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September 13, 2013

Patrick J. O'Donnell, Clerk
Room 2018, State Capitol
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Clerk O'Donnell:

Nebraska Revised Statute 79-527.01 requires that the Truancy Task Force report to the Legislature on or before October 1 of each year, its recommendations to reduce the incidents of excessive absenteeism. The following constitutes the Report of the Truancy Task Force including the attendance data from the 2012-13 school-year.

Mission:

"The task force shall study and evaluate the data contained in the reports required by 79-527 and shall develop recommendations to reduce incidents of excessive absenteeism. The task force may contact a school district or a county attorney for additional information. The task force shall report to the Legislature on or before October 1 of each year."

Participants:

Scott Swisher, Deputy Commissioner of Education
Ellen Brokofsky, Probation Administrator
Kerry Winterer, CEO – Department of Health and Human Services

Report:

A summary report of the 2012-13 attendance data is attached. As the report shows, the overall number and percentage of students who were excessively absent (missed more than twenty school days) slightly increased to 16,956 students, or 5.85% of the total membership in public schools. Last year, the total number was 16,297 students, or 5.65% of the total membership in public schools.

There were also comparable increases in the numbers of students who missed 15 or more days (from 31,699 to 33,243), and in the number of students who missed 10 or fewer days (from 68,497 to 72,962). This is the first time in four years that there has been an increase in these numbers, and there is no discernible pattern or reason for these small increases. When looking at the numbers from school districts, some districts continued to show an

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improvement in attendance for the fourth consecutive year, while some school districts showed a slight increase in absences.

In reviewing the data from the attendance reports for 2012-13, the Truancy Task Force would note the following:

1. The Legislature adopted last year's recommendation of the Truancy Task Force to eliminate the monthly excessive absenteeism reports from all public and nonpublic schools, and to only require quarterly reporting of individual student attendance from public school districts beginning with the 2013-14 school year;
2. The Legislature also adopted the recommendation of the Truancy Task Force to change the date for this report to the Legislature to October 1 so that numbers could be finalized and reviewed. The Truancy Task Force wishes to express its appreciation to these changes by the Legislature.
3. The Task Force believes that school officials and communities need to be ever vigilant on the need for school attendance since the chart for NeSA scores clearly demonstrates that missing school hurts academic achievement of students. The slight increase in the number of students missing more school is troubling. While this may not indicate a trend, should this increase continue next year, the Task Force intends to bring this to the Legislature's attention.

Based on the 2012-13 attendance data and observations, the Truancy Task Force would offer that no changes be made to Sections 79-201 through 79-210 regarding school attendance expectations.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Swisher, Ed.D., Deputy Commissioner of Education,
On behalf of Ellen Brokofsky, Probation Administrator, and
Kerry Winterer, CEO, Department of Health and Human Services

cc: Senator Kate Sullivan
Senator Brad Ashford

Four-Year Trend Data on Absences

TOTAL

DATA YEARS	MEMBERSHIP	STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES
2009-2010	283,397	82,278	29.03%	40,643	14.34%	21,980	7.76%
2010-2011	285,837	74,836	26.18%	35,121	12.29%	18,100	6.33%
2011-2012	288,263	68,525	23.77%	31,713	11.00%	16,305	5.66%
2012-2013	289,674	72,962	25.19%	33,243	11.48%	16,956	5.85%

PRELIMINARY State Average Scale Score Range 1-200

State Average Reading Scale Scores: Scale Score Range 0-200					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Compare
Grade 3	101	104	109	111	Higher
Grade 4	104	109	112	115	Higher
Grade 5	101	108	114	118	Higher
Grade 6	101	109	113	115	Higher
Grade 7	104	110	116	122	Higher
Grade 8	102	106	109	115	Higher
Grade 11	101	102	102	106	Higher

State Average Math Scale Scores: Scale Score Range 0-200					
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Compare	
Grade 3	101	108	110	Higher	
Grade 4	104	106	109	Higher	
Grade 5	101	108	109	Higher	
Grade 6	101	106	106	Same	
Grade 7	104	104	106	Higher	
Grade 8	102	99	102	Higher	
Grade 11	101	95	100	Higher	

State Average Science Scale Scores: Scale Score Range 0-200					
	2011-2012	2012-2013	Compare		
Grade 5	101	104	Higher		
Grade 8	100	103	Higher		
Grade 11	99	103	Higher		

