



Oregon Juvenile Department Directors' Association

Representing Oregon's County Juvenile Departments

www.ojdda.org

OJDDA Statement Regarding 2025 Session Truancy-Related Legislation SB 456

The Oregon Juvenile Department Director's Association understands the value of education in supporting young people's development, skills, and ultimately their vocation. School attendance, school success, and having a trustworthy adult other than a parent in one's life are all protective factors for young people. Schools and teachers save lives and inspire greatness. Juvenile departments across the state work in partnership with educators to foster and build these protective factors with youth on supervision or receiving prevention services.

There are many reasons that young people fail to regularly attend school, often due to circumstances beyond their control, including family dynamics, and the preexisting communication, relationship and trust between the family and their student's assigned school.

OJDDA recommends a systemic approach to understanding and addressing school attendance, and the use of evidence-based practices shown to positively impact truancy, including assessing and addressing root causes in the areas of:

- Attendance and engagement systems
- Structures and processes that address truancy at the prevention, intervention and response levels
- Family engagement and understanding of attendance requirements
- School culture
- Family supports

OJDDA supports the following investments to address chronic absenteeism:

- Communication that is clearly written, provided in multiple formats, and continually engages with the young person and family that the school is eager for the student to return.
- Home visits by trained school personnel to investigate and problem-solve root causes and barriers with the young person's guardian in a supportive manner.
- Collaboration with other systems the young person and family are engaged with including juvenile justice, department of human services, and other community-based providers.
- Mentorship opportunities for the young person.
- Resources to support parent and guardian barriers to supporting their student's attendance.

OJDDA believes that youth experiencing chronic absenteeism are not best served in the juvenile justice system, but through prevention efforts including some local juvenile departments who work with Youth Development Oregon within the community to engage with youth and families experiencing chronic absenteeism using Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) funds.

OJDDA recommends additional funding to address chronic absenteeism through the JCP program which would support robust, statewide efforts in ways that best fit our communities.

[Colorado Dept Education](#)
[OBP article on 2023 legislative conversation on this topic.](#)