

**MEMORANDUM**

February 24, 2015

TO: Public Safety Committee  
Education Committee

FROM: Susan J. Farag, Legislative Analyst *SJF*

SUBJECT: **Update: Truancy Prevention Program**

Today the Joint Committee will receive an update on the Truancy Prevention Program by the State's Attorney's Office. Those expected to brief the Committee:

John McCarthy, State's Attorney  
Steve Chaikin, State's Attorney's Office  
Lisa Russo, State's Attorney's Office

It is anticipated that several Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) staff will also be available to answer any Committee questions.

**Background**

Created in 2010 as a partnership among the State's Attorney's Office, the Montgomery County Public Schools, and the University of Baltimore School of Law's Center for Families, Children, and the Courts (CCFC), the Truancy Prevention Program is designed to increase student attendance by assisting students and their families with issues that impact attendance. The program model includes a "judge," mentor, program coordinator, and MCPS Pupil Personnel Worker at each school, who work together with the student and the student's family to identify barriers to attendance and help mitigate them.

The Truancy Prevention Program is held in 10-week sessions each school semester, and meets at the designated schools once a week. The student's mentor generally meets with the child prior to the Court session. The child also meets individually with the Truancy Prevention Program team. The team reviews the child's attendance, grades, school performance, and offers advice and support to help the child become more consistent at attending school daily and punctually. Initially, the program was operated in two middle schools - Neelsville and Francis Scott Key. The program was successful in reducing truancy for a majority of the participating

students in these two schools, and the program then expanded to Loiederman. Since its inception, the program has been expanded to 10 middle schools in the County. A list of participating schools is included on © 9. In order to determine which middle schools may benefit from the program, the SAO meets once a month with other agencies that form the Truancy Review Board. The SAO meets with the Chair of the Truancy Review Board to determine appropriate schools. They examine schools with high truancy rates and those with students who have more than 15% unexcused absences.

The SAO's Truancy Prevention Program is just one of several County initiatives attempt to reduce truancy. MCPS has internal programs that address early truancy problems (those who miss approximately 10-15% of school days in the first semester). The County also has an interagency workgroup, the Truancy Review Board, which addresses truancy and dropout prevention. Students who are absent approximately 20% of the school year are referred to the Truancy Review Board. This workgroup includes members from MCPS, SAO, Department of Health and Human Services, Police Department (Family Services Division), the Housing Opportunities Commission, and the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services. If a child's habitual truancy cannot be reduced, a case may be referred to court for prosecution of the child's parents.

### **Funding and Scope**

The Truancy Prevention Program was initially funded through a \$26,000 federal grant in 2010. The Council appropriated \$52,000 in FY13 and \$78,000 annually in both FY14 and FY15 for the initiative. In the fall 2014 semester, the program served 116 students. The program is expected to serve approximately 200 students for the 2014-2015 school year.

### **University of Baltimore School of Law Study of the Truancy Prevention Program**

The University of Baltimore School of Law recently conducted a longitudinal study that tracked student attendance after graduating from the Truancy Prevention Program. The study looked at 107 program graduates at Loiederman, Key, Neelsville, Roberto Clemente, and Argyle Middle Schools. Preliminary results of the study indicate that 67% of the students who participated in the program improved their attendance in the semester or year after their participation. These preliminary results are attached at © 14-28, although the final report is expected to be published sometime next month.

