

WASHINGTON'S TRUANCY LAWS IN THE JUVENILE COURTS: WIDE VARIATION IN IMPLEMENTATION AND COSTS

In 1995, the Washington State Legislature passed a law known as the "Becca Bill."¹ In addition to providing for At-Risk Youth (ARY) and Children In Need of Services (CHINS) petitions,² the Becca Bill changed the compulsory school attendance laws. The bill requires that school districts file truancy petitions in juvenile court when students accumulate a specified number of unexcused absences. Prior to 1995, school districts had considerable discretion regarding the filing of truancy petitions. As a result of the new law, the annual number of petitions increased from 91 in 1994 to over 15,000 in 1997, and has remained at this level since.

In 2008, Washington's Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to investigate the ways schools and courts are implementing the truancy provisions of the Becca Bill.

In this report, we describe the various ways the courts have chosen to process truancy cases; we also estimate the costs of those interventions to courts and local governments.

Other recent Institute reports have identified school district procedures and costs, interventions for at-risk students used by Washington's school districts, and analyzed evidence-based programs to reduce truancy and school dropouts (see page 24 for a list of the reports).

A final report will describe the outcomes for youth who received truancy petitions in Washington State.

Summary

The 2008 Legislature directed the Institute to survey the juvenile courts regarding activities and expenditures related to truancy. In addition, we were to query the courts about barriers to contempt proceedings.

Findings. Courts across the state varied widely in the processing of truancy cases. In 2006–07, the variation in court activities resulted in an equally wide cost-per-case range.

- The number of hearings per case ranged from 0.1 to over 6, with an average of 1.4.
- Only 41 percent of youth appeared at an initial hearing in 2006–07 because "agreed orders" were signed.
- 33 percent of youth with a truancy petition also had a contempt motion filed.
- The use of detention days per case ranged from 0 to over 4, depending on the court, with an average of 0.5 days.
- The average cost of a truancy case ranged from less than \$200 to almost \$1,500.
- The statewide average cost per case was \$475 (in 2007 dollars). We estimated the courts' costs to local government for the 2007–09 biennium was \$15.4 million. In the same biennium, the state reimbursement for Becca cases was \$16.5 million, of which \$8.9 million was for truancy. Thus, we estimated that \$6.5 million in courts' costs were not reimbursed by the state.

Our estimate of costs is not a funding recommendation. There is little evidence of a "best" approach to process these cases.

Ten of the 35 juvenile court administrators (JCAs) indicated no barriers to contempt proceedings when youth persist in their truancy. Six JCAs reported that, because of scheduling issues, they limit the number of contempt cases. Eighteen JCAs indicated that some school districts do not file contempt motions on all eligible youth.

Caveat. Our analyses of court procedures and costs are based on information for the 2007–08 school year. Because of a recent court decision, however, the information presented here may not reflect the current state of affairs. State law permits the first truancy hearing to be held without legal counsel for students. In January 2009, the Washington State Court of Appeals, Division One, ruled that students are entitled to legal counsel at the initial truancy hearing and at all subsequent hearings in the case. King County has appealed this ruling to the Washington Supreme Court and expects a decision in 2010. In the interim, courts have reported various changes to the ways they are handling truancy cases.

¹ E2SSB 5439, Chapter 312, Laws of 1995

² At-Risk Youth and Children In Need of Services are programs for juveniles who exhibit behaviors that create a "serious risk of harm to the child or others" and are "beyond the control of their parents" (for more details, see RCW 12.32A.030).

BACKGROUND

Washington's truancy laws seek to keep students in school through a series of interventions that begin with the schools. A simplified flow chart of the interventions mandated by the law is shown in Exhibit 1.

The law requires that schools notify parents after a student's first unexcused absence and hold a conference with parents and student if the student has two unexcused absences. The conference should identify issues that may be the cause of the truancy and explore alternatives to improve attendance. If the youth continues to be truant, and has seven unexcused absences in a month or ten unexcused absences in the year, the school district is to file a petition with the court.

The law allows school districts and courts to establish truancy boards, staffed by community volunteers. These boards work with individual students and their families to clarify issues affecting attendance and seek alternatives that may increase student engagement in school. In many cases, a truancy board can avoid a court appearance by the youth and family by obtaining an "agreed order," where the youth admits his or her truancy and agrees to attend school regularly.

Most courts also make efforts to obtain agreed orders to decrease the need for court appearances. Statewide, court, school, and truancy board efforts reduce the number of initial petition hearings considerably—only 41 percent of youth with a petition ever appear in court.

If the court finds the youth to be truant, or the youth signs an agreed order, and the youth continues to be truant, the school or the court may file a contempt motion. This more serious level of court involvement may result in the youth being ordered to detention³ or alternatives, such as community service or "work crew." Courts may also fine parents \$25 per day of missed school.

At any stage in the court process, depending on the court, youth or families may be referred to other services.

Each biennium, money is appropriated to reimburse districts and courts for the costs of complying with the truancy provisions of the Becca Bill. In the current biennium, the state provided \$16.505 million to the courts to cover the costs of processing truancy

³ RCW 28A.225.090 authorizes the use of detention for truant youth found in contempt of court, and RCW 7.21.030 indicates that youth may be held in detention for not more than seven days.

ESHB 2687 Study Language 2008 Legislature

Sec 610. (19) \$70,000 of the general fund--state appropriation for fiscal year 2009 is provided solely for the Washington state institute for public policy to analyze local practices regarding RCW 28A.225.020, 38 28A.225.025, and 28A.225.030.

(a) The institute shall:

(i) Sample school districts' and superior courts' expenditures in fiscal years 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 used to comply with RCW 28A.225.020, 28A.225.025, and 28A.225.030;

(ii) evaluate evidence-based, research-based, promising, and consensus-based truancy intervention and prevention programs and report on local practices that could be designated as such;

(iii) survey school district truancy petition and intervention programs and services currently available and report on any gaps in accessing services;

(iv) survey the districts' definitions of "absence" and "unexcused absence";

(v) survey the courts' frequency of use of contempt proceedings and barriers to the use of proceedings; and

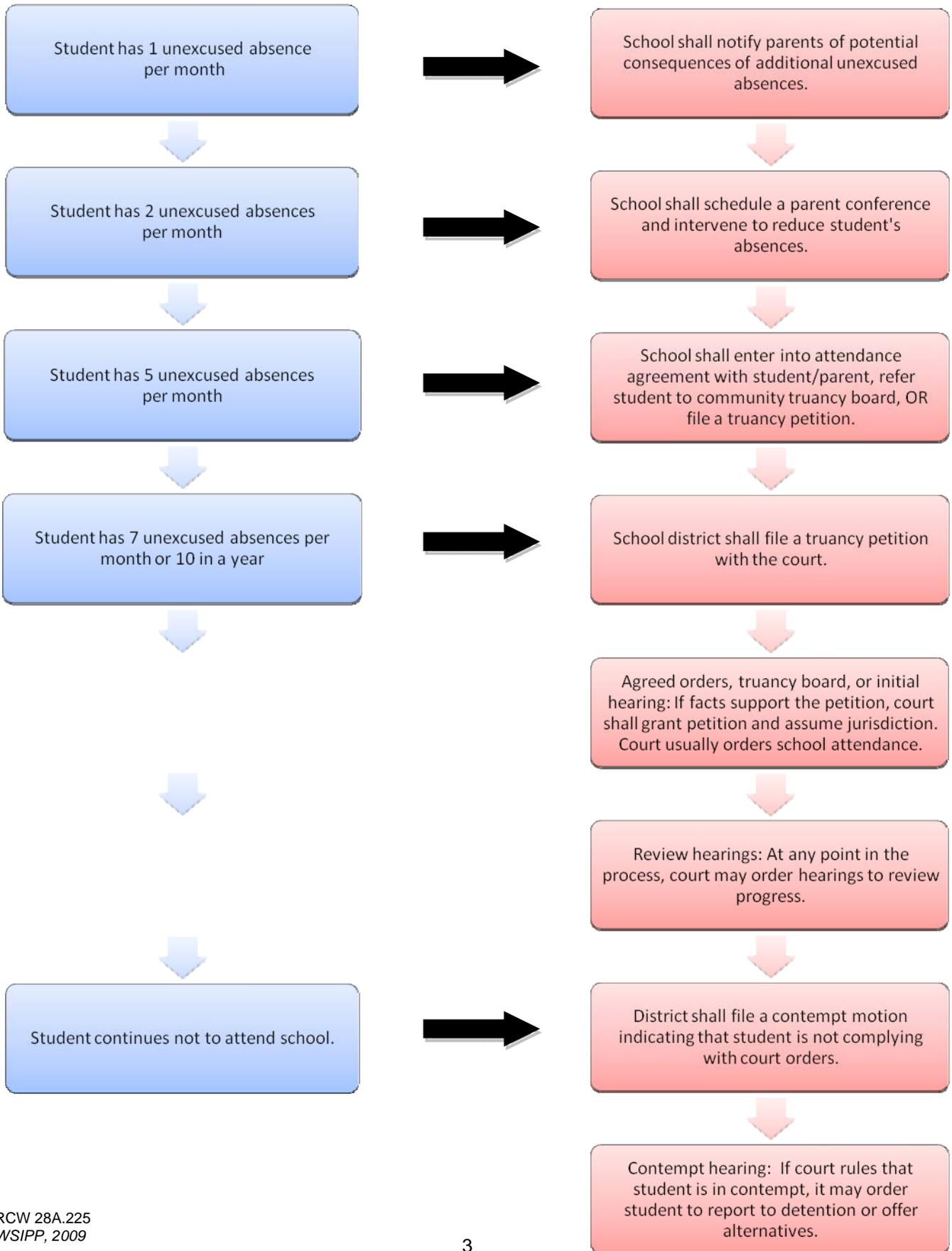
(vi) analyze the academic impact of RCW 28A.225.030 by sampling school districts' student academic records to ascertain the students' post-petition attendance rate, grade progression, and high school graduation for students where the school district filed a truancy petition in superior court.

