

Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Final Report to the Minnesota Legislature

December 2024

Executive Summary

The Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group (“Study Group”) was established in 2024 by Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 115, Article 1, Section 21. The Study Group was created to make recommendations to the relevant legislative committees in order to increase student attendance and reduce truancy, particularly in the wake of the 2020 Covid Pandemic and the subsequent rise in truancy rates across both Minnesota and nationwide. The Study Group is required to submit its recommendations in a report by the end of 2024.

The Study Group hosted meetings both in-person and online via Zoom to receive feedback from the Department of Education, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, tribal officials, county officials, school boards, school administrators, parents, and students from across the state. Testimony and discussion raised a myriad of issues and current programs tackling student attendance.

From this review, the Study Group recommended 1) the CP006 Draft Legislation in Appendix A and 2) eight topics of exploration for the Legislature:

1. Explore Consistent Definitions around Attendance
2. Explore Coordination Among State and Local Agencies
3. Explore Community Engagement - Cultural/Lived Experience School Credit
4. MDE Recommendation – Explore Increased Data on Attendance
5. Explore Increased Data Sharing Between School Districts and County Governments
6. Explore School Staff Dedicated to Truancy Reduction
7. Explore Transportation of Students to and from School
8. Explore Community Support

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Membership

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 115, Article 1, Section 21.

Subd. 2. **Members.** (a) The legislative study group on student attendance and truancy consists of:

(1) four duly elected and currently serving members of the house of representatives, two appointed by the speaker of the house and two appointed by the house minority leader; and

(2) four duly elected and currently serving senators, two appointed by the senate majority leader and two appointed by the senate minority leader.

(b) The appointments must be made by June 15, 2024, and expire December 31, 2024.

(c) If a vacancy occurs, the leader of the caucus in the house of representatives or senate to which the vacating study group member belonged must fill the vacancy.

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair

Appointed by: Speaker of the House

Representative Ben Bakeberg

Appointed by: House Minority Leader

Representative Bryan Lawrence

Appointed by: House Minority Leader

Representative Bianca Virnig

Appointed by: Speaker of the House

Senator Mary Kunesh, Vice-Chair

Appointed by: Senate Majority Leader

Senator Steve Cwodzinski

Appointed by: Senate Majority Leader

Senator Robert Farnsworth

Appointed by: Senate Minority Leader

Senator Michael Kreun

Appointed by: Senate Minority Leader

Enabling Legislation

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 115, Article 1, Section 21.

Subd. 3. **Duties.** (a) The legislative study group must study and evaluate ways to increase student attendance and reduce truancy. In preparing the recommendations, the group must consider the following:

- (1) current statutory requirements relating to student attendance and truancy;
- (2) currently available attendance data and additional data that would help schools and policy makers understand and reduce absenteeism;
- (3) the effect of school programs and strategies to improve attendance;
- (4) the role of school principals in addressing student absenteeism;
- (5) the role of the Department of Education in addressing student absenteeism;
- (6) the role of counties in addressing truancy; and
- (7) how truant students are tracked across county lines.

(b) The study group must identify and include in its report any statutory changes needed to implement the study group recommendations.

Overview of Meetings

First Meeting- July 29, 2024

The Study Group elected Representative Heather Keeler as Chair. Members of the Study Group and staff introduced themselves. Staff from the Legislative Coordinating Commission provided an overview of the Study Group's enabling legislation. Members of the audience introduced themselves.

Second Meeting- August 12, 2024

The Study Group elected Senator Mary Kunesh as Vice Chair. The Study Group heard brief introductions from 23 different stakeholders from EdAllies, Hennepin County Attorney's Office, Bloomington Public Schools, Sanneh Foundation, Association of Metropolitan School Districts, Columbia Heights Public Schools, Minnesota School Social Workers Association, students at Prior Lake High School, Savage Police Department, Minnesota School Boards Association, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals / Minnesota Elementary Principals Association, Minnesota Alliance with Youth, Minnesota Department of Education, Multicultural Autism Action Network, Scott County, and Playworks Minnesota.

Third Meeting- August 26, 2024

The Study Group heard brief introductions from 23 different stakeholders from Mitchell Hamline School of Law, Olmsted County, Polk County, East Grand Forks Public Schools including several students, White Earth Band of Ojibwe, Bug O Nay Ge Shig School, Brown County, Minnesota State University Mankato, Otter Tail County, Northfield Public Schools, Northfield Promise, Red Wing Public Schools, BARR Center, Detroit Lakes High School, Anoka Hennepin School District, Saint Paul Public Schools, School Nurse Organization of Minnesota, and Bloomington Public Schools.