### **Discussion Issues**

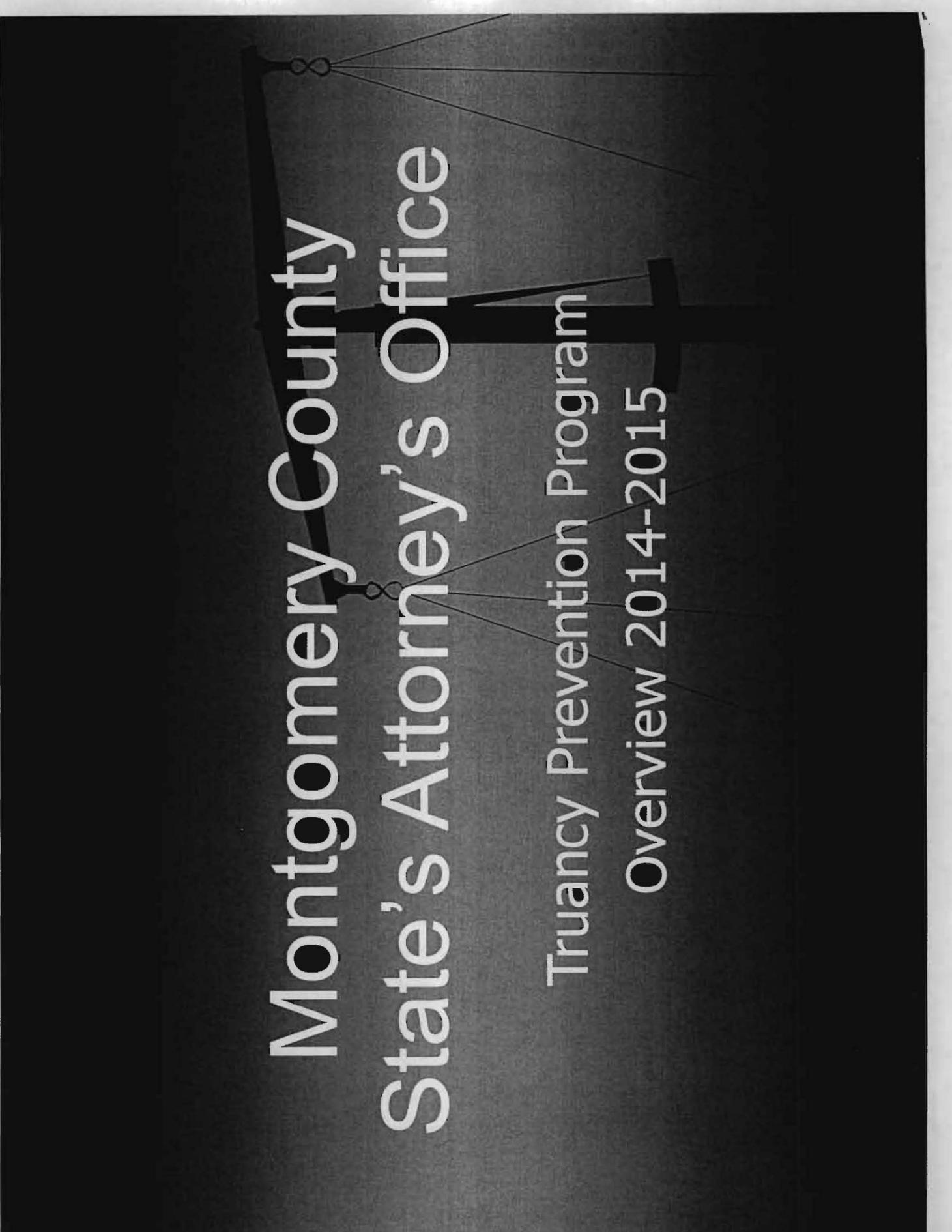
1. The Committee may wish to ask how particular middle schools are chosen and whether the SAO has identified additional schools that may benefit from the program.
2. The UB study shows initial positive impacts of the program for the semester or year following graduation from the Truancy Prevention Program. Are there plans to track graduates on a more long-term basis (i.e. into and through high school)?

3. While most schools showed that a majority of graduates reduced their absentee rates, some students were not as successful at increasing attendance. Does the SAO have information on why some cases are more difficult to improve? Are there particular circumstances that are more difficult to alleviate (e.g., homelessness, domestic violence, mental health issues)?
4. What are the SAO's proposed next steps with regard to the Truancy Program?

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# Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office

Truancy Prevention Program  
Overview 2014-2015

# Truancy Program Overview

- Currently serving 10 middle schools
  - 116 students/families being served
- We select and train the judge, coordinator, and mentor and Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW) at each school
  - Collaboration with school regarding student selection and process
- We meet one time per week at each school for 3 hours for 10 weeks
- Schools chosen through Truancy Review Board
- Holistic approach to student/family needs
- Coordination of resources

# Office of the State's Attorney Prosecution Units

## Community Outreach

- District Court
- Family Violence
- Felony
- Elder Fraud
- Juvenile
- Major Crimes
- Special Prosecution

# Community Prosecution Unit

- **Community Prosecution** takes a proactive, integrated, solutions-based approach to solve public safety problems, prevent crime and improve public confidence in the justice system.