cases and cases involving at-risk youth and children in need of services.

Our analysis of court activities and estimates of costs are based on hearings and arrests in cases filed during the 2006–07 school year and on information provided by court administrators for expenses and services during the 2007–08 school year. We assume that truancy caseloads and court activities are about the same across the 2007–09 biennium. However, a recent appellate court decision, requiring that truant youth have legal representation at all hearings, may have caused changes in the way courts process cases.⁴ Thus, this analysis may not provide an accurate picture of the ways courts are currently processing truancy cases.

⁴ *Bellevue School District v. ES*, No. 60528-3-I [Wash. Ct. App. 2009]

**Exhibit 1
Summary of Washington's
Truancy Petition Process**



APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

Our overall approach to the truancy study was guided by the legislative direction (see sidebar on page 2).

In this report, we focus on the court practices in processing truancy cases, services for youth and families, and barriers to contempt proceedings. Finally, we estimate the truancy-specific costs incurred by courts and local governments.

Our legislative direction required a survey of a sample of juvenile courts about activities and costs over a four-year period. After consultation with legislative staff, the decision was made to survey all the courts rather than only a sample. We further decided to focus only on the most recent year, assuming that court administrators would be most accurate in recalling recent activities and costs. The survey⁵ of juvenile court administrators (JCAs) and an Institute analysis of court data served as the primary basis for our estimate of activities and costs.

We estimated costs based on courts' information about the following activities during the 2007–08 school year:

- the types of hearings they scheduled: initial hearing, review hearing, and contempt hearing;
- the typical duration of each hearing type; and
- the personnel present at each type of hearing.

In addition, we asked about:

- time required for processing cases;
- services ordered by the courts;
- days in detention for truant youth; and
- any additional expenses the courts incurred for truancy cases, including programs funded by local governments.⁶

Then, using a publicly available sample of county salaries, we estimated the hourly salaries and benefits of all court personnel.⁷ We assumed that benefits averaged 40 percent above base salary;

⁵ The text of the interview is included in the Technical Appendix.

⁶ For example, we included \$202,000 for the Positive Steps program, which is paid for by the Pierce County Health Department.

⁷ We used salary information available at the website, www.lbloom.net. We took a sample of salaries from counties with varying median incomes, then, based on county median income, used the results of a regression analysis to approximate 2007 salaries for each category of county employee involved in the truancy process.

this assumption is in general agreement with the benefits reported in the 2008 salary and benefit survey of Washington cities and counties.⁸

Using records from the Superior Court Management Information System (SCOMIS), we identified hearings and arrests in each case and then calculated the average number of hearings, by hearing type, for each court. We followed the cohort of 16,190 youth who had a truancy petition filed during the 2006–07 school year. That year was chosen to allow at least a one year follow-up for all cases.⁹ Then, for each court, we calculated the average number of hearings per case.

To summarize, our estimate of costs incurred by each court in 2007–08 was based on personnel costs, hearing duration, detention days per case, arrests, and services provided or funded by courts or local governments (but not schools¹⁰), and other truancy-specific costs.

It is important to emphasize that our cost estimates are not derived from an audit of the courts. Rather, we followed the legislative direction to survey courts and analyze court data.

FINDINGS

In this section we describe:

- court activities associated with truancy cases,
- services for youth ordered by the court,
- community services to which youth and families are referred, and
- our estimate of costs to courts and local governments.

We observed wide variation in the ways courts implement the truancy laws. The differing approaches to prosecution of truancy cases lead to equally wide variation in court costs.

⁸ Association of Washington Cities in cooperation with Washington State Association of Counties (2008). *Washington city and county employee salary and benefit survey*. Olympia WA: Association of Washington Cities.

⁹ In a brief online survey, 18 courts indicated cases were usually closed at the end of the school year. However, six courts carry cases for either one calendar year or through October 31 of the following year. Eight courts keep cases open until youth turn 18 or obtain a GED. Using the 2006–07 school year as our base, we could account for hearings that occurred in the 2007–08 school year.

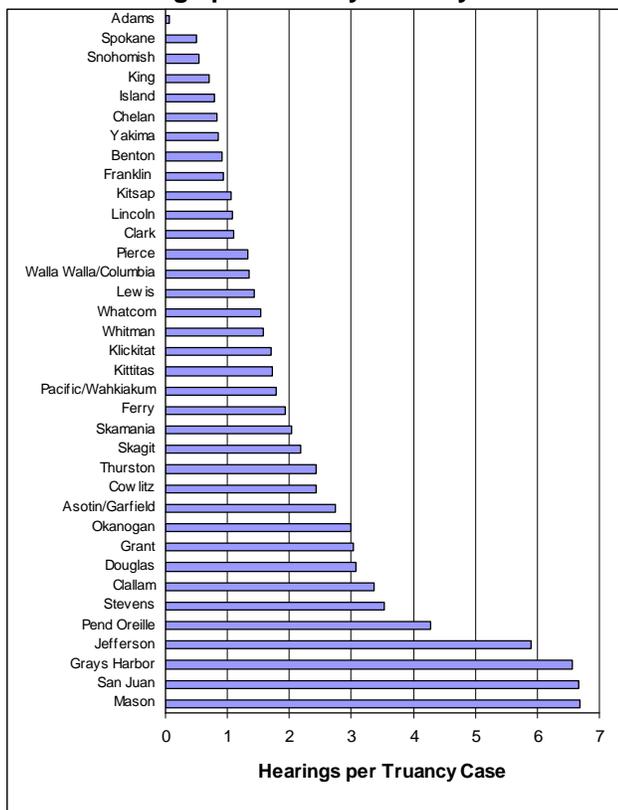
¹⁰ We exclude interventions funded entirely by the schools and districts.

Hearings

Across the state, youth with truancy petitions attended an average of 1.4 hearings, including the initial hearing and any review and contempt hearings. As displayed in Exhibit 2, the average number of hearings differed widely among the courts. In some courts, hearings were frequent, averaging more than six hearings per case, while in other courts hearings occurred rarely, if at all.

