



JUSTICE GRANTS ADMINISTRATION

Justice Grants Administration (JGA): Community-based Truancy Reduction Program (CBTR) - FY14 DCPS Performance Oversight Status Report

Justice Grants Administration (JGA) has been working to address truancy in DCPS schools by building schools' capacity through collaborations with community-based organizations that can provide support and services to the families of elementary (and middle) school students that are frequently truant. The JGA Community-based Truancy Reduction Initiative objective is to reduce unexcused absences across DC public schools by eliminating barriers to school attendance. The program targets students with five to nine unexcused absences in order to address any practical, behavioral, financial and health challenges prior to Child and Family Services Agency and court referrals. Each school closely partners with a community-based organization with the capacity to provide fast-tracked wraparound services that quickly stabilizes the family. JGA initiated programs working with five community based providers in 17 elementary schools in 2013, and for school year 2014, JGA has contracted with seven providers and established programs in 37 elementary schools, with a middle school pilot in 13 schools (9 of which are education campuses also with elementary school programming), totaling in 41 school partners (see figure 1).

Figure 1.

50 programs at 41 schools

(37 elementary schools programs, 13 middle school program pilots)

Aiton ES	Amidon-Bowen ES	Burrville ES	Barnard ES
Browne EC	Bruce-Monroe ES	Drew ES	Cleveland ES
Columbia Heights EC	Cooke ES	Houston ES	Garrison ES
Harris ES	Hart MS – MS pilot	LaSalle-Backus EC	Jefferson MS
Kelly-Miller MS	Langley ES	Nalle ES	Malcolm X ES
Marie Reed ES	Miner ES	Plummer ES	Noyes EC
Orr ES	Payne ES	Shepherd ES	Simon ES
Savoy ES	Sharpe Health School	Thomas ES	Truesdell EC
Stanton ES	Takoma EC	Watkins ES	West EC
Tubman ES	Walker-Jones EC	Wilson ES	
Wheatley EC	Whittier EC		

The CBTR Initiative is designed to reduce chronic absenteeism by providing support services to identified families while fostering student achievement. Upon reaching 5 unexcused absences, a student is referred by the school to their partnered CBO who will work closely with the Student Support Team (SST) to identify barriers to attendance. A Family Support Worker (FSW) will conduct home visits in order to assess the needs of the student and their family, and develop a case management plan. Ongoing communication between the FSW and the SST ensure that the student's needs are being properly addressed.

JGA's CBTR has received 978 referrals from DCPS, of which 719 are considered official referrals (259 of which are for tracking purposes only). Out of the 719, 596 referrals had active CBO/parent exchanges; 123 had no response to outreach. 225 students and their families out of the 596 referrals are actively working with the CBO. The remaining 371 referrals comprises of 127 cases that were no longer considered truant once absence documentation was delivered to their school, school transfers, and/or parents promising to ensure school attendance. It also includes 204 that had no contact/no response, had reflected confusion over branding, and/or CBO data capacity issues. Lastly, current CFSA cases, schools withdrawing referrals, and other variables impacted the remaining referrals.

Given that the JGA Community-based Truancy Reduction program is in its second year of the pilot phase, concrete benchmarks and recommendations will be applied to the third and final year of the elementary school pilot phase. The middle school and future high school pilots will be tracked and evaluated using the same process as the elementary school intervention programming.

The desired outcomes are to:

- Establish structured programming across 37 low performing DCPS schools elementary schools.
- Develop and implement structured pilot program across 17 middle schools.
- Increase post-intervention In Seat Attendance Rate that results in high academic proficiency.
- Stabilize families by providing fast-tracked wrap-around services in order to reconnect youth to education, while reducing the probability of future youth risky behaviors.
- Decrease the number of students referred to the Child and Family Services Agency and Court Social Services.
- Expand program to all low performing middle schools prior to the end of the academic year.
- Begin pilot programming in approximately 4-9 low performing high schools