## Community Prosecution Unit: Community Work

- The State's Attorney's Office has been contacted by schools throughout the County to provide additional resources, including but not limited to:
  - TCP/Truancy Prevention Program
  - Presentations on internet safety, cyber bullying, safe teen dating, alcohol safety, and career advancement

# Compulsory Attendance Law

- Parents/guardians can be charged with a criminal offense if a child misses 20% or more unexcused absences
- Convictions involve incarcerations and/or fines
- We do not want to prosecute parents; we want their children to go to school
- The SAO is taking a proactive/diversionary approach by identifying students for the program

# SAO and Truancy

Montgomery County SAO Attorneys participate in a full spectrum of truancy interventions, including:

- The TCP/Truancy Prevention Program
- The Truancy Review Board
  - Follow-up required for cases
- Train Education Facility Officers (EFOs)
- Special attention for juvenile cases related to schools
- Attendance Matters meetings
- Prosecution of Parents for Compulsory Attendance/Truancy violations

# Truancy Prevention Program Growth

- Spring 2010-Spring 2012
  - Served 2 schools: Neelsville and Francis Scott
- 2012-2013
  - Served 2 schools in the Fall, 3 in the Spring
- 2013-2014
  - Served 5 schools in the Fall, 6 in the Spring
- 2014-2015
  - Serving 10 middle schools

# Truancy Prevention Program Expansion: Schools

The Truancy Prevention Program will operate in the following schools in 2014-2015:

- Argyle Middle School
- A. Mario Loiederman Middle School
- Briggs Chaney Middle School
- Francis Scott Key Middle School
- Julius West Middle School
- Martin Luther Kind Jr. Middle School
- Neelsville Middle School
- Roberto Clemente Middle School
- Shady Grove Middle School
- Silver Spring International Middle School

**All schools are selected in consultation with the Montgomery County Public Schools**

The program will serve over 200 students and their families in 2014-2015

# Truancy Prevention Program Model

## Data-Driven, Targeted Student Selection

- Students with 10-25% unex. absences in 2 marking periods are eligible
- School counselors, PPW, attendance monitor, administrators review list of eligible students to select who would benefit the most
- School staff reaches out to families to secure permission and buy-in
- Teachers, students, parents fill out intake forms

## 10 Weekly Meetings for Participating Students

- Students meet with SAO/Police mentor to informally discuss issues
- Students/Parents meet formally with SAO judge and coordinator, PPW, administrator and counselor to identify problems and solutions
- Student files are updated weekly with attendance, teacher forms, and grades
- Students are held accountable and are rewarded for achievement

## Resources Provided

- Program team collaborates to identify and access resources for problems identified
- SAO mentors/coordinators call home to follow-up on resources, problems, etc
- Incentives provided at each meeting to reward positive behavior
- In-school Pizza Parties and Graduations reward improvement, foster self-esteem and engagement
- Reception at Governor's Mansion/Cty. Courthouse

# University of Baltimore School of Law Truancy Program Longitudinal Study

- The University of Baltimore School of Law conducted a longitudinal study examining the estimated Truancy Court program effects experienced by students at A. Mario Loiederman, Francis Scott Key, Neelsville, Roberto Clemente, and Argyle Middle Schools who participated in the Program. The Truancy Court Program ("TCP") was sponsored by the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office.
- To estimate the program's effects, a comparison was made between the pre-program (baseline) school attendance records of the participants and their post-program school attendance experience.
- Based on this study, 67% (72 of the 107) students who participated in the Truancy Program at the five middle schools evaluated had improved attendance in the semester or year after their participation compared to before they entered the program.

# University of Baltimore School of Law Truancy Program Longitudinal Study Results

- A. Mario Loiederman Middle School: During the Fall 2013, and the 2013-14 school year, 32 students participated in the program. 75% of the participants continued to reduce their absences after the program.
- Francis Scott Key Middle School: During the 2013-14 school year, 19 students participated in the program. 73.68% of the participants continued to reduce their absences after the program.
- Neelsville Middle School: During the 2013-14 school year, 24 students participated in the program. 54.17% of the participants continued to reduce their absences.
- Roberto Clemente Middle School: During the 2013-14 school year, 13 students participated in the program. 40.00% of the participants had a reduction in absences after completion of the Program.
- Argyle Middle School: During the 2013-14 school year, 19 students participated in the program. 78.94% of the sample experienced a reduction in the absence rate.

