**Community Engagement Board Referral Process**

1. Prior to referral to a CEB, the school should have conducted and documented the following steps:
   1. Informed the student and family of unexcused absences, school policy on absences and the benefits of school attendance;
   2. A meeting with the student and family to complete a written plan to address the underlying causes of truancy with a referral to an intervention (Attendance meeting)
   3. Completion and follow up of the WARNs (or like) assessment
2. The student should have ample opportunity (at least 30 school days) to “work” their plan and demonstrate improved attendance prior to being referred to a CEB.
3. The student’s previous plan to address truancy should be included in the CEB referral. The plan should identify the reason school is important, barriers to attendance, action steps, a timeline and an identified support person at school.
4. A student whose attendance remains the same or declines after creating a plan is an ideal candidate for the truancy engagement board. If a student’s attendance has improved, it is encouraged that the school continues to follow up with the student and alter the plan as needed. Improvement is based upon the individual student and is not necessarily “perfect” attendance.
5. Updated attendance should be provided to CEB members, including if the student was present at school on the day of the board meeting. Attempts to contact the student on the day of the board meeting should be made to ensure attendance.
6. The CEB referral should include notes and other documentation of intervention efforts, including efforts by the school to follow up with the student regarding the success of their plan and intervention.
7. If a student has sensitive or traumatic issues that impact truancy, it is important that all pertinent information is disclosed to board members. If the youth does not want to share personal information, then a referral to the Community Engagement Board may not be appropriate and a one-on-one meeting to develop a plan is recommended.
8. Referrals are to be provided to board members at least one week prior to the truancy board. Referrals need to be provided to court staff present for boards at least two weeks prior to the board.

**Community Engagement Board**

1. The board is focused on truancy. Behaviors, grades and other subjects should only be discussed if they are connected to attendance or the student believes they are important to talk about.
2. When interpreters are needed the board should consist of a smaller number of individuals. The board should clarify with the interpreter how the meeting will be interpreted and allow ample time for the CEB.
3. It is important to start the board on time, both out of respect to the family’s time and for timeliness of subsequent meetings.
4. Board members need to be aware of trying to “fix the problem” for the student and family, as well as placing their own individual values and beliefs on the student or in the truancy plan.
5. It is important to ask the student why he/she wants to address the barriers to attendance or how he/she believes their plan will work. This is important to develop motivation for the intervention and can be used as a tool at follow up. Asking questions such as “Why would you want to “[Meet with your teacher in the morning before class?]” or “What would be the benefit of [going to study group]?” will help engage the youth and develop a plan that will actually work.
6. The youth should have a support person that is not part of the board if parents are unable to attend. A support person can be any family member, friend, school staff, community member, etc., as long as they are supportive of the board process.
7. The school should have a list of resources in their community and school available to the board members to help members make recommendations to the truancy plan.

**Board Formation and Conceptualization**

1. All board members are expected to be present for staffing cases (conceptualization) to sit on board. Conceptualization should begin at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the truancy board and all members must be present during the entire conceptualization session. It is recommended that the facilitator of the CEB guide conceptualization and focus on any previous plans that were completed, the WARNS and WARNS follow up, and changes in attendance. Conceptualization should take place in a quiet and confidential room. Roles for the CEB (greeter, facilitator, timekeeper) should be assigned during conceptualization.
2. All board members must be present for the entirety of the board in which they are participating. Members are not to come in late or leave early from the board, unless they are the established “greeter” and have explained their departure from the board to the family.
3. It is important to be purposeful when selecting board members. Areas of consideration are gender, race, culture, trauma awareness, and available community and school resources. Ideally the school personnel attending the board should have a relationship with the student and family, as well as direct knowledge of any previous plans created to address truancy.
4. A conference room and a separate room are necessary during the truancy board. The greeter requires a private space to greet families, orient them to the board process and conduct post CEB feedback forms.
5. Siblings should have separate CEB’s. Although some family issues may overlap, students have different barriers to truancy and require an individualized plan to adequately address risk and needs.
6. The student and family should be adequately informed and prepared about the purpose and benefits of a board. This will allow the board to maintain focus on truant behavior.
7. The ideal board size is 3-4 members. More than 5 members can be problematic in creating a supportive and non-intimidating atmosphere and can result in too much discussion amongst adults rather than with the student.
8. Board members can vary from one student to another, depending on the students’ needs and relationships. If a board member has not been trained the school district should meet with those individuals before the board to explain the purpose and process.

