

#EVERYKIDCOUNTS: LEGISLATION TO ADDRESS CALIFORNIA'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRUANCY CRISIS

Big Problem

- **250,000** elementary school students in CA are estimated to be **chronically absent** – missing 10% or more of the school year.
 - Almost **90%** of the elementary students with the most **severe attendance problems** – missing over a month of school per year – are from **low-income families**.
 - More than **1 in 5 African American** and **Latino** students is **chronically absent**, **2.5xs** the average for white students.
 - CA elementary school children missed an estimated **113,000+ days** of school last year **due to suspensions alone**.
- Only **17%** of chronically absent kindergartners and first graders in California **read proficiently** by 3rd grade, compared to **64%** for students with good attendance.
- Students who do not read proficiently by **third grade** are **4xs** more likely to leave school without a diploma.
- **Dropouts** cost CA more than **\$46 billion** each year, including more than **\$1 billion** in juvenile crime costs, **\$22.5 billion in reduced earnings** and **\$8.5 billion in lost economic growth**.

CA's Hidden Crisis

- **1 in 10** school districts reported they **do not know** their chronic absence rate for the 2013-14 school year.
- CA **does not collect** information on students' total absences, chronic absenteeism or chronic truancy.
- When students move, there is **no state infrastructure** to transfer local attendance records from district to district. As a result, records are often **lost or late**, and the same bad attendance patterns reemerge in the new district.
- Nearly **half a million** CA students transferred schools last year.
 - **65%** of CA students change schools at least once between 1st-8th grades, and **26%** change schools at least **3xs** during that period.
 - **Foster** students change schools **1-2xs per year** on average.

We Can Solve This

- **Every kid counts**, so CA should **count every kid**. CA is 1 of only 4 states that doesn't collect attendance records.
- We can give educators **better tools** to make **informed decisions** about how to help **each child stay on track**.
- **AB 1866** (Bocanegra) would enhance the CA Dept. of Education's student record system to include a student's attendance, chronic absenteeism and chronic truancy.
 - With this legislation, school districts could count every kid's attendance over time, no matter where they move. Districts could also track patterns of attendance problems for at-risk students, such as low-income and foster students.
 - Educators could intervene earlier when a student is at risk of falling behind, before the problem becomes too severe.
- **AB 1672** (Holden), **AB 2141** (Hall, Bonta), and **AB 1643** (Buchanan) would help districts assess which truancy intervention programs work most effectively to improve attendance and encourage adoption of proven models that work.