**To: Phil Andrews**  
**From: Rexanah Wyse**  
**Re: University of Baltimore School of Law Longitudinal Study of the Truancy Program**  
**Date: Monday, February 23, 2015**

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### **I. Introduction**

The University of Baltimore School of Law conducted a longitudinal study examining the estimated Truancy Court Program effects experienced by students at A. Mario Loiederman, Francis Scott Key, Neelsville, Roberto Clemente, and Argyle Middle Schools who participated in the Program. The Truancy Court Program ("TCP") was sponsored by the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office. To estimate the program's effects, a comparison was made between the pre-program (baseline) school attendance records of the participants and their post-program school attendance experience. Based on this study, 67% (72 of the 107) students who participated in the Truancy Program at the five middle schools evaluated had improved attendance in the semester or year after their participation compared to before they entered the program.

### **II. Results**

#### **A. A. Mario Loiederman Middle School**

During the Fall 2013, and the 2013-2014 school year, 32 students participated in TCP. During the post-program measurement period, 75% of the participants continued to reduce their absences.

#### **B. Francis Scott Key Middle School**

During the 2013-2014 school year, 19 students participated in TCP. During the post-program measurement period, 73.68% of the participants continued to reduce their absences.

#### **C. Neelsville Middle School**

During the 2013-2014 school year, 24 students participated in TCP. During the post-program measurement period 54.17% continued to reduce their absences.

#### **D. Roberto Clemente Middle School**

During the 2013-2014 school year, 13 students participated in TCP. According to the study, 40.00% of the participants had a reduction in absences after completion of the Truancy Program.

#### **E. Argyle Middle School**

During the 2013-2014 school year, 19 students participated in TCP. According to the study, 78.94% of the sample experienced a reduction in the absence rate compared to the baseline rate.

### **III. Conclusion**

In summation, overall the TCP participants demonstrated a positive improvement in their school attendance. The data analysis shows that a significant number of students in the program improved their attendance while they were in the program and continued to attend school regularly after the program.

## **Summary of Findings for Argyle Middle School**

Introduction (note that an introduction for all schools included in the study will replace this introduction in the final report)

This study is intended to examine the estimated program effects experienced by students at Argyle Middle School who participated in the Truancy Court Program (TCP) sponsored by the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office (MCSAO). To estimate the program's effects, a comparison was made between the pre-program (baseline) school attendance records of TCP participants and their post-program school attendance experience. The analysis is based upon Montgomery County Public School data provided to the researchers by MCSAO.

The straightforward pre-post measurement approach utilized in the study is not a strong approach to analyzing the effect of a social intervention. As compared to use of a random assignment experimental design or strong non-experimental designs involving statistically tested comparison groups, pre-post measurements of single groups do not effectively control threats to internal validity and offer very limited inferential value.

### Description of the sample

The sample includes 19 students at Argyle Middle School who participated in TCP. 11 students participated in the program during the Fall of 2013, and 8 participated in Spring 2014. The sample represents all but three participants in the TCP program during the indicated program sessions. 3 participants were excluded due to incomplete data available for them. At the time of their TCP participation, 3 students were in the sixth grade, 7 were in the seventh grade, and 9 were in the eighth grade. 5 of the program participants are boys and 14 are girls.

### Baseline description and measurement

The baseline used for the analysis is the rate of school absences for the sample during the school year prior to the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. This approach to baseline establishment is somewhat flawed but cannot be helped, as it is the only data available. This is primarily because, for students who participate in the program during the TCP Spring session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program entry. However, in that data was only available for the full school year prior to program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers.

During the baseline period the sample experienced a rate of absences of 9.22%. The school absence rate ranged from 4.55% to 15.34% among sample members. The median absence rate was 10.80%. TCP participants experienced an average of 25 absences during the school year prior to their participation in the TCP, and the median number of absences was also 25.

#### Post-program description, measurement and analysis

The post-program measurement used for the analysis is rate of school absences for the sample during the school year following the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. Similar to the situation with the establishment of the baseline, this approach to post-program measurement is also somewhat flawed. This is primarily because, for students who participated in the program during the TCP Fall session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program exit. However, in that data was only available for the full school year after program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers. The post-program measurement approach is further flawed because the length of the measurement period is not the same as that used for the baseline measurements. For all members of the Argyle MS sample, attendance data was only available for the Fall 2014 (SY 2015) school period.