As we discussed earlier, many courts employed several methods to obtain “agreed orders,” where the youth signs a document admitting his or her truancy and agrees to resume school attendance. If an agreed order is obtained, the youth is not required to attend an initial petition hearing. In one court, all cases were stayed after the petition was filed and almost no hearings were held.¹¹

Exhibit 2
Hearings per Truancy Case by Court*



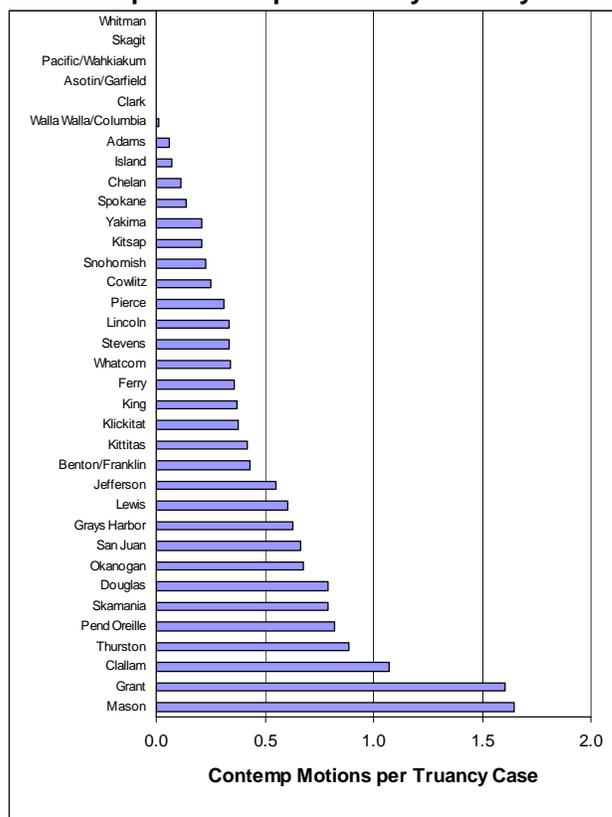
* Cases filed during the 2006–07 school year.
WSIPP, 2009

Contempt Proceedings

If a youth does not comply with the original court order, he or she may be subject to contempt of court. Across the state, 33 percent of youth with a truancy petition also have a contempt motion filed. As can be seen in Exhibit 3, across the courts, the average number of contempt motions range from none to 1.7 per case.

In the majority of courts, the contempt proceedings are civil matters. Three JCAs, however, indicated that in their courts, youth who continue to be truant are subject to criminal contempt proceedings.¹² In these courts, there may be a trial and the youth may be sentenced up to 14 days in detention.

Exhibit 3
Contempt Motions per Truancy Case by Court*



* Cases filed during the 2006–07 school year.
WSIPP, 2009

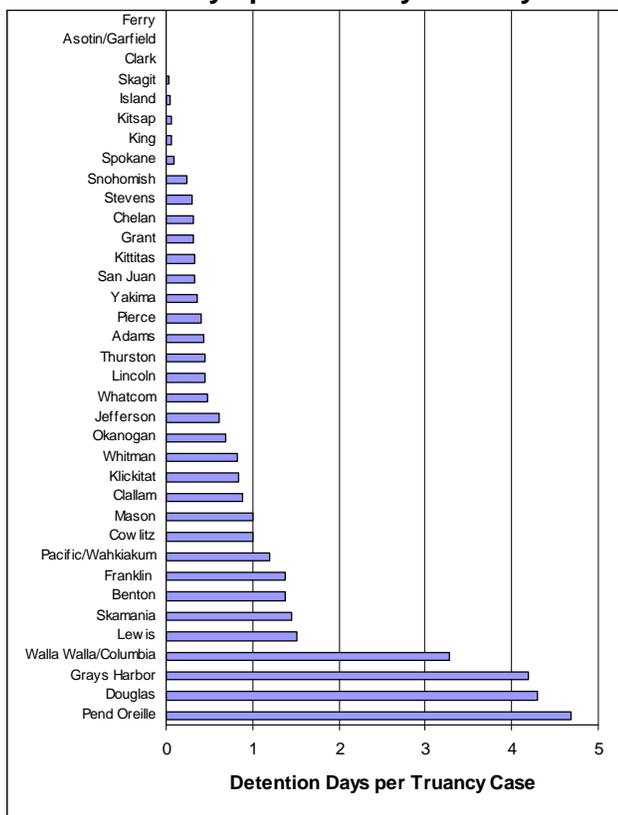
¹¹ Adams

¹² The three courts employing criminal prosecution of contempt cases are Asotin/Garfield, Pacific/Wahkiakum, and Walla Walla/Columbia.

Detention and Sanctions

Courts also varied widely in their use of detention for youth in contempt of court. Statewide, a youth with a truancy petition spent an average of 0.5 days in detention. In some courts, no youth went to detention (an average of zero days) while in three courts, youth served an average of over four days in detention. The range of detention days per case in the courts is displayed in Exhibit 4.

Exhibit 4
Detention Days per Truancy Case by Court



WSIPP, 2009

Alternatives to Detention. Some courts have implemented programs that serve as alternatives to detention. These include:

- day reporting schools where youth attend school at the detention center and return home at night,
- weekend programs where youth attend classes or workshops on weekends but return home at night,
- work crew, and
- electronic monitoring.

Parent fines. The law also allows the courts to assess the parents up to \$25 per day of unexcused absence.¹³ In our analysis of cases filed in 2006–07, we observed fines in 68 cases; these fines were assessed in only one court.¹⁴

Court Services for Youth

Courts also differ in the level of case management and other services ordered by the court.

Case management. Seventy percent of courts reported providing case management of youth with truancy petitions. Because some courts provide case management for just a portion of their truancy caseload, across the state, 43 percent of truant youth received court case management in 2008.

Case management is provided by probation staff and most often involves monitoring school attendance and meeting with school officials. Case management may also involve providing referrals to necessary services for students and families.¹⁵ In the courts that provide case management, the intensity of intervention differed from court to court. Most courts indicated about two hours of probation officer time per case, but in several courts, the average time spent in case management was greater, up to 10 hours per managed case.

¹³ RCW 28A.225.090

¹⁴ Analysis of court records indicated fines were assessed only in Snohomish County.

¹⁵ Personal communication with Pam Isakson, Pierce County and Dave Yount, Skagit County.

Drug and alcohol testing. The law allows courts to order drug/alcohol testing for truant youth.¹⁶ Fifty-four (54) percent of JCAs indicated that their court ordered testing for truant youth. In some courts, all youth were tested, but most courts tested only selected youth. Across the state, 10 percent of youth with a truancy petition were tested.

Other court programs. Several courts partner with other local entities in programs for truant youth. In Clark and Cowlitz Counties, the courts partner with Educational Service District 112 in a program for truant students: The Truancy Project. The program provides management and educational programming, including GED classes and community truancy boards.

The Pierce County Health Department, in cooperation with the court, operates the Positive Steps program for truant youth who have been found in contempt of court. Positive Steps involves extensive assessment of the child and family’s situation and risk factors, development of a “family action plan” with the family, case management, parent mentoring, and Functional Family Therapy (as needed).^{17, 18}

Community Services

Courts may refer truant students to other services in the community. In Exhibit 5, we indicate the percentage of courts that referred youth to such services, and the statewide percentage of youth who were referred. For example, 23 percent of courts indicated they referred some youth to counseling; statewide, 3 percent of all truant youth were referred to counseling.

Thirty-four percent (12 courts) made no referrals to community service; the youth in these courts represent 58 percent of all youth with a truancy petition.

**Exhibit 5
Community Services Referred by the Courts
In 2007–08**

Service	Percentage of Courts	Percentage of Youth
Counseling for student	23% ¹⁹	3%
Tutoring	26%	6%
Psychological evaluation	6%	0.1%
Anger management	17%	1%
Parent training/classes	9%	1%
Other services	31% ²⁰	Not consistently reported
No referrals to services	34%	58% [§]

[§] The percentage of all youth with truancy cases in those courts that made no referrals to community services.

Depending on the court and the type of service, the costs for services may be borne by the county, the parent, or the local school district. In our analysis of cost, we included only the services the courts indicated were paid for with local (or grant) funds.

¹⁶ RCW 28A.225.031

¹⁷ In 2007–08, about a 33 percent of the 101 youth served by Positive Steps received Functional Family Therapy. (Personal communication with Beth Wilson, Positive Steps Program manager).

