Mayor’s Interagency Task Force on Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism and School Engagement

the CHALLENGE

Over **200,000 NYC public school students – 1 out of 5 –** were chronically absent last year, meaning they missed a month or more of school.

**3 out of 4 students who are chronically absent** in the sixth grade never graduate from high school.

**Students with good attendance** were more than twice as likely to score proficient on NYS examinations than those who missed more than 20 days of school.

**Ninth grade attendance** is a better predictor of graduation than eighth grade test scores.

**79% of NYC children in the juvenile justice system** have records of chronic absenteeism; nearly half of them were severely chronically absent, meaning they missed more than 38 days of school in a year.

the TASK FORCE

In the summer of 2010, Mayor Bloomberg launched the Interagency Task Force on Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism and School Engagement – the first-ever interagency effort to reduce truancy and chronic absenteeism in public schools in NYC. In the fall of 2010, the Task Force initiated the *Every Student, Every Day* campaign – the nation’s most comprehensive effort to tackle chronic absenteeism, with multi-sector strategies mobilizing over a dozen city agencies and private partners to combat this complex problem.

The causes of absenteeism are varied, making interagency collaboration the best way to address the problem. The agencies primarily responsible for implementing the Task Force’s initiatives, along with the Department of Education, include: NYC Service, the Department of Homeless Services, the Department for the Aging, the Administration for Children’s Services, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the New York City Police Department, the Department of Youth and Community Development, the New York City Housing Authority, the Human Resources Administration, and the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation.

the IMPACT

**11,800 DAYS**

**MENTORS ARE HELPING STUDENTS GET BACK ON TRACK:**

- **IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**, 49% of students with full-year mentors exited chronic absenteeism status vs. 42% of students without mentors. **17% MORE**
- **IN HIGH SCHOOLS**, 23% of students with full-year mentors exited chronic absenteeism status vs. 18% of students without mentors. **27% MORE**

**PILOT SCHOOLS WITH FULL-YEAR SUCCESS MENTORS OUTPERFORMED COMPARISON SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS CITYWIDE.**

Learn more at: [WWW.NYC.GOV/EVERYSTUDENT](http://WWW.NYC.GOV/EVERYSTUDENT)
Truancy is often a child’s first step in the wrong direction. Chronic absenteeism leads to higher rates of school failure, delinquency, and dropping out. From there, it is often hard to recover. We are going to focus on truant children because keeping them in school is an investment in their health, future success, and everyone’s safety.

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg

The power and scale of these Task Force initiatives are profound. It is the first time any city has attempted to reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy in such a comprehensive, strategic, and collaborative manner. What is striking is that the Task Force is addressing the problem on so many fronts simultaneously in its initiatives, recognizing the complexity and multiple causes of truancy and chronic absenteeism... [It] should serve as a model for all cities attempting to address this problem.

Dr. Robert Balfanz, Johns Hopkins University

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