During the post-program measurement period the sample experienced an absence rate of 9.43%. As compared to the baseline measurement this represents a 2.32% increase in the composite absence rate among the sample members. The post-program school absence rate ranged from 0.00% to 16.98% among sample members. Although the composite experience of the sample showed an increase in absence rate for the post-program measurement period, 15 members or 78.94% of the sample experienced a reduction in the absence rate during the post-program measurement period as compared to the baseline rate.

## **Summary of Findings for Clemente Middle School**

Introduction (note that an introduction for all schools included in the study will replace this introduction in the final report)

This study is intended to examine the estimated program effects experienced by students at Clemente Middle School who participated in the Truancy Court Program (TCP) sponsored by the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office (MCSAO). To estimate the program's effects, a comparison was made between the pre-program (baseline) school attendance records of TCP participants and their post-program school attendance experience. The analysis is based upon Montgomery County Public School data provided to the researchers by MCSAO.

The straightforward pre-post measurement approach utilized in the study is not a strong approach to analyzing the effect of a social intervention. As compared to use of a random assignment experimental design or strong non-experimental designs involving statistically tested comparison groups, pre-post measurements of single groups do not effectively control threats to internal validity and offer very limited inferential value.

### Description of the sample

The sample includes 13 students at Clemente Middle School who participated in TCP. 6 students participated in the program during the Fall of 2013, while 7 participated in in Spring 2014. Two members of the study sample participated in both TCP samples considered. As a result, they were only counted once – as members of the Spring 2014 cohort. The sample represents all but eight participants in the TCP program during the indicated program sessions. These eight participants were excluded due to incomplete data available for them. At the time of their TCP participation, 2 students were in the sixth grade, 3 were in the seventh grade, and 8 were in the eighth grade. 6 of the program participants are boys and 7 are girls.

### Baseline description and measurement

The baseline used for the analysis is the rate of school absences for the sample during the school year prior to the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. This approach to baseline establishment is somewhat flawed but cannot be helped, as it is the only data available. This is primarily because, for students who participate in the program during the TCP Spring session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program entry. However, in that data was only available for the full school year prior to program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers.

During the baseline period the sample experienced a rate of absences of 11.91%. The school absence rate ranged from 7.10% to 28.13% among sample members. The median absence rate was 11.93%

### Post-program description, measurement and analysis

The post-program measurement used for the analysis is rate of school absences for the sample during the school year following the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. Similar to the situation with the establishment of the baseline, this approach to post-program measurement is also somewhat flawed. This is primarily because, for students that participated in the program during the TCP Fall session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program exit. However, in that data was only available for the full school year after program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers. The post-program measurement approach is further flawed because the length of the measurement period is not the same as that used for the baseline measurements. For all members of the Clemente MS sample, attendance data was only available for the Fall 2014 (SY 2015) school period.

During the post-program measurement period the sample experienced an absence rate of 15.47%. As compared to the baseline measurement this represents a 24.38% increase in the composite absence rate among the sample members. The post-program school absence rate ranged from 0.00% to 60.38% among

sample members. The median absence rate was 21.99%. 6 members or 40.00% of the sample experienced a reduction in the absence rate experienced.

## **Summary of Findings for Key Middle School**

Introduction (note that an introduction for all schools included in the study will replace this introduction in the final report)

This study is intended to examine the estimated program effects experienced by students at Key Middle School who participated in the Truancy Court Program (TCP) sponsored by the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office (MCSAO). To estimate the program's effects, a comparison was made between the pre-program (baseline) school attendance records of TCP participants and their post-program school attendance experience. The analysis is based upon Montgomery County Public School data provided to the researchers by MCSAO.

The straightforward pre-post measurement approach utilized in the study is not a strong approach to analyzing the effect of a social intervention. As compared to use of a random assignment experimental design or strong non-experimental designs involving statistically tested comparison groups, pre-post measurements of single groups do not effectively control threats to internal validity and offer very limited inferential value.

### Description of the sample

The sample includes 19 students at Key Middle School who participated in TCP. 13 students participated in the program during the Fall of 2013, while 6 participated in in Spring 2014. The sample represents all but three participants in the TCP program during the indicated program sessions. These three participants were excluded due to incomplete data available for them. At the time of their TCP participation, 2 students were in the sixth grade, 7 were in the seventh grade, and 10 were in the eighth grade. 7 of the program participants are boys and 12 are girls.

