



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Special Hearing on Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court

Studies have shown that suspended or expelled students were almost three times more likely to come into contact with the juvenile justice system

SACRAMENTO—An informational hearing on September 30 in Sacramento will focus on the dangers of chronic student absenteeism and strategies for keeping kids in school.

The hearing is one of many events leading up to a December 4 statewide Summit on Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court. The summit is part of Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye's effort to highlight the role that courts and juvenile court judges can play in changing the poor outcomes for youth struggling with truancy, chronic absenteeism, and school discipline issues.

Special Hearing in Sacramento

The informational hearing on September 30 will provide county teams attending the December 4 summit with up-to-date information about attendance law, the consequences of chronic absenteeism, and the need for collaborative efforts to promote regular school attendance.

Effective intervention is based on a shared understanding that truancy and school discipline are community problems that no one system or agency must handle alone, so collaboration is critical. The county teams attending the hearing and summit will consist of representatives from schools, law enforcement, courts, social services, and other community agencies. Courts and judges in particular, have been identified as a major role player in encouraging and supporting collaboration.

Hearing attendees will also learn about the Los Angeles School Attendance Task Force, chaired by Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Michael Nash, and its efforts to gather information, improve school attendance, and ensure that juvenile court judges are able to monitor the attendance of the youth subject to their jurisdiction.

The September 30 hearing will be held at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) in Sacramento, 2860 Gateway Oaks, Suite 400, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Media interested in attending the hearing should contact the AOC's Tracy Kenny at 916-263-2838 or tracy.kenny@jud.ca.gov.

Statewide Summit on Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court

Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye and Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson are co-hosting the statewide Summit on Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court, which will take place December 4 in Anaheim.

The summit will bring together county teams of judicial officers, educators, juvenile justice and child welfare professionals, and community leaders to examine truancy and school discipline policies creating a “school-to-prison pipeline” for California’s children and youth. The summit will feature successful solutions and provide the county teams with strategies to keep kids in school and out of court in their jurisdictions.

The summit is funded by private foundations, with assistance from the [federal Court Improvement Program](#).

Statistics on Truancy, Suspensions, and Expulsions in California

- During the 2010–11 school year (the most recent year for which data are available), 30% of all California public school students—more than 1.8 million—were truant
- The statewide suspension rate in 2010–2011 was 11%, representing more than 700,000 suspensions
- More than 18,000 students were expelled in 2010–2011, an expulsion rate of 0.3%
- Although statewide data are not available, studies in select California counties indicate that foster youth are at higher risk for suspension and expulsion. In one school district, children in foster care were three times more likely to be suspended or expelled than other children in the same schools. In another county, dependent youth were more than twice as likely to be suspended and ten times more likely to be expelled than non-dependent youth
- A recent study showed that, controlling for other factors that might relate to juvenile justice involvement, students who were suspended or expelled were almost three times more likely to come into contact with the juvenile justice system

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