Fourth Meeting- September 9, 2024

The Study Group heard testimony from several students from BlueSky Online; Camden High School, Minneapolis; Southwest High School, Minneapolis; Fergus Falls Area Learning Center; and Duluth East High School. The Study Group then heard a presentation by EdAllies going over student attendance data in Minnesota and the issues around using it.

Fifth Meeting- September 23, 2024

The Minnesota Department of Education presented to the Study Group about its role in collecting student attendance data. The Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families provided a brief introduction about its creation and its role in the issues around student truancy. The Education Commission of the States presented about efforts other states have taken to reduce student truancy in the wake of the pandemic. The members of the Study Group concluded the meeting with a discussion about their takeaways and their future aims.

Sixth Meeting- October 7, 2024

The Study Group heard a presentation from Scott County and Shakopee Public Schools about the work they are doing together to reduce student truancy. The Study Group then invited the stakeholders in attendance to join the table for a discussion about what first legislative changes are

needed to deal with student attendance that can be done with bipartisan support in the 2025 legislative session.

Seventh Meeting- October 21, 2024

The Study Group discussed possible avenues for dealing with student attendance and voted to move forward with recommendations in eight subject areas for its preliminary report:

1. Consistent Definitions
2. Coordination Among State and Local Agencies
3. Community Engagement - Cultural/Lived Experience School Credit
4. MDE Recommendation – Increased Data on Attendance
5. Increased Data Sharing Between School Districts and County Governments
6. School Staff Dedicated to Truancy Reduction
7. Transportation of Students to and from School
8. Community Support

Eighth Meeting- November 18, 2024

The Study Group heard feedback on the preliminary report from a school social worker, EdAllies, the Pacer Coalition, Minnesota Youth Council, Hennepin County Attorney’s Office Be@School Program, the Minnesota School Board Association, Nicollet County Commission, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association, Minnesota Disability Law Center at Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, and a Twice Exceptional Advocate.

Ninth Meeting- December 2, 2024

The Study Group heard from the school districts involved in the Student Attendance Pilot Program (Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 115, Article 1, Section 21): Minneapolis, Columbia Heights, Red Lake, Sauk Rapids-Rice, Mankato, Moorhead, Cook County, Windom, Burnsville, Rochester, Northfield, and Chisholm about the Pilot Program’s current work.

Tenth Meeting- December 16, 2024

The Study Group approved recommendations for its final report. 1) the CP006 Draft Legislation (see Appendix A) and 2) eight topics of exploration for the Legislature:

1. Explore Consistent Definitions around Attendance
2. Explore Coordination Among State and Local Agencies
3. Explore Community Engagement - Cultural/Lived Experience School Credit
4. MDE Recommendation – Explore Increased Data on Attendance
5. Explore Increased Data Sharing Between School Districts and County Governments
6. Explore School Staff Dedicated to Truancy Reduction
7. Explore Transportation of Students to and from School
8. Explore Community Support

Eleventh Meeting – December 20, 2024

The Study Group approved the final report.

Recommendations

The Study Group adopted two recommendations: 1) the CP006 Draft Legislation in Appendix A and 2) eight topics of exploration for the Legislature:

- 1. Explore Consistent Definitions around Attendance**
- 2. Explore Coordination Among State and Local Agencies**
- 3. Explore Community Engagement - Cultural/Lived Experience School Credit**
- 4. MDE Recommendation – Explore Increased Data on Attendance**
- 5. Explore Increased Data Sharing Between School Districts and County Governments**
- 6. Explore School Staff Dedicated to Truancy Reduction**
- 7. Explore Transportation of Students to and from School**
- 8. Explore Community Support**

Staff Contributions

This report was compiled by LCC staff members, Nick Nigro and Meena Xiong, and would not have been possible without contributions of staff members from the Senate, House of Representatives and Legislative Coordinating Commission.

