077 students who had an SST meeting in SY13-


## Truancy Repeaters

The chart below del

Supplement to DCPS Annual Truancy Report, August 2015

| SY14-15 Grade | \# Truant SY13-14 and <br> Registered EOY14-15 | \# Truant in both SY13-14 and <br> SY14-15 | \% of SY13-14 <br> Truant |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |

## Analysis of Truancy Definition and Comparative Calculations

Effective SY13-14, the legal definition of truancy in the District was modified to require that students attend $80 \%$ of the scheduled periods to be considered present. With this rule in place, any student missing more than $20 \%$ of school periods are now considered absent for the entire day, which has resulted in a significant increase in recorded absences and truancy calculations. This has had a particularly big effect in DCPS schools with four-period school days; specifically, the 80/20 rule now affects any student who misses just one period of the four in a regular school day.

In SY14-15, based on this new rule, there were 8,400 truant students district-wide. However, if the rule had been $75 / 25$, there would have been 7,207 truant students, a difference of 1,193 students. If the rule had been 60/40, 6,211 students would have been truant or 2,189 fewer; and if the rule had been 40/60, 5,384 students would have been truant

## Improving the SST process for Elementary and Secondary Schools

During the Truancy Roundtable held on June 29, 2015, Council raised a question regarding the comparative implementation of SST meetings in elementary and secondary schools. Currently, in elementary schools, social workers or administrators typically manage the attendance SST process. Secondary schools, for the most part, entrust their attendance counselors, who are non-clinical staff. econdary schools are required to hold many more SST meetings than elementary schools, based on the sheer volume of truant older students; this sometimes results in delayed interventions. Secondary school students are more independent, have more complex issues, deeply entrenched patterns of non-attendance and may be academically disengaged, and it is more difficult to match these students with appropriate interventions and services. It is important to note that DCPS can refer, but deally, staff with case
management skills and experience could better manage the SSTs and work more intensively with students and families to identify the barriers to attendance and identify the very best supports and interventions.