### Baseline description and measurement

The baseline used for the analysis is the rate of school absences for the sample during the school year prior to the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. This approach to baseline establishment is somewhat flawed, but cannot be helped, as it is the only data available. This is primarily because, for students who participate in the program during the TCP Spring session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program entry. However, in that data was only available for the full school year prior to program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers.

During the baseline period the sample experienced a rate of absences of 10.27%. The school absence rate ranged from 1.42% to 13.35% among sample members. The median absence rate was 8.24%

### Post-program description, measurement and analysis

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The post-program measurement used for the analysis is rate of school absences for the sample during the school year following the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. Similar to the situation with the establishment of the baseline, this approach to post-program measurement is also somewhat flawed. This is primarily because, for students who participated in the program during the TCP Fall session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program exit. However, in that data was only available for the full school year after program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers. The post-program measurement approach is further flawed because the length of the measurement period is not the same as that used for the baseline measurements. For all members of the Key MS sample, attendance data was only available for the Fall 2014 (SY 2015) school period.

During the post-program measurement period the sample experienced an absence rate of 5.76%. As compared to the baseline measurement this represents a 43.89% reduction in the composite absence rate among the sample members. The post-program school absence rate ranged from 0.00% to 16.98% among sample members. The median absence rate was 3.77%. 14 members or 73.68% of the sample experienced a reduction in the absence rate experienced.

## **Summary of Findings for Loiederman Middle School**

Introduction (note that an introduction for all schools included in the study will replace this introduction in the final report)

This study is intended to examine the estimated program effects experienced by students at Loiederman Middle School who participated in the Truancy Court Program (TCP) sponsored by the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office (MCSAO). To estimate the program's effects, a comparison was made between the pre-program (baseline) school attendance records of TCP participants and their post-program school attendance experience. The analysis is based upon Montgomery County Public School data provided to the researchers by MCSAO.

The straightforward pre-post measurement approach utilized in the study is not a strong approach to analyzing the effect of a social intervention. As compared to use of a random assignment experimental design or strong non-experimental designs involving statistically tested comparison groups, pre-post measurements of single groups do not effectively control threats to internal validity and offer very limited inferential value.

### Description of the sample

The sample includes 32 students at Loiederman Middle School who participated in TCP. 6 students participated in the program during the Spring of 2013, while 12 participated in the Fall 2013 program session, and 14 participated in Spring 2014. The sample represents all but three participants in the TCP program during the indicated program sessions. 3 participants were excluded due to incomplete data available for them. At the time of their TCP participation, 7 students were in the sixth grade, 7 were in the seventh grade, and 18 were in the eighth grade. 9 of the program participants are boys and 23 are girls.

### Baseline description and measurement

The baseline used for the analysis is the rate of school absences for the sample during the school year prior to the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. This approach to baseline establishment is somewhat flawed but cannot be helped, as it is the only data available. This is primarily because, for students who participate in the program during the TCP Spring session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program entry. However, in that data was only available for the full school year prior to any program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers.

During the baseline period the sample experienced an average rate of absences of 14.21%. Among the sample members the school absence rate ranged from 3.98% to 26.99%. The median absence rate was 14.20%

TCP participants experienced an average of 25 absences during the school year prior to their participation in the TCP, and the median number of absences was also 25. Among the sample members, 3 had 10 or fewer absences, 9 had 11 to 20 absences, 12 had 21 to 30 absences, 4 had 31 to 40 absences, and 4 had 41 or more absences.

24 TCP students (75% of all participants at Loiederman) continued to reduce their absences in the school year following their participation in the TCP.

It is interesting to examine the changes in attendance in greater detail:

- 9.38% of TCP participants (3 students) reduced their absences by 76% or more
- 25% (8 students) reduced their absences by 51-75%
- 21.88% (7 students) reduced their absences by 26-50%
- 12.5% (4 students) reduced their absences by 0-25%.