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND NeSA SCALE SCORES

Nebraska Public Schools 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13

	Reading			Math			Science			
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Grade 4 - NeSA										
Students absent less than 20 Days	105	110	112	115	103	107	109	NA	NA	NA
Students absent greater than 20 Days	84	89	91	92	80	83	86	NA	NA	NA
Students absent less than 10 Days	106	111	113	116	105	108	111	NA	NA	NA
Students absent greater than 10 Days	95	101	103	106	93	96	98	NA	NA	NA
Grade 8 - NeSA										
Students absent less than 20 Days	104	108	110	117	100	101	104	101	101	104
Students absent greater than 20 Days	83	82	84	89	68	71	74	75	75	80
Students absent less than 10 Days	107	110	113	119	103	104	107	104	104	106
Students absent greater than 10 Days	93	96	98	104	85	85	89	89	89	92
Grade 11 - NeSA										
Students absent less than 20 Days	102	104	106	110	98	100	105	102	102	106
Students absent greater than 20 Days	72	72	72	78	58	62	65	78	78	83
Students absent less than 10 Days	107	107	109	114	103	105	111	104	104	109
Students absent greater than 10 Days	90	87	89	92	75	78	81	89	89	93

OVERALL ATTENDANCE 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
More than 10 days absent	29.03%	26.18%	23.77%	25.19%
More than 15 days absent	14.34%	12.29%	11.00%	11.48%
More than 20 days absent	21,980 - 7.76%	18,100 - 6.33%	16,305 - 5.66%	16,956 - 5.85%

**K-12 MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10/15/20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES
ABSENCES DATA FROM NSSRS: 2012-2013 STUDENT SUMMARY ATTENDANCE TEMPLATE**

STATEWIDE SUMMARY

	MEMBERSHIP	STUDENT COUNT	% OF MEMBERSHIP
MEMBERSHIP	289,674		
STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	72,962		25.19%
STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	33,243		11.48%
STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	16,956		5.85%

GRADE	MEMBERSHIP	STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES
KG	22,095	5,031	22.77%	1,897	8.59%	821	3.72%
01	23,331	4,567	19.57%	1,605	6.88%	598	2.56%
02	22,836	3,899	17.07%	1,266	5.54%	461	2.02%
03	23,057	3,836	16.64%	1,224	5.31%	442	1.92%
04	22,583	3,732	16.53%	1,249	5.53%	445	1.97%
05	22,370	4,041	18.06%	1,381	6.17%	508	2.27%
06	21,998	4,448	20.22%	1,680	7.64%	653	2.97%
07	21,893	5,485	25.05%	2,358	10.77%	1,068	4.88%
08	21,438	6,012	28.04%	2,820	13.15%	1,403	6.54%
09	21,796	6,564	30.12%	3,342	15.33%	1,864	8.55%
10	21,725	7,662	35.27%	4,137	19.04%	2,410	11.09%
11	21,400	8,301	38.79%	4,792	22.39%	2,884	13.48%
12	23,152	9,384	40.53%	5,492	23.72%	3,399	14.68%
TOTAL	289,674	72,962	25.19%	33,243	11.48%	16,956	5.85%

MEMBERSHIP	STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	
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AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	4,011	2,024	50.46%	1,268	31.61%	848	21.14%					
ASIAN	6,300	1,034	16.41%	464	7.37%	238	3.78%					
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	19,133	7,070	36.95%	4,045	21.14%	2,455	12.83%					
HISPANIC	48,210	15,006	31.13%	7,491	15.54%	3,991	8.28%					
NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	330	96	29.09%	48	14.55%	21	6.36%					
TWO OR MORE RACES	9,330	2,960	31.73%	1,528	16.38%	880	9.43%					
WHITE	202,360	44,772	22.12%	18,399	9.09%	8,523	4.21%					
TOTAL	289,674	72,962	25.19%	33,243	11.48%	16,956	5.85%					

MEMBERSHIP	STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 10 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 15 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES		% STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN 20 DAYS TOTAL ABSENCES	
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FEMALE	140,577	36,498	25.96%	16,434	11.69%	8,164	5.81%					
MALE	149,097	36,464	24.46%	16,809	11.27%	8,792	5.90%					
TOTAL	289,674	72,962	25.19%	33,243	11.48%	16,956	5.85%					