Appendices

Appendix A: CP006 Draft Legislation

Appendix B: Statutory Authority

Appendix C: Meeting Minutes

Appendix D: Committee Materials

Appendix A: CP006 Draft Legislation

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; student attendance; referring to statutes governing student
1.3 attendance; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 120A.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **[120A.37] ATTENDANCE PROVISIONS CODED ELSEWHERE.**

1.6 Subdivision 1. **Scope.** The sections referred to in subdivisions 2 through 11 are codified
1.7 outside this section. Those sections include many but not all the sections governing student
1.8 attendance.

1.9 Subd. 2. **Age of instruction.** (a) Compulsory instruction requirements based on age are
1.10 governed by section 120A.22, subdivision 5.

1.11 (b) Limitation on admission to a public school based on age is governed by section
1.12 120A.20.

1.13 Subd. 3. **District of residence.** (a) Admission to a public school operated by a district
1.14 is free to a child who resides within the district in accordance with section 120A.20.

1.15 (b) A student may attend a school operated by a district in which the student does not
1.16 reside in accordance with section 124D.03. A nonresident district may terminate the
1.17 enrollment of a nonresident student if the student is a habitual truant or has been absent
1.18 without lawful excuse in accordance with section 124D.03, subdivision 12.

1.19 Subd. 4. **Nonpublic school student reporting.** The person or nonpublic school in charge
1.20 of providing instruction to a child must submit a report to the superintendent of the district
1.21 in which the child resides, and maintain documentation in accordance with section 120A.24.

2.1 Subd. 5. **Transportation.** (a) A school board must provide transportation for enrolled
2.2 students residing within the district in accordance with section 123B.88. A district may
2.3 provide between-building bus transportation along school routes for students attending
2.4 programs at an area learning center in accordance with section 123B.88, subdivision 13.

2.5 (b) A school district may revoke a student's bus riding privileges in accordance with
2.6 sections 121A.59 and 123B.91.

2.7 (c) A school district transporting students must do so using a school bus, including a
2.8 multifunction school activity bus or a type III vehicle, in accordance with chapters 169 and
2.9 171. A district may use a vehicle that otherwise qualifies as a type III vehicle where the
2.10 operator does not meet the requirements of section 171.321, to transport students in a
2.11 nonscheduled situation in accordance with section 169.454, subdivision 13.

2.12 Subd. 6. **Students with disabilities.** (a) A school board must provide transportation for
2.13 a student with a disability in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education
2.14 Act, section 123B.88, and chapter 125A.

2.15 (b) A district must provide a student with disabilities a free appropriate public education
2.16 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and special instruction and services
2.17 under chapter 125A.

2.18 Subd. 7. **Funding.** A school district may use its unrestricted general fund money or its
2.19 reserved basic skills revenue for programs to reduce truancy in accordance with section
2.20 126C.15.

2.21 Subd. 8. **Absences.** (a) A parent or guardian may apply to a district to have a child
2.22 excused from attendance, and the district may approve the application in accordance with
2.23 section 120A.22, subdivision 12; an excused absence may include absence so that the child
2.24 can attend, for up to three hours a week, instruction by a Tribal spiritual or cultural adviser,
2.25 or a school for religious instruction. Section 120A.22, subdivision 12 identifies the persons
2.26 to whom a parent may apply for an excused absence.

2.27 (b) A district must make reasonable efforts to accommodate a student who wishes to be
2.28 excused from a curricular activity for a religious observance or American Indian cultural
2.29 practice, observance, or ceremony, in accordance with section 120A.35.

2.30 Subd. 9. **Removal from attendance roll.** A student who has been absent from school
2.31 for 15 consecutive school days during the regular school year is dropped from the roll and
2.32 classified as withdrawn in accordance with section 126C.05.

2.33 Subd. 10. **Truancy.** (a) Truancy programs are governed by chapter 260A.

3.1 (b) A student who is absent from school without valid excuse within a single school
3.2 year for three days if the child is in elementary school, or three or more class periods if the
3.3 child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school, is a continuing truant in
3.4 accordance with section 260A.02, subdivision 3.

3.5 (c) A district must notify the child's parent or guardian that the child is a truant in
3.6 accordance with section 260A.03.

3.7 (d) Truancy programs may include community-based projects, truancy service centers,
3.8 and school attendance review boards, in accordance with section 260A.04.

3.9 (e) A county attorney may establish a truancy mediation program under section 260A.07.
3.10 A school district may refer a student who is a truant to the county attorney if the student
3.11 continues to be a truant after the district has notified the parent or guardian that the child is
3.12 a truant under section 260A.03. Disclosure of student data to the county attorney for purposes
3.13 of addressing truancy is governed by sections 13.32, subdivision 3, paragraph (c); section
3.14 260A.07; and chapter 260E.