¹⁸ A more complete description of the Truancy Project and Positive Steps is available in T. Klima, M. Miller, & C. Nunlist (2009). *Truancy and dropout programs: Interventions by Washington’s school districts and community collaborations*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Document No. 09-06-2202.

¹⁹ Including drug/alcohol treatment and/or education

²⁰ These 11 courts refer to various services, including academic programs (5), case management or family treatment (4), and miscellaneous (2).

Community Truancy Boards

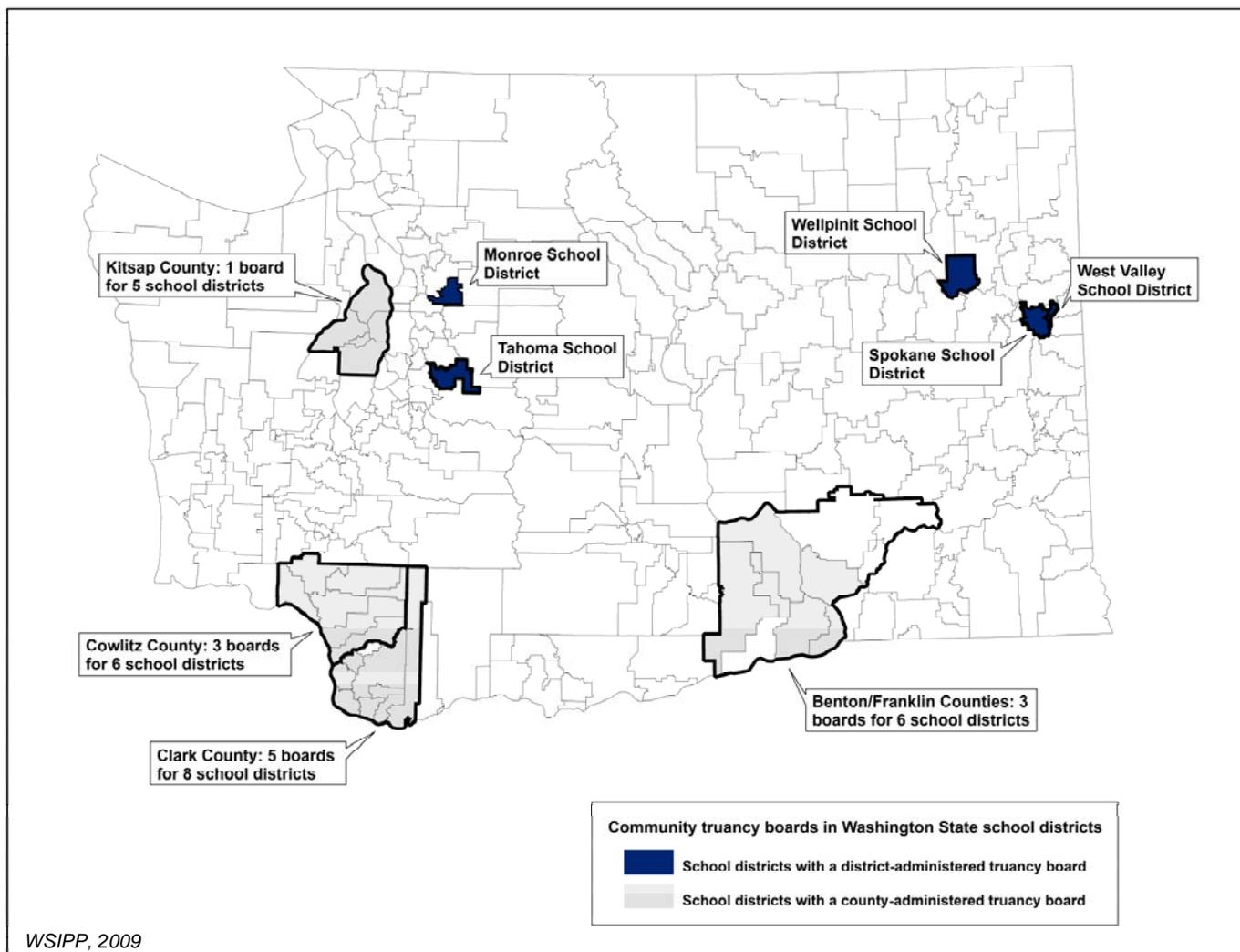
The truancy laws allow the courts to sponsor community truancy boards.²¹ These boards are composed of members of local communities and representatives of the courts and schools. The goal of the truancy boards is to resolve barriers to attendance during meetings with the student, family, and school officials.

Although community truancy boards are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile courts, the law permits individual school districts, with agreement of the court, to establish and operate a truancy board. In the 2007–08 school year, 17 truancy boards served 30 school districts under the jurisdiction of nine courts (see Appendix A4 for a list of courts).

The law permits truancy board meetings to occur prior to or after the filing of a petition. In 2007–08, only three boards met with youth before a petition was filed. (These three boards are run by school districts.) The remaining 14 boards held meetings after a petition was filed.²² Exhibit 6 provides the geographical distribution of community truancy boards operating in 2007–08.

We have heard from some school districts and courts that additional truancy boards have been formed, partly in response to the January 2009 appellate court decision.

Exhibit 6
Community Truancy Boards Operating in Washington State in 2007–08



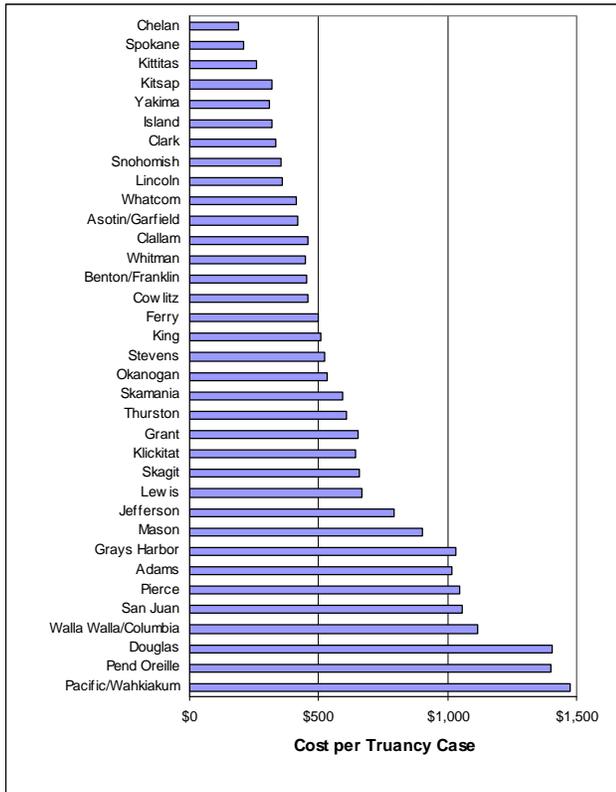
²¹ RCW 28A.225.025

²² Further information on community truancy boards in Washington is available in the Appendix.

Cost to Courts and Local Governments

Based on factors such as number of hearings, contempt hearings, and the use of detention, services, and programs provided by the courts, the cost per case varied widely across the state. Exhibit 7 provides information on the estimates of cost by court. Using the court-supplied data, we estimated that the average cost of a truancy petition ranged from less than \$200 to nearly \$1,500 in the 2007–08 school year. The weighted statewide average was \$475 per petition.

Exhibit 7
Cost per Truancy Case by Court



WSIPP, 2009

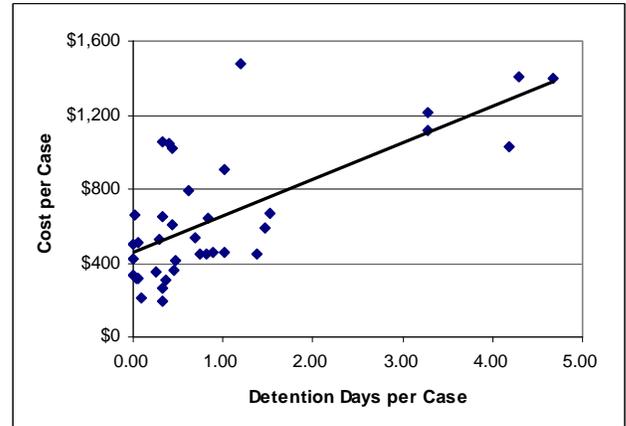
In our analysis of cost per case,²³ the average days of detention per case was the strongest predictor of overall cost.²⁴ The number of hearings per case was also a major contributor to the cost per case. In addition, of course, the truancy-specific programs of some courts added to the average cost per case. Controlling for these factors, the size of the court was not significantly related to cost per case.

