

**DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES  
NEW LONDON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Exhibit 7.2.j.

**TO:** DR. CLOUET, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
**FROM:** CHRISTINE CARVER, DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES  
**SUBJECT:** TRUANCY REVIEW BOARD UPDATE  
**DATE:** 4/11/2008  
**CC:** DOREEN FULLER, ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS, SOCIAL WORKERS, SUSAN CONNOLLY, CHRIS STELIGA, JUVENILE COURT & MATT GREENE

Steps prior to making a referral to the Truancy Review Board (TRB)

Per New London Public Schools, Board of Education Policy 5113 the following steps must be taken at the building level, prior to making a referral to the TRB:

1. If a parent does not call the school to report an absence, the secretary in each school should call the home to find out the reason for absence. A log should be kept of those phone calls.
2. A building level attendance meeting must be held no later than “ten school days after the child’s fourth unexcused absence in a month or tenth unexcused absence in a school year”. By policy, building attendance teams should consist of the classroom teacher, building administrator, motivation officer, social worker and school nurse.
3. If a parent fails to attend the meeting or the truancy matter is not otherwise resolved, the student should be immediately referred to the Truancy Review Board. The Truancy Review Board consists to the following “Standing Members”
  - a. Ms. Christine Carver, Superintendent Designee
  - b. Reverend Wilson, Community Member
  - c. Mr. Lonnie Braxton, Probate Appointee
  - d. Building Principal

Also present are the building Social Worker and Motivation Officer.

To make a referral to TRB, attendance meetings at the building level must be held, at a minimum monthly. They should occur two weeks prior to the scheduled TRB meeting dates.

Truancy Review Board Process

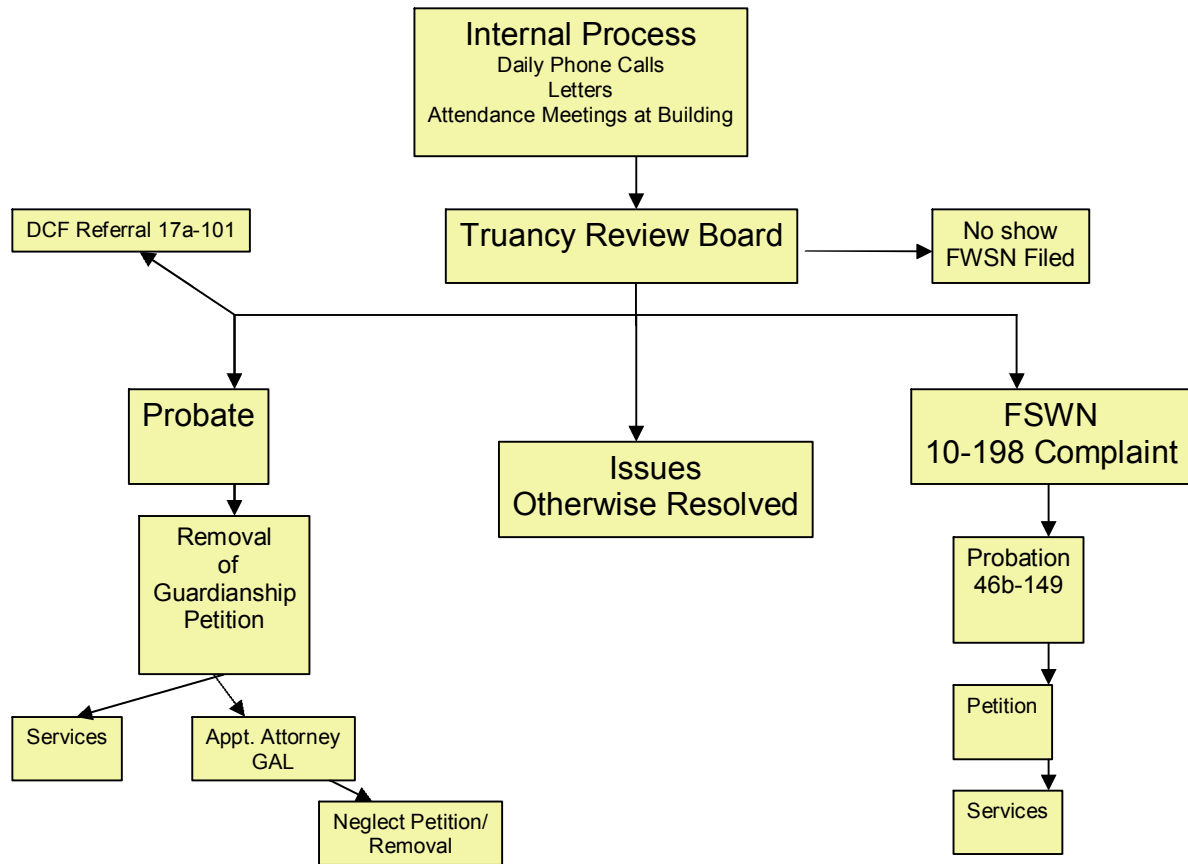
Truancy Review Board meetings occur monthly. Previous cases are reviewed to monitor student attendance. When reviewing the attendance cases, the TRB will consider the following options:

1. If attendance has improved, a letter is sent to the parent congratulating them on the improved attendance.
2. If attendance has not improved, the case is referred to the Children's Probate Court and the Department of Children and Families
3. Continue to monitor the case.

