

## Los Angeles Unified School District

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# News Statement

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## **TRUANCY CITATIONS CONTINUE TO DROP AT LAUSD *A 78 PERCENT REDUCTION BETWEEN 2010 AND 2012***

LOS ANGELES – The numbers tell the story of a significant and steady decline in truancy citations that school police have given to students. So far, during this school year, only 77—that's no typo—have been handed out.

Students are now cited by the dozens, no longer by the thousands—3,356 in 2010; 2,625 in 2011 and 726 in 2012. Attribute that progress to a change in policies that are more proactive than reactive. Students who are truant s are now directed to a non-court, district-sponsored, diversion program. Also, a youngster is no longer ticketed when close to the campus as the first bell rings; late, yes; talked to, yes; intervention and support at the school, consequences definitely; but no citation.

In addition, the Los Angeles School Police Department has been an active partner in the Los Angeles County Student Attendance Task Force, and works with other multi-partner committees to address schoolwide positive behavior practices, various student safety awareness, and quality campus programs. The results are more than promising.

In 2012, the last year for which complete data is available, there was an overall reduction of 22 percent to African American students from the previous year. In that same time period, there was an overall reduction of 44 percent to Latino students. Specifically, fewer minority students received tickets, and in general, fewer citations were given to L.A. Unified students.

Dramatic progress like this should be celebrated. Instead, the Community Rights Campaign zeros in on a statistic that is not illuminating. Is there still a higher concentration of minority students who get citations? After all, wouldn't that be expected in a 91 percent minority school district? That said do the math: compare 2010 with 2012. So, 40 percent of 3,356 is 1,342 citations versus 40 percent of 726 equals 290 tickets. Remember, only 77 have been written so far this year.

The District and the Los Angeles School Police Department continue to analyze the most appropriate means to address student law violators. We will continue to address many issues administratively within the school environment. We will continue to work to identify and evaluate non-penal alternatives to various minor violations.

Each year, we continue to reduce crime, reduce arrests, reduce suspensions and increase positive relationships with students. Truancy citations have plummeted. For that, we deserve an A, not an F.

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