²³ See Appendix Table A3.1 for results of regression analysis.

²⁴ Based on information provided by the courts, the weighted average cost for detention for truant youth was \$137 per day in 2007–08.

Exhibit 8 displays the influence of detention days per case on the average cost per case.

Exhibit 8
Cost per Truancy Case by Days in Detention



WSIPP, 2009

Local costs compared with state reimbursement.

To summarize, using court-supplied information and Institute analysis of court data, the statewide weighted average cost of a truancy case for the 2007–08 school year was \$475 per case, based on the 16,190 truancy petitions filed during the 2006–07 school year.

Assuming the same number of petitions in 2007–08 and 2008–09, we estimate the total cost to courts and local governments to be \$15.4 million for the biennium.

The state reimburses courts for all Becca cases, including truancy, At-Risk Youth (ARY), and Children in Need of Services (CHINS). The current reimbursement is \$16.5 million per biennium. The JCA's funding formula for Becca cases²⁵ allocates 54 percent of the budget for truancy cases and the remaining 46 percent for ARY/CHINS.²⁶

Overall, then, for the 2007–09 biennium, the following costs were incurred:

- State allocation for all Becca cases \$16.5 million
 - 54 percent for truancy cases \$8.9 million
- Estimated court costs \$15.4 million
 - State reimbursement for truancy \$8.9 million
- Estimated court costs not reimbursed \$6.5 million

²⁵ Washington State Association of Juvenile Court Administrators (2006). *Finance Training Manual*.

²⁶ In accounting of Becca expenditures in 2007–08 in three courts, 58.8 percent of court expenditures were for truancy cases.

Thus, we estimate that in the 2007–09 biennium, the state funded 58 percent (\$8.9/\$15.4 million) of the court costs related to truancy cases. On average, the state reimbursed courts at a rate of \$275 per case.

Our estimate of cost is not a funding recommendation. The statute allows the courts considerable leeway in the processing of truancy cases. We have shown that courts implement the law in a variety of ways with a wide range in costs. Little evidence is available regarding a “best” approach for the courts.²⁷

Barriers to Contempt Proceedings

We were directed to survey the courts about barriers to their use of contempt proceedings. In our interviews with court officials, we asked specifically about any barriers to contempt. Their responses are summarized below.

- Ten of the 35 JCAs identified no barriers to contempt proceedings.
- Six of the JCAs told us that, due to scheduling issues, they limited the number of contempt filings and/or restricted the dates when contempt motions could be filed. With this restriction, all cases could have a contempt hearing before the end of the school year.
- Eighteen JCAs said that school districts did not file contempt motions on all eligible youth. In some cases, JCAs indicated the physical distance to the courthouse was a disincentive for schools. Seven JCAs told us that some schools may be frustrated by the “lack of teeth” in the contempt process. That is, the consequences for youth were frequently minimal.
- Several JCAs also mentioned that districts may not file because of the “20-day drop rule.”²⁸ For the purposes of state funding, a student missing 20 days in a row is no longer considered to be enrolled in school. Districts may have a reduced incentive to file a petition for a student with 20 or more consecutive days of absence.

Appellate Case May Change Court Procedures

Our analysis of court procedures and costs are based on information for the 2007–08 school year. A recent court decision, however, may change school and court responses to truancy.

According to state law, the court “may permit the first hearing to be held without requiring that either party (school district or student) be represented by legal counsel, and to be held without a guardian *ad litem* for the child.”²⁹ In January 2009, however, the Washington State Court of Appeals, Division One, ruled that students are entitled to legal counsel at the initial truancy hearing and at all subsequent hearings in the case.³⁰

King County has appealed the decision to the Washington State Supreme Court, and a decision is expected sometime in 2010. In the interim, courts and school districts have adjusted their procedures. As with other aspects of truancy cases, the courts have responded in various ways. We include here a few examples of what courts have told us about their responses to the appellate ruling.

- At least one court is now providing legal counsel at the initial hearing and involving prosecutors at all stages of the cases.
- Some school districts and courts have introduced or expanded “truancy workshops” prior to filing the petition. In some cases, the workshops are held by districts prior to filing petitions, while in others, workshops are held after the petition is filed.
- Several courts have described interventions following a petition, where the districts hold truancy classes and obtain written acknowledgement from the students. The acknowledgement is not a legal document and, thus, may not—under the ruling—require an attorney for the youth. Only youth who continue to be truant or fail to sign the acknowledgement have a hearing with legal counsel.
- More courts and districts are operating community truancy boards.
- Some school districts have dramatically reduced the number of truancy petitions filed.

²⁷ T. Klima, M. Miller, & C. Nunlist (2009). *What works? Targeted truancy and dropout programs in middle and high school*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Document No. 09-06-2201.
²⁸ WAC 392-121-108(1)

²⁹ RCW 28A.225.035(11)

³⁰ *Bellevue School District v. ES*, No. 60528-3-I [Wash. Ct. App. 2009]

Due to the additional costs associated with defense attorneys, our estimates of cost may be low if districts continue to file truancy petitions at the same rate as in 2007–08 and courts hold hearings with the same frequency as before. On the other hand, districts and courts may adjust the ways they handle truancy, resulting in minimal changes in cost.

CONCLUSIONS

Courts process truancy cases in a variety of ways across Washington State. During the 2006–07 school year, some courts held almost no hearings, while in others, truant youth averaged over four hearings. In some courts, no youth spent time in detention, while in three courts, youth with a truancy case average over four days in detention. In three courts, youth who continue to be truant are subject to criminal prosecution. Courts also vary in the case management they provide and in the services they order.

The range of approaches results in an equally wide range in costs to courts and local government. We estimate that in the 2007–08 school year, the average truancy case cost \$475. Across the courts, the cost per case ranged from less than \$200 to nearly \$1,500.

The state reimburses courts for the costs to process Becca cases. In the current biennium, courts received \$16.5 million dollars. The funding formula allocates 54 percent of this amount (\$8.9 million) for truancy cases and the remaining 46 percent for ARY and CHINS cases. Based on responses from courts and an analysis of court data, we estimate that, in the 2007–09 biennium, the cost to courts and local government for truancy cases was \$15.4 million. Thus, \$6.5 million (\$15.4 – \$8.9 million) of court expenses associated with truancy cases were not funded by the state allocation.

Technical Appendix

Contents

Appendix A: Methods and Data

A1. Measuring Costs in Truancy Cases	13
A2. Tables of Court Activities, Referrals, and Costs	15
A3. Regression Analysis of Cost Factors	17
A4. Community Truancy Boards in Washington.....	17
A5. Court Reimbursements for Becca Cases.....	18

Appendix B: Juvenile Court Phone Survey	19
---	----

Appendix A: Methods and Data

A1. Measuring Costs in Truancy Cases

We estimated costs to courts and local governments based on five sources of information:

1. A structured interview with each of the juvenile court administrators
2. Analysis of docket and case records from the Superior Court Management Information System (SCOMIS)
3. Publicly available salaries online³¹
4. The 2008 Washington City and County Salary and Benefit Survey published by the Association of Washington Cities
5. Juvenile criminal records

In the autumn of 2008, we conducted structured interviews with the juvenile court administrators. We took an accounting approach to estimating costs. That is, we asked about court activities, time required, and personnel involved in each of the following court events:

- Paperwork associated with filing and registering petitions
- Initial hearings
- Review hearings
- Contempt filings and hearings

The answers to these questions allowed us to estimate time, by type of court employee, for each of the steps listed.

We also asked about services provided by the court, particularly efforts to obtain agreed orders outside of court that would obviate the initial hearing, case management, drug, and alcohol testing.

We further inquired about community services to which the courts refer truant youth, as well as any additional costs the courts/local governments incur related to other services. The complete text used for the interview is provided in Appendix B.