**Community Engagement Board Suggestions**

1. **CEB Member Roles**
   1. **Greeter**: Welcome the family in the waiting area (preferably a private, quiet area), set the “tone” of the meeting as welcoming and inviting, offer snacks and water if available.
      1. Inform family of mandated reporting
      2. Inform parents that the CEB will want to hear primarily from the student
      3. After the meeting, parent and student will be asked for their written feedback
   2. **Time Keeper**: Keep pace of CEB- 30 minutes of conversation, 15 minutes for truancy plan
   3. **Recorder**: Inform the family you will be keeping notes, document direct youth quotes
   4. **Facilitator**: Guide the CEB and will do the majority of talking/facilitation
2. **CEB:**
   1. It is helpful to have nametags for board members
   2. Facilitator welcomes family, CEB member introduce themselves and give a brief explanation of their CEB role
   3. Facilitator informs family that the CEB is a supportive and collaborative meeting with the goal to help the student develop a plan to increase attendance and success in school. CEB is a “safe place” to talk freely about issues getting in the way of school attendance. Inform family that CEB will be a conversation for 30 minutes, then they will create a truancy plan together. During the development of truancy plan, provide family with a blank copy to follow along
   4. Options for beginning the conversation:
      1. Review attendance absences and ask youth “Does this surprise you?”
      2. Walk through a “timeline” of a missed day of school vs. an attended day of school- what was different on the day the student missed school?
   5. At the end of the CEB, inform the student that someone from the school will follow up with them about how the truancy plan is working and ask the student for permission to share the plan with identified school support person. Identify which CEB member will share the information with the school support person.
3. **Points to Remember:**
   1. CEB roles are flexible and can adjust during the board, especially if the student has a good relationship with a board member (ie: the recorder may move into facilitator role if the student is engaging in conversation with him/her more easily)
   2. Focus on the underlying cause of the truant behavior, not the result of the WARNS, trauma or family situation if it does not directly relate to truancy- ask yourself “what is getting in the way of this student coming to school?”
   3. The student should do the majority of the talking, not the parent or CEB members
   4. Use language that the student will understand. Avoid words that students may not sue regularly, such as “truancy, barriers, values, BECCA bill, etc.”
   5. If a youth is resistant to a topic or having trouble identifying a support person at the school, roll with their resistance, move on and come back to it later in the CEB.

**Community Engagement Board Outline**

1. An invitation is mailed to the youth and his/her family or hand delivered by the school designee at least two weeks prior to CEB.
2. The week of the CEB, the school designee contacts the family and confirms appointment and answers any questions or concerns.
3. When the family arrives they are greeted by someone from the CEB (greeter), they are explained what to expect for the session.
4. When the family enters the room, they are greeted and introductions take place; this includes name, who they represent and why they are a part of the CEB.
5. The “facilitator” goes over the attendance records and asks the youth “does this surprise you…” This question initiates conversation.
6. The youth should do the majority of the talking and comes up with a plan to address the truant behavior. CEB members and parents should not direct youth or “carry” the conversation.
7. A “support person” is identified and the contract is recorded, summarized by the “recorder” making sure that everyone understands and any barriers or concerns are addressed and signed by all parties present. A timeline should be established for review and completion.
8. The original is kept by the school, a copy to both the youth and parent and the final copy is given to the “support person” who is identified by the youth. A release of information should be signed after the contract is signed to allow for the school to monitor progress.
9. School will monitor progress of contract and “support person” will follow up within a week of the CEB meeting with the student

The contract must include:

1. Identify barriers to school attendance
2. Methods for improving attendance such as connecting students and their families with community services, culturally appropriate promising practices, and evidence based services such as functional family therapy, multisystem therapy, aggression replacement training
3. Suggesting to the school district that the child enroll in another school, an alternative education program, an education center, a skill center, a dropout prevention program, or another public or private educational program.
4. Recommendation to the juvenile court that a juvenile be referred to a HOPE center or crisis residential center

\*If student/parent do not attend CEB meeting the school shall make every effort to identify reason behind missed meeting and to determine whether the missed meeting was “willful”.

\*If the CEB fails to reach an agreement or the parent or student does not comply with the agreement within the timeline for completion set by the CEB, the CEB may file a petition with the juvenile court.