3.15 Subd. 11. **Maltreatment.** (a) The definition of "child in need of protection or services,"
3.16 which includes a habitual truant, is governed by section 260C.007, subdivision 6. The
3.17 definition of "habitual truant" is governed by section 260C.007, subdivision 19.

3.18 (b) Presumptions regarding the intent of the parent when a child is absent from school
3.19 for purposes of determining compliance with compulsory instruction laws are governed by
3.20 section 260C.04, subdivision 11.

3.21 (c) Habitual truancy may also be considered reportable maltreatment of a minor under
3.22 chapter 260E. Maltreatment under section 260E.03, subdivision 12, includes neglect, under
3.23 subdivision 15. Neglect includes failure to ensure that the child is educated as defined in
3.24 sections 120A.22 and 260C.163, subdivision 11.

3.25 Subd. 10. **Criminal penalties.** (a) A person who fails or refuses to provide for instruction
3.26 of a child who is required to receive instruction when notified to do so by a truant officer
3.27 or other official, or who meets other conditions, is guilty of a petty misdemeanor, in
3.28 accordance with section 120A.34.

3.29 (b) A person who causes or contributes to a child being a habitual truant may be charged
3.30 with a felony in accordance with section 609.26.

Appendix B: Statutory Authority

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 115, Article 1, Section 21.

Sec. 21. **STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP.**

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** A legislative study group is established to study issues related to student attendance and truancy.

Subd. 2. **Members.** (a) The legislative study group on student attendance and truancy consists of:

(1) four duly elected and currently serving members of the house of representatives, two appointed by the speaker of the house and two appointed by the house minority leader; and

(2) four duly elected and currently serving senators, two appointed by the senate majority leader and two appointed by the senate minority leader.

(b) The appointments must be made by June 15, 2024, and expire December 31, 2024.

(c) If a vacancy occurs, the leader of the caucus in the house of representatives or senate to which the vacating study group member belonged must fill the vacancy.

Subd. 3. **Duties.** (a) The legislative study group must study and evaluate ways to increase student attendance and reduce truancy. In preparing the recommendations, the group must consider the following:

(1) current statutory requirements relating to student attendance and truancy;

(2) currently available attendance data and additional data that would help schools and policy makers understand and reduce absenteeism;

(3) the effect of school programs and strategies to improve attendance;

(4) the role of school principals in addressing student absenteeism;

(5) the role of the Department of Education in addressing student absenteeism;

(6) the role of counties in addressing truancy; and

(7) how truant students are tracked across county lines.

(b) The study group must identify and include in its report any statutory changes needed to implement the study group recommendations.

Subd. 4. **Meetings and chair.** (a) The speaker of the house must designate a member to convene the first meeting of the study group, which must be held no later than July 15, 2024. Members of the study group must elect a chair from among the members present at the first meeting. The study group must meet periodically.

(b) Meetings of the study group are subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 3.055. The meetings may be conducted by interactive television.

Subd. 5. **Administrative support.** The Department of Education must cooperate with the legislative study group and provide information requested in a timely fashion. The Legislative Coordinating Commission must provide meeting space, technical and administrative support, and staff support for the study group. The study group may hold meetings in any publicly accessible location in the Capitol complex that is equipped with technology that can facilitate remote testimony.

Subd. 6. **Consultation with stakeholders.** In making recommendations, the study group must consult with interested and affected stakeholders.

Subd. 7. **Report.** The study group must submit a preliminary report with its recommendations to the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education by November 1, 2024, and a final report by December 31, 2024.

Subd. 8. **Expiration.** The study group expires December 31, 2024, or on the date upon which the final report required under subdivision 7 is submitted to the legislature, whichever is later.

Appendix C: Meeting Minutes



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, July 29, 2024
10:30 AM
Room G-15, State Capitol
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsg/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Steve Cwodzinski
Senator Robert Farnsworth
Senator Mary Kunesh

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler, designated convener, called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 10:38 AM in Room G-15 of the State Capitol. A quorum was present.

Introduction of Members and Staff

Members appointed to the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group introduced themselves. LCC staff, Nick Nigro, Research Analyst, and Meena Xiong, Commission Administrative Assistant, introduced themselves.