We obtained SCOMIS data for all truancy cases and included data for all truancy cases filed for the school year 2006–07; that is, all cases filed between September 1, 2006 and August 31, 2007. That year was chosen to allow us to follow cases that were carried over into the following school year. For each case, we analyzed the docket records to identify initial hearings, review hearings, contempt hearings, and arrest warrants. Based on this analysis, for each court, we calculated the average number of each hearing type and arrests per case.

Three courts, Asotin/Garfield, Pacific/Wahkiakum, and Walla Walla/Columbia, prosecute youth who continue to be truant as criminal contempt. In these courts, we matched youth with truancy cases to juvenile criminal records to identify youth with criminal contempt proceedings subsequent to a truancy petition.

To estimate the costs of court activities, we estimated the 2007 salaries from publicly available sources. If salaries were provided for earlier years, we used the Consumer Price Index to advance the salaries to 2007 dollars and calculated an hourly wage assuming 2,000 hours per year per FTE. We then added 40 percent for fringe benefits and vacation.

For judicial officers, we assumed the local cost for either a judge or a court commissioner was 90 percent of a superior court judge's salary. We make this assumption for several reasons.

- Superior court judges' salaries are set in law. The state pays half the salary and most of the benefits.
- Judges are afforded staff whose salaries are paid with local funds.
- Court commissioners' salaries and benefits are paid entirely with local funding.

The Administrative Office of the Courts has assumed that for these reasons the local costs are roughly the same for a judge or a commissioner and that the local costs are 90 percent of the statutory superior court judges' salary plus benefits.

³¹ www.lbloom.net

In the estimation of court costs, unless courts told us otherwise, we assumed:

- Hearings requiring a translator take, on average, 15 minutes longer than hearings where no translator is required
- Judicial officers spend five minutes outside of court reviewing records
- Prosecutors spend 20 minutes outside of court per hearing
- Defense attorneys spend 30 minutes outside of court per hearing
- Overhead costs represent 15 percent of total expenditures
- Filing costs based on reported time to file multiplied by the hourly wage of clerk
- Hearing costs are based on reported duration of hearings and type of court personnel present
- Detention costs are based on number in detention, days in detention, and reported daily detention cost
- Arrest numbers based on SCOMIS indication of "return on bench warrant"—quashed warrants
- Arrest costs assume two hours of sheriff time
- Hearing diversion assumes 15 minutes of probation officer time per youth
- Case management assumes 2.25 hours of probation officer time per youth
- All salaries include 40 percent benefits/overhead
- \$400 for psychological evaluations and counseling
- When courts order anger management, youth receives Anger Replacement Therapy at a cost of \$897³²
- \$60 per hour for interpreter services
- Assume that defense attorneys' salaries are equivalent to prosecutors' salaries
- Assume that commissioners receive 90 percent of judge salaries. Salaries and benefits for commissioners are the county's responsibility
- Drug/alcohol testing costs \$50 per youth

Juvenile Court Administrators (JCAs) also told us about truancy-specific costs they incur. These include alternatives to detention, truancy clinics, educational programming (e.g. summer school, GED classes), and prosecutor assistance to schools. In Clark and Cowlitz Counties, the JCAs indicated costs for the Truancy Project; Pierce County funds the Positive Steps program for truant youth found in contempt of court.³³

We estimated the cost for each activity using salary information and the time required for personnel involved in the activities. Then for each type of activity, we used the analysis of court data to calculate the average cost per case of an activity. For example, in the Asotin/Garfield court, we found 0.93 initial hearings per case and estimated that the initial hearing cost \$60.72. Then average cost per case for initial hearings (including cases where no hearing was held) was $0.93 \times \$60.72$ or \$54.47.

We did the same calculations for each type of court expense. The average costs per case for all activities and expenses were summed to estimate cost per case for each court.

We asked the JCAs to correct any errors or omissions in our initial estimates. Based on the feedback from the courts, we made alterations to our estimates. JCAs then had the opportunity to suggest further changes to the revised estimates.

³² E. K. Drake (2007). *Evidence-based juvenile offender programs: Program description, quality assurance, and cost*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Document No. 07-06-1201.

³³ These programs are described in detail in: T. Klima, M. Miller, & C. Nunlist (2009). *Truancy and dropout programs: Interventions by Washington's school districts and community collaborations*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Document No. 09-06-2202.

A2. Court Activities, Referrals, and Costs

Tables A2.1 and A2.2 display court-level information. Table A2.1 contains the caseload for each court and the average number of hearings, arrests, average days of detention per case, and percentage of cases referred to services.

Table A2.2 gives the court-level cost components used to estimate the cost per case.

Exhibit A2.1
Court Caseloads and Activities

County	Cases Filed 2006-07	Cases per 1,000 Youth Aged 10 to 17	Hearings, Arrests, and Detention Days per Case					Percentage of Cases Referred							
			Initial Hrg	Review Hrg	Contempt Hrg	Arrests	Det'n Days	Drug/Alc Testing	Case Management	Psych Eval	Counseling	Tutoring	Anger Mgmt	Parenting Classes	
Adams	32	13.02	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.44	100%	100%	0%	0%	20%	25%	0%	
Asotin/Garfield	28	12.33	0.93	1.43	0.39 ³	0.00	0.00	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Benton/Franklin ¹	927	29.83	0.38	0.10	0.44	0.09	0.75	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Chelan	225	25.82	0.46	0.26	0.12	0.01	0.32	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Clallam	552	80.02	0.90	1.03	1.45	0.25	0.88 ⁴	9%	100%	2%	2%	60%	3%	0%	
Clark	804	16.11	0.81	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	3%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Cowlitz	727	64.41	0.34	1.75	0.34	0.28	1.01	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Douglas	128	27.45	0.81	1.27	0.99	0.33	4.30	0%	39%	0%	0%	0%	16%	0%	
Ferry	14	13.78	0.79	0.79	0.36	0.21	0.00	0%	57%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	
Grant	179	15.80	0.82	0.55	1.67	0.03	0.32	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Grays Harbor	415	50.88	0.82	4.95	0.79	0.35	4.19	72%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	
Island	335	39.96	0.08	0.62	0.10	0.02	0.04	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Jefferson	49	18.62	0.82	4.15 ²	0.92 ³	0.10	0.61	75%	100%	0%	20%	30%	0%	2%	
King	2,004	11.48	0.12	0.20	0.39	0.05	0.06	0%	16%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Kitsap	555	19.45	0.51	0.32	0.24	0.03	0.05	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Kittitas	74	21.12	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.00	0.32	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Klickitat	24	9.69	0.88	0.42	0.42	0.00	0.83	60%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Lewis	181	20.10	0.26	0.53	0.65	0.12	1.51	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Lincoln	27	22.26	0.59	0.07	0.41	0.00	0.44	100%	100%	0%	0%	40%	0%	0%	
Mason	163	27.27	0.93	3.98	1.79	0.59	1.01	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Okanogan	131	26.01	0.84	1.29	0.87	0.21	0.69	38%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Pacific/Wahkiakum ¹	45	16.81	0.98	0.16	0.64 ³	0.04	1.20	129%	0%	2%	0%	0%	13%	0%	
Pend Oreille	11	6.81	0.73	2.64	0.91	0.00	4.68	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Pierce	881	9.53	0.64	0.35	0.34	0.04	0.40	5%	100%	0%	20%	10%	0%	25%	
San Juan	9	6.17	1.00	4.56	1.11	0.00	0.33	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Skagit	615	45.87	0.78	1.39	0.00	0.18	0.03	3%	100%	0%	2%	8%	1%	2%	
Skamania	24	18.26	1.00	0.17	0.88	0.13	1.46	75%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Snohomish	3,292	40.95	0.13	0.18	0.23	0.07	0.25	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Spokane	2,038	40.06	0.31	0.04	0.14	0.02	0.10	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Stevens	77	12.95	0.75	2.36	0.42	0.03	0.30	6%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Thurston	452	16.41	0.78	0.74	0.90	0.08	0.44	20%	100%	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	
Walla Walla/Columbia ¹	171	26.17	0.93	0.12	0.30 ³	0.00	3.27	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Whatcom	343	17.47	0.79	0.39	0.36	0.06	0.47	1%	100%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	
Whitman	17	5.29	0.71	0.82	0.06	0.00	0.82	82%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Yakima	641	21.05	0.27	0.37	0.21	0.06	0.36	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	

¹ Judicial districts combined

² Jefferson County may keep cases open for years. This is the county estimate for the number of contempt hearings per case.