Post-program description, measurement and analysis

The post-program measurement used for the analysis is rate of school absences for the sample during the school year following the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. Similar to the situation with the establishment of the baseline, this approach to post-program measurement is somewhat flawed. This is primarily because, for students who participated in the program during the TCP Fall session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program exit. However, in that data was only available for the full school year after program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers. The post-program measurement approach is also somewhat flawed because the length of the measurement period is not the same for all members of the sample. For the six students who participated in TCP during the Spring 2013 session of TCP a full school year (SY 2014) was available for the analysis. For the 26 students who participated in the Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 TCP sessions, attendance data was only available for the Fall 2014 (SY 2015) school period.

During the post-program measurement period the sample experienced an absence rate of 11.36%. As compared to the baseline measurement this represents a 20.08% reduction in the composite absence rate among the sample members. Among the sample members the post-program school absence rate ranged from 1.98% to 33.96% among sample members. The median absence rate was 7.96%.

In summary, the TCP participants at Loiederman Middle School have demonstrated positive improvement in their school attendance. Data analysis reveals that a substantial majority of students in the program not only improve their attendance while they are in the

program<sup>1</sup> but, more important, continue to attend school regularly after they complete the TCP.

The current analysis infers support for the TCP's effectiveness.

#### Recommendations for Future Data Collection and Analysis

The straightforward pre-post measurement approach utilized in the study is not a strong approach to analyze the effect of a social intervention. As compared to use of a random assignment experimental design or strong non-experimental designs involving statistically tested comparison groups, pre-post measurements of single groups do not effectively control threats to internal validity and offer very limited inferential value.

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<sup>1</sup> Program data analysis was provided immediately following the TCP sessions and was based on data collected directly by CFCC from Loiederman Middle School. The current analysis is based on data provided by Montgomery County Public Schools.

## **Summary of Findings for Neelsville Middle School**

Introduction (note that an introduction for all schools included in the study will replace this introduction in the final report)

This study is intended to examine the estimated program effects experienced by students at Neelsville Middle School who participated in the Truancy Court Program (TCP) sponsored by the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office (MCSAO). To estimate the program's effects, a comparison was made between the pre-program (baseline) school attendance records of TCP participants and their post-program school attendance experience. The analysis is based upon Montgomery County Public School data provided to the researchers by MCSAO.

The straightforward pre-post measurement approach utilized in the study is not a strong approach to analyzing the effect of a social intervention. As compared to use of a random assignment experimental design or strong non-experimental designs involving statistically tested comparison groups, pre-post measurements of single groups do not effectively control threats to internal validity and offer very limited inferential value.

### Description of the sample

The sample includes 24 students at Neelsville Middle School who participated in TCP. 12 students participated in the program during the Fall of 2013, while 12 participated in in Spring 2014. The sample represents all but three participants in the TCP program during the indicated program sessions. These three participants were excluded due to incomplete data available for them. At the time of their TCP participation, 7 students were in the sixth grade, 8 were in the seventh grade, and 9 were in the eighth grade. 16 of the program participants are boys and 8 are girls.

### Baseline description and measurement

The baseline used for the analysis is the rate of school absences for the sample during the school year prior to the school year during which the sample participated in TCP.

This approach to baseline establishment is somewhat flawed, but cannot be helped, as it is the only data available. This is primarily because, for students who participate in the program during the TCP Spring session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program entry. However, in that data was only available for the full school year prior to program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers.

During the baseline period the sample experienced a rate of absences of 29.64%. The school absence rate ranged from 8.24% to 58.81% among sample members. The median absence rate was 17.05%

### Post-program description, measurement and analysis

The post-program measurement used for the analysis is rate of school absences for the sample during the school year following the school year during which the sample participated in TCP. Similar to the situation with the establishment of the baseline, this approach to post-program measurement is somewhat flawed. This is primarily because, for students who participated in the program during the TCP Fall session, it is not based on data immediately proximate to program exit. However, in that data was only available for the full school year after program participation, this was the practicable approach available to the researchers. The post-program measurement approach is further flawed because the length of the measurement period is not the same as that used for the baseline measurements. For all members of the Neelsville MS sample, attendance data was only available for the Fall 2014 (SY 2015) school period.

During the post-program measurement period the sample experienced a absence rate of 13.44%. As compared to the baseline measurement this represents a 54.64% reduction in the composite absence rate among the sample members. The post-program school absence rate ranged from 0.00% to 54.72% among sample members. The median absence rate was 9.43%. 13 members or 54.17% of the sample experienced a reduction in the absence rate experienced.