When meeting with the parent at the TRB hearing, the following procedure is followed:

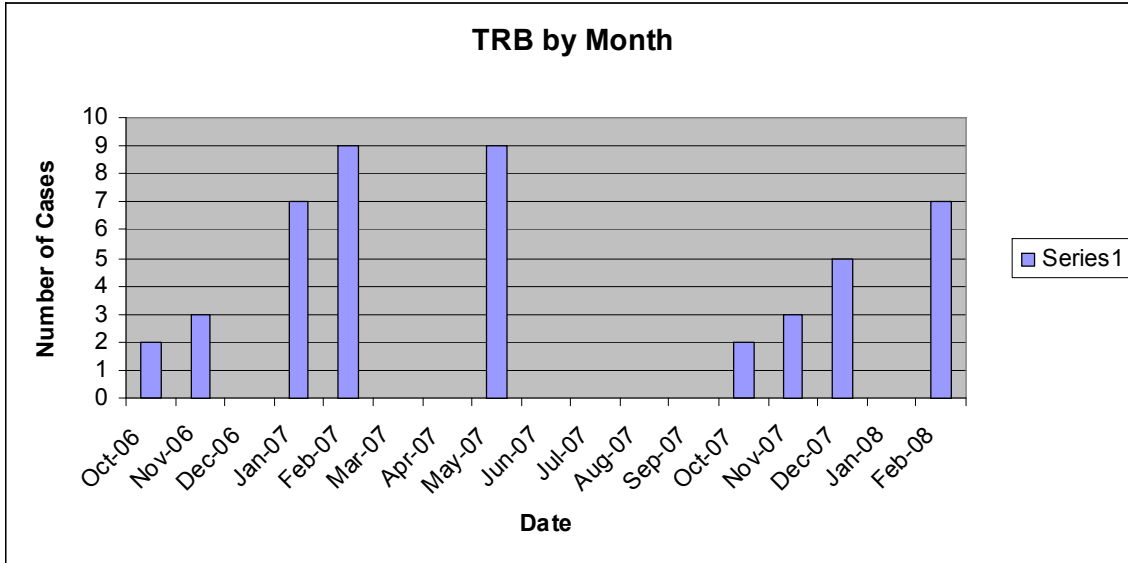
1. Introductions are made.
2. Goals of TRB are stated (to work with the parent to resolve attendance issues).
3. Student(s) attendance is reviewed with parent.
4. Parent is given an opportunity to offer explanations.
5. TRB asks clarify questions/makes recommendations.
6. If issue is resolved at this level and a plan is agreed upon, then a formal letter is sent out within a week, outlining the plan and copies of the plan are sent to the school within a week of the meeting.

If the Truancy Review Board feels that the matter has not been resolved, the TRB could make the following recommendations (as outlined in the flowchart):

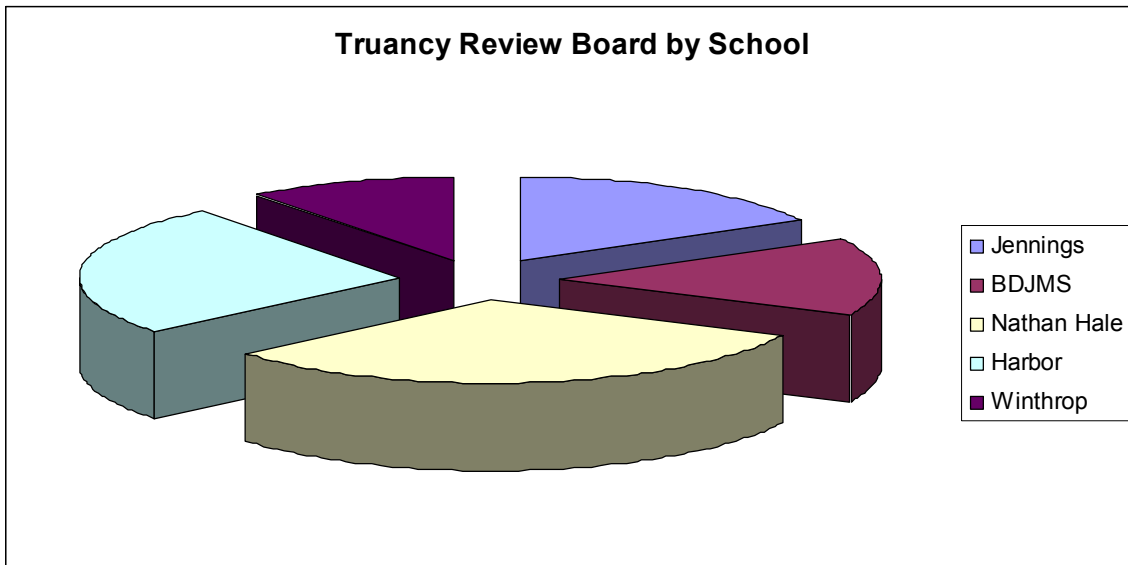


As indicated earlier, referrals to the Department of Children and Families and the Children’s Probate Court are also made as a recommendation during the monthly review if attendance has not improved. Parents are informed that that may happen in the letter sent to the home which outlines the agreed upon plan.