³ Includes criminal contempt

⁴ This indicates days of detention per case; not used to calculate costs, because Clallam County uses state-funded secure residential center for truant youth sent to detention, and hence the county incurs no cost for detention.

Exhibit A2.2
Estimates of Cost Components and Total Costs by Court
(Costs in 2007 Dollars)

County	Cases Filed 2006/07	Costs per Activity						Cost per Case for Services					Totals	
		Filing	Initial Hearing	Review Hearing	Contempt Hearing	Arrest	Detention Day	Case management ²	Anger Replacement Training ¹	Psych Eval ³	Counseling ³	All Other Expenses	Per Case w Overhead ⁶	Court Total w overhead
Adams	32	\$37.45	\$69.77	\$0.00	\$175.17	\$65.96	\$142.86	\$67	\$224	\$0	\$0	\$425	\$1,016	\$32,519
Asotin/Garfield	28	\$10.76	\$60.72	\$81.13	\$138.39	\$73.68	NA	\$74	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$419	\$11,739
Benton/Franklin	927	\$33.66	\$68.75	\$0.00	\$101.78	\$88.60	\$150.00	\$90	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$97	\$451	\$418,057
Chelan	225	\$12.16	\$67.34	\$0.00	\$207.49	\$81.38	\$110.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$191	\$43,068
Clallam	552	\$11.84	\$21.02	\$23.50	\$88.91	\$79.60	\$0.00 ⁵	\$129 ⁴	\$24	\$7	\$7	\$0	\$457	\$252,450
Clark	804	\$8.07	\$31.80	\$77.59	\$78.96	\$90.63	\$146.00	\$46	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$185	\$336	\$270,445
Cowlitz	727	\$14.20	\$65.06	\$23.77	\$155.43	\$76.99	\$110.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$127	\$457	\$332,412
Douglas	128	\$22.86	\$113.05	\$84.56	\$178.61	\$77.36	\$143.64	\$31	\$140	\$0	\$0	\$4	\$1,408	\$180,191
Ferry	14	\$52.86	\$189.67	\$105.26	\$254.22	\$62.91	NA	\$36	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$7,005
Grant	179	\$11.09	\$56.39	\$99.30	\$118.27	\$75.52	\$100.00	\$76	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$141	\$652	\$116,763
Grays Harbor	415	\$5.37	\$26.64	\$41.46	\$77.42	\$73.61	\$125.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,029	\$427,127
Island	335	\$41.25	\$20.26	\$134.98	\$134.98	\$90.17	\$129.00	\$91	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$40	\$321	\$107,452
Jefferson	49	\$47.92	\$41.66	\$29.99	\$159.52	\$80.40	\$100.00	\$144 ⁴	\$0	\$0	\$80	\$4	\$795	\$38,937
King	2,004	\$80.23	\$111.93	\$104.05	\$453.11	\$102.85	\$424.95	\$17	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$66	\$507	\$1,016,075
Kitsap	555	\$48.08	\$84.97	\$0.00	\$107.56	\$90.10	\$130.00	\$91	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19	\$317	\$176,128
Kittitas	74	\$20.75	\$46.61	\$0.00	\$99.70	\$71.56	\$165.50	\$8	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$261	\$19,292
Klickitat	24	\$21.41	\$24.01	\$0.00	\$82.99	\$73.37	\$105.00	\$329 ⁴	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$643	\$15,439
Lewis	181	\$85.22	\$42.71	\$0.00	\$158.01	\$73.08	\$130.00	\$74	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4	\$668	\$120,912
Lincoln	27	\$10.92	\$58.36	\$0.00	\$110.55	\$74.53	\$135.00	\$75	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$23	\$357	\$9,642
Mason	163	\$12.04	\$103.86	\$63.25	\$119.59	\$80.76	\$161.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$902	\$146,961
Okanogan	131	\$6.92	\$81.98	\$123.21	\$139.86	\$71.60	\$100.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$533	\$69,776
Pacific/Wahkiakum	45	\$6.77	\$81.20	\$0.00	\$248.42	\$70.34	\$141.56	\$0	\$120	\$9	\$0	\$591	\$1,475	\$66,391
Pend Oreille	11	\$48.54	\$71.56	\$0.00	\$116.37	\$67.87	\$150.24	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,401	\$15,416
Pierce	881	\$6.97	\$217.91	\$331.66	\$311.55	\$91.18	\$150.00	\$184	\$0	\$0	\$80	\$240	\$1,047	\$922,790
San Juan	9	\$13.55	\$125.94	\$107.66	\$201.75	\$89.08	\$130.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,054	\$9,487
Skagit	615	\$105.14	\$33.40	\$34.25	\$133.00	\$86.82	\$115.00	\$312 ⁴	\$7	\$0	\$10	\$33	\$657	\$404,245
Skamania	24	\$11.75	\$55.41	\$0.00	\$130.12	\$79.12	\$126.31	\$80	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$591	\$14,193
Snohomish	3,292	\$31.53	\$39.61	\$0.00	\$183.81	\$121.00	\$200.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$114	\$352	\$1,160,164
Spokane	2,038	\$51.05	\$73.07	\$0.00	\$117.72	\$76.89	\$197.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$59	\$208	\$423,532
Stevens	77	\$84.08	\$74.43	\$40.55	\$136.42	\$74.93	\$159.21	\$109 ⁴	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$525	\$40,414
Thurston	452	\$28.60	\$37.99	\$0.00	\$136.38	\$93.21	\$118.00	\$94	\$79	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$608	\$274,842
Walla Walla/Columbia	171	\$44.91	\$70.59	\$0.00	\$734.49	\$76.25	\$146.00	\$77	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,122	\$191,931
Whatcom	343	\$24.88	\$30.34	\$0.00	\$209.96	\$82.94	\$130.00	\$84	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$414	\$141,943
Whitman	17	\$40.12	\$61.34	\$59.16	\$297.75	\$69.64	\$151.78	\$70	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$447	\$7,594
Yakima	641	\$20.88	\$60.21	\$0.00	\$183.20	\$71.91	\$120.00	\$73	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1	\$310	\$198,908
Statewide	16,190												\$475	\$7,684,238

¹ Anger Replacement Training at \$897 per youth, per E.K. Drake, 2007.

² Assume 2.25 hours of probation officer time for case management

³ Assume \$400 per youth

⁴ Court indicates more intensive case management

⁵ Clallam County uses the state-funded secure Crisis Residential Center for truant youth sent to detention and hence incurs no local costs.

⁶ Assume overhead at 15 percent of cost except in King County, where overhead was reported to be 20 percent.

A3. Regression Analysis of Cost Factors

The results of regression analysis in predicting the average cost per case is provided in Table A3.1. The major drivers of the cost differences were the average number of days youth spent in detention and the average number of hearings per case. Additional truancy-specific costs were also significantly related to average costs. Controlling for these other court characteristics, the truancy caseload and the percentage of cases with case management had no significant impact on cost per case.

Exhibit A3.1
Court Factors Affecting Cost per Truancy Case

	Coefficient	p-value
Hearings per Case	71.38	0.0152
Detention Days per Case	238.31	0.0001
Log (Percentage With Case Management)	36.90	0.4898
Other Expenses per Case	1.611	0.0001
Cases Filed	0.0504	0.5006

N=35

Adjusted R-square=.7731

A4. Community Truancy Boards in Washington

Based on our surveys of courts and school districts, we identified 17 community truancy boards serving 30 school districts in nine courts during the 2007–08 school year. A list of those boards is provided in Exhibit A4.1, below.