Election of Chair

Rep. Bakeberg nominated Rep. Keeler to chair the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. Rep. Keeler was elected Chair of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group.

Overview of Enabling Statute

Nick Nigro, LCC Research Analyst, provided an overview of the statute creating the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group.

Introduction of Audience

Members of the audience were invited to introduce themselves:

Bob Driver, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals
Michelle Krell, Executive Director, Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association
Colleen Kaibel, Minneapolis Public Schools

Megan Arriola, Legislative Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Education
Chuck Wiger, Building Assets Reducing Risk
Kris Amundson, Association of Metropolitan School Districts
Denise Dittrich, School Boards
Matt Shaver, Policy Director, Ed Allies
Josh Downham, Minneapolis Public Schools
Rick Heller

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:14 AM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, August 12, 2024

11:00 AM

Room 1100, Minnesota Senate Building

<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsq/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair

Representative Ben Bakeberg

Representative Bryan Lawrence

Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Steve Cwodzinski

Senator Robert Farnsworth

Senator Mary Kunesh

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 11:09 AM in Room 1100 of the Minnesota Senate Building. A quorum was present.

Approval of July 29, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Bakeberg moved to approve the minutes of the July 29, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Election of Vice Chair

Rep. Keeler nominated Sen. Kunesh to chair the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. Sen. Kunesh was elected Vice Chair of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group.

Introduction of Stakeholders / Engaged Partners

The Study Group heard from several stakeholders and engaged partners about student attendance and truancy:

- *Matt Shaver, Policy Director at EdAllies*
- *Mary Moriarty, Hennepin County Attorney*
- *Ashley Hanson-Oni, Social Worker at Bloomington Public Schools (ISD 271)*

- *Carol Nanneman, McKinney Vento Students in Transition/Foster Care District Liaison at Bloomington Public Schools (ISD 271)*
- *Robert Murry, Senior Dreamline Director at The Sanneh Foundation*
- *Scott Croonquist, Executive Director at Association of Metropolitan School Districts*
- *Zena Stenvik, Superintendent at Columbia Heights Public Schools*
- *Bondo Nyembwe, Executive Director of Educational Services at Columbia Heights Public Schools*
- *Christy McCoy, Legislative Coordinator at MN School Social Workers Association (MSSWA)*
- *Grace Canny, Student at Prior Lake High School*
- *Zavia Sidney, Student at Prior Lake High School*
- *Jacqui Kelch, School Resource Officer at Savage Police Department*
- *Denise Dittrich, Director of Government Relations at Minnesota School Boards Association*
- *Roger Aronson, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals / Minnesota Elementary Principals Association*
- *Jim Davnie, Executive Director at Minnesota Alliance with Youth*
- *Angela Mansfield, Assistant Commissioner at MN Department of Education*
- *Ivy Wheeler, COMPASS Director at MN Department of Education*
- *Lana Peterson, Data Practices and Analytics Director at MN Department of Education*
- *Fatima Molas, Co-founder at Multicultural Autism Action Network (MAAN)*
- *Nikki Hallberg, Scott County Prevention Supervisor*
- *Shauna McDonald, Executive Director at Playworks Minnesota*
- *Ashley Hightower, Hennepin County Attorney's Office - Be@School Program*

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:24 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, August 26, 2024
2:30 PM
Remote via Zoom
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsg/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Mary Kunesh, Vice Chair
Senator Robert Farnsworth

Members Excused:

Senator Steve Cwodzinski

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:33 PM on Zoom. A quorum was present.

Approval of August 12, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Bakeberg moved to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Introduction of Stakeholders / Engaged Partners

The Study Group heard from several stakeholders and engaged partners about student attendance and truancy:

- Hannah Burton, Equal Justice Works Fellow at Mitchell Hamline School of Law
- Dr. Vera Ndumbe, Parent and Children Excel (PACE) program in Olmsted County
- Karen Warmack, Director of Polk County Social Services
- Dekka Ali, School Liaison at East Grand Forks Senior High School
- Sajid Nur, East Grand Forks Student
- Habsa Good, East Grand Forks Student
- Bahja Yussuf, East Grand Forks Student
- Eugene Sommers, District II Representative of White Earth Band of Ojibwe
- Dan McKeon, Superintendent of Bug O Nay Ge Shig School

- Andy Braulick, Truancy Officer for Brown County
- Dr. Barbara Carson, Professor Emeritus of Sociology from Minnesota State University Mankato
- Melanie Cole, School Engagement Social Worker for Otter Tail County Human Services and member of the Fergus Falls School Board
- Carrie Duba, MTSS Coordinator and Systems Coach at Northfield Public Schools
- Cindy Santa, Family Engagement Navigator at Northfield Promise
- Leah Johnson, Prairie Island Tribal Member and Middle School Liaison for Red Wing Public Schools
- Rob Metz, Deputy Director at BARR Center
- Josh Omang, Principal of Detroit Lakes High School
- Julia Messenger, Assistant Director of Mental Health and Emotional Wellness at Anoka Hennepin School District
- Britt Olean, District School Social Worker at Anoka Hennepin School District
- Kathy Kimani, Director of the Office of School Support at Saint Paul Public Schools
- Tara Cliff, President of School Nurse Organization of Minnesota
- Ashley Hanson-Oni, Social Worker at Bloomington Public Schools
- Carol Nannemann, McKinney Vento District Liaison at Bloomington Public Schools

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:41 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, September 9, 2024
2:30 PM
Ladyslipper Room, Centennial Office
Building and Zoom
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsq/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Steve Cwodzinski
Senator Robert Farnsworth

Members Excused:

Senator Mary Kunesh, Vice Chair

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:36 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of August 26, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Bakeberg moved to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Testimony from Students

The Study Group heard from several students about student attendance and truancy:

- *Priscilla, Student at BlueSky Online*
- *Isiah, Student at Camden High School, Minneapolis*
- *Madeline, Student at Southwest High School, Minneapolis*
- *Karl, Student at Fergus Falls Area Learning Center*
- *Bianca, Student at Fergus Falls Area Learning Center*
- *Nyssa, Student at Duluth East High School*

Ed Allies Presentation

Matt Shaver, Policy Director at Ed Allies presented to the Study Group on student attendance data.

Member Discussion

The Study Group discussed their takeaways from previous testimony and future plans.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:37 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, September 23, 2024
2:30 PM
Zoom
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsfg/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Mary Kunesh, Vice Chair
Senator Robert Farnsworth

Members Excused:

Senator Steve Cwodzinski

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Bakeberg called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:32 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of September 9, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Lawrence moved to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Minnesota Department of Education Presentation

The Study Group heard from the several individuals at the Minnesota Department of Education about school attendance.

- Angela Mansfield, Assistant Commissioner of Educational Opportunity
- Lana Peterson, Director of Data Practices and Analytics
- Michael Diedrich, Elementary and Secondary Education Act Policy Analyst

Department of Children, Youth, and Families Introduction

Bharti Wahi, Interim Assistant Commissioner of Child Safety and Permanency at the Department of Children, Youth, and Families presented to the Study Group about the progress of the department's creation and the department's role in dealing with truancy.

Education Commission of the States Presentation

Joel Moore, Assistant Director of State Relations, and Lauren Bloomquist, Policy Analyst, of the Education Commission of the States presented to the Study Group on the efforts of other states to deal with truancy and student attendance.

Member Discussion

The Study Group discussed their takeaways from previous testimony and future plans.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, October 7, 2024
2:30 PM
Ladyslipper Room, Centennial Office
Building and Zoom
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsq/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Mary Kunesh, Vice Chair
Senator Robert Farnsworth

Members Excused:

Senator Steve Cwodziński

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:31 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of September 23, 2024, Minutes

Sen. Kunesh moved to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Counties Presentation

Nikki Conway, Child Welfare Manager at Scott County, and Jim Miklausich, Assistant Superintendent at Shakopee Public Schools, presented to the Study Group about how the two organizations are working together to reduce student truancy.

Roundtable Discussion

The Study Group invited several stakeholders to join the table and discuss potential bipartisan recommendations the Study Group can make.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, October 21, 2024
2:30 PM
Zoom
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsg/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Mary Kunesch, Vice Chair
Senator Robert Farnsworth

Members Excused:

Senator Steve Cwodzinski

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:35 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of October 7, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Virnig moved to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Preliminary Recommendation Discussion

The Study Group discussed possible recommendations for its report.

Rep. Lawrence moved the Study Group charge Chair Keeler and staff to move forward with eight topics for recommendations:

1. Definitions
2. Agency interaction
3. Community engagement - Cultural/lived experience school credit
4. MDE recommendation – increased data on truancy
5. Increased data sharing between school districts and county governments
6. Liaison role
7. Transportation
8. Community support - hiring outside services for schools

A vote was taken. The motion prevailed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, November 18, 2024
2:30 PM
Room G-3, State Capitol
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsdg/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Mary Kunesch, Vice Chair
Senator Steve Cwodzinski
Senator Robert Farnsworth
Senator Michael Kreun

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:32 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of October 21, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Lawrence moved to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Staff Overview of Preliminary Report Recommendations

The Study Group heard an overview of the recommendations in the preliminary report from Nick Nigro, LCC Research Analyst.

Public Testimony on Preliminary Report Recommendations

The Study Group heard testimony from members of the public about the recommendations in its preliminary report:

- Michelle Bryant, School Social Worker at Susan Lindgren Elementary School (St. Louis Park)
- Matt Shaver, Policy Director at EdAllies
- Claire Eckley, Pacer Coalition
- Cathy Manning, Pacer Coalition
- Priscilla Mayowa, Director at Minnesota Youth Council

- Ashley Hightower, Community Engagement and Strategy Manager at Hennepin County Attorney's Office Be@School Program
- Terry Morrow, General Counsel at Minnesota School Boards Association and Nicollet County Commissioner
- Roger Aronson, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals and Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association
- Jessica Heiser, youth Services/Education Team Leader at Minnesota Disability Law Center, Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid
- Rick Heller, Twice Exceptional Advocate

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:16 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, December 2, 2024
2:30 PM
Remote Via Zoom
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsgr/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Mary Kunesch, Vice Chair
Senator Steve Cwodzinski
Senator Robert Farnsworth
Senator Michael Kreun

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:33 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of November 18, 2024, Minutes

Representative Virnig moved to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. Representative Lawrence provided the second. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Presentations

The Study Group heard from several school districts and their involvement in the Pilot Program:

- Chisholm Public Schools
- Moorhead Public Schools
- Rochester Public Schools
- Mankato Public Schools
- Red Lake School District
- Minneapolis Public Schools
- Cook County Public Schools
- Windom Public Schools
- Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools
- Northfield Public Schools
- Burnsville-Eagan-Savage Public Schools
- Columbia Heights Public Schools

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:51 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Monday, December 16, 2024
2:30 PM
Room G-3, State Capitol
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsg/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence
Representative Bianca Virnig

Senator Mary Kunesh, Vice Chair
Senator Steve Cwodzinski
Senator Robert Farnsworth
Senator Michael Kreun

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:31 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of October 21, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Lawrence moved to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Member Discussion on Final Recommendations

The Study Group discussed its preliminary recommendations and potential final recommendations.

Rep. Keeler moved to adopt the CP006 draft legislation as a recommendation in the final report. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the recommendation was adopted.

Rep. Bakeberg moved to adopt the proposed eight recommendations in the final report:

1. Explore Consistent Definitions around Attendance
2. Explore Coordination Among State and Local Agencies
3. Explore Community Engagement - Cultural/Lived Experience School Credit

4. MDE Recommendation – Explore Increased Data on Attendance
5. Explore Increased Data Sharing Between School Districts and County Governments
6. Explore School Staff Dedicated to Truancy Reduction
7. Explore Transportation of Students to and from School
8. Explore Community Support

A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the recommendation was adopted.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:16 PM.



Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group

Friday, December 20, 2024
2:30 PM
Remote via Zoom
<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/satlsq/>

Members Present:

Representative Heather Keeler, Chair
Representative Ben Bakeberg
Representative Bryan Lawrence

Senator Steve Cwodzinski
Senator Robert Farnsworth
Senator Michael Kreun

Members Excused:

Representative Bianca Virnig
Senator Mary Kunesh, Vice Chair

Meeting Minutes

Rep. Keeler called the meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group to order at 2:32 PM. A quorum was present.

Approval of December 16, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Keeler moved to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

Adoption of Final Report

The Study Group reviewed the final report.

Rep. Bakeberg moved to adopt the final report and authorize staff to include today's minutes and any technical changes that are necessary. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the report was adopted.

Approval of December 20, 2024, Minutes

Rep. Keeler moved to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2024, meeting of the Student Attendance and Truancy Legislative Study Group as prepared by staff and approved by the chair and vice chair. A vote was taken. The motion prevailed and the minutes were approved.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.