Exhibit A4.1
Community Truancy Boards Operating in Washington State in 2007–08

County	Truancy Board	School District
Benton	Benton County	Finley School District
Benton	Benton County	Kennewick School District
Benton	Benton County	Richland School District
Benton	Kiona-Benton/Prosser	Kiona-Benton School District
Benton	Kiona-Benton/Prosser	Prosser School District
Clark	Clark County	Battle Ground School District
Clark	Clark County	Camas School District
Clark	Clark County	Hockinson School District
Clark	Clark County	La Center School District
Clark	Clark County	Ridgefield School District
Clark	Clark County	Washougal School District
Clark	Evergreen (2 boards)	Evergreen School District (Clark)
Clark	Vancouver (2 boards)	Vancouver School District
Cowlitz	Castle Rock/Toutle Lake	Castle Rock School District
Cowlitz	Castle Rock/Toutle Lake	Toutle Lake School District
Cowlitz	Kelso/Kalama/Woodland	Kalama School District
Cowlitz	Kelso/Kalama/Woodland	Kelso School District
Cowlitz	Kelso/Kalama/Woodland	Woodland School District
Cowlitz	Longview	Longview School District
Franklin	Franklin County	Pasco School District
King	Tahoma	Tahoma School District
Kitsap	Kitsap County	Bainbridge Island School District
Kitsap	Kitsap County	Bremerton School District
Kitsap	Kitsap County	Central Kitsap School District
Kitsap	Kitsap County	North Kitsap School District
Kitsap	Kitsap County	South Kitsap School District
Snohomish	Monroe	Monroe School District
Spokane	Spokane	Spokane School District
Spokane	West Valley (Spokane)	West Valley School District (Spokane)
Stevens	Wellpinit	Wellpinit School District

A5. Court Reimbursements for Becca Cases

The Becca Bill was passed in the spring of 1995. As a result, the number of petitions for truancy, At-Risk Youth, and Children in Need of Services increased markedly. The state has reimbursed the courts for this increased activity since the 1995–97 biennium. Exhibit A5.1 show the amounts budgeted for truancy since the Becca Bill was passed.

In 1998, 20 counties filed for declaratory relief to cover unreimbursed expenses incurred in the 1995–97 biennium.³⁴ In 2000, a settlement of the case provided \$4.7 million in payment to those counties.

Exhibit A5.1
Truancy Budget

Biennium	Biennial Allocation
1993–95	\$0
1995–97	\$2,300,000
1997–99	\$14,019,000
1999–01*	\$17,581,000
2001–03	\$12,881,000
2003–05	\$13,224,000
2005–07	\$13,224,000
2007–09	\$16,505,000
2009–11	\$16,505,000

*Allocation for 1999–01 biennium includes \$4,700,000 from settlement of superior court case 98-2-02458, filed by 20 counties in 1998.

³⁴ Thurston County Superior Court, Case Number 98-2-02458.

**Appendix B
JUVENILE COURT PHONE SURVEY
TRUANCY 2008**

Respondent information

Name: _____

Title: _____

Court: _____

Phone: _____

Best time(s) to call: _____

Survey information

Interviewer name: _____

Date of interview: _____

Any necessary follow-up: _____

Instructions: I will be asking you questions about the policies and practices of your court in truancy cases. Some of the questions require estimates of time, cost, and number of cases. If you can, please provide us with an estimate of these figures based on your knowledge and expertise (we do not expect that you do additional research for this). If you absolutely don't know, that is okay too.

1. In your court, which entity OFFICIALLY FILES truancy petitions?

School or school district

Prosecutor's office

Other – please specify: _____

2. How much time does it take complete the intake process after a petition is filed (including preparation, paperwork, data entry, etc.)? _____ minutes/hours

3. In your court, which entity appears at the truancy hearing on behalf of the petitioner?

School or school district

Prosecutor's office

Other – please specify: _____

4. On average, how long do initial truancy hearings last? _____ minutes/hours

5. Apart from students, parents and school representatives, who is usually present at the initial truancy hearing?

	Yes/No	
Judicial officer		
Probation officer		
Court clerk		
Court coordinator		
Prosecutor		
Defense attorney		
Translator/interpreter		% cases
Other – please specify:		
Other – please specify:		

6. Some courts hold review hearings following the initial truancy hearing. Does your court routinely schedule review hearings in truancy cases to monitor compliance with court orders (this does not include contempt hearings)?

- Yes
- No → Q10

7. About how many truant youth had a review hearing in your court last year? _____ youth

8. How long does a review hearing usually last? _____ minutes/hours

9. Apart from students, parents and school representatives, who is usually present at the review hearing?

	Yes/No
Judicial officer	
Probation officer	
Court clerk	
Court coordinator	
Prosecutor	
Defense attorney	
Translator/interpreter	
Other – please specify:	
Other – please specify:	

10. On average, how long do contempt hearings last? _____ minutes/hours

11. Apart from students, parents and school representatives, who is usually present at a contempt hearing?

	Yes/No
Judicial officer	
Probation officer	
Court clerk	
Court coordinator	
Prosecutor	
Defense attorney	
Translator/interpreter	
Juvenile detention attendant (corrections officer, etc)	
Other – please specify:	
Other – please specify:	

12. Other than circumstances related to individual youth, what might be the *systemic* barriers to contempt proceedings on truant youth who continue to have unexcused absences? **[Interviewer: we're interested in both contempt filing & hearings]**

13. How many truant youth were sent to detention in past year? _____ youth

Zero → Q17

14. On average, how many days do truant youth spend in detention? _____ days

15. Do you know the approximate cost per day for detention in your county?

- Yes
- No → Q17

16. What is the average daily cost of detention per youth? _____ dollars

17. Now I will read to you a list of services to which some courts refer truant youth and others do not. Please tell me which, if any, of these special services your court refers truant students to.

[Interviewer: first ask if referral to each service is even made; then ask about how many *truant* youth were referred]

Case management – number referred: _____

Drug/alcohol testing – number referred: _____

Who normally pays for this: Parents/Medicaid or the court? (circle one)

Psychological evaluation – number referred: _____

Who normally pays for this: Parents/Medicaid or the court? (circle one)

Counseling – number referred: _____

Who normally pays for this: Parents/Medicaid or the court? (circle one)

Anger management – number referred: _____

Who normally pays for this: Parents/Medicaid or the court? (circle one)

Parent training – number referred: _____

Who normally pays for this: Parents/Medicaid or the court? (circle one)

Tutoring – number referred: _____

Who normally pays for this: Parents/Medicaid or the court? (circle one)

Other: _____ – number referred: _____

Who normally pays for this: Parents/Medicaid or the court? (circle one)

My court does not refer truant youth to special services

18. To the best of your knowledge, in the past year, did your court incur any additional costs related to truancy cases that you have not already told me about? **(E.g., community truancy board, truancy diversion programs, alternatives to detention or court-ordered assignments/requirements)**

- Yes
- No → **Survey complete!**

19. What were these costs?

Item

Cost

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study would not have been possible without cooperation of the 35 juvenile court administrators (JCAs) and numerous court personnel who took the time to respond to our online survey and interview. Later, they spent considerable time reviewing and helping us to revise our estimates of cost. We are especially grateful to the following court representatives who met with us to discuss preliminary findings: Gary Carlyle (JCA, Thurston County), Bruce Knutson (JCA, King County), Shelly Maluo (JCA, Pierce County), Mike Merringer (JCA, Island County), and Craig Daly (Assistant Administrator, Snohomish County Superior Court).

Ed Vukich (Program Evaluation Analyst, King County) conducted special analysis to provide the days that truant youth spent in detention in King County.

Bonnie Glenn (King County Prosecutor's Office) provided background regarding legal issues and proceedings.

Previous Reports in the Truancy Series

Klima, T., Miller, M., and Nunlist, C. (2009). *Washington's Truancy Laws: School District Implementation and Costs*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy
Document No. 09-02-2201

Klima, T., Miller, M., and Nunlist, C. (2009). *What Works? Targeted Truancy and Dropout Programs in Middle and High School*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy
Document No. 09-06-2201.

Klima, T., Miller, M., and Nunlist, C. (2009). *Truancy and Dropout Programs: Interventions by Washington's School Districts and Community Collaborations*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy
Document No. 09-06-2202

For further information, contact Marna Miller at (360) 586-2745 or millerm@wsipp.wa.gov

Document No. 09-10-2201



*Washington State
Institute for
Public Policy*

The Washington State Legislature created the Washington State Institute for Public Policy in 1983. A Board of Directors—representing the legislature, the governor, and public universities—governs the Institute and guides the development of all activities. The Institute's mission is to carry out practical research, at legislative direction, on issues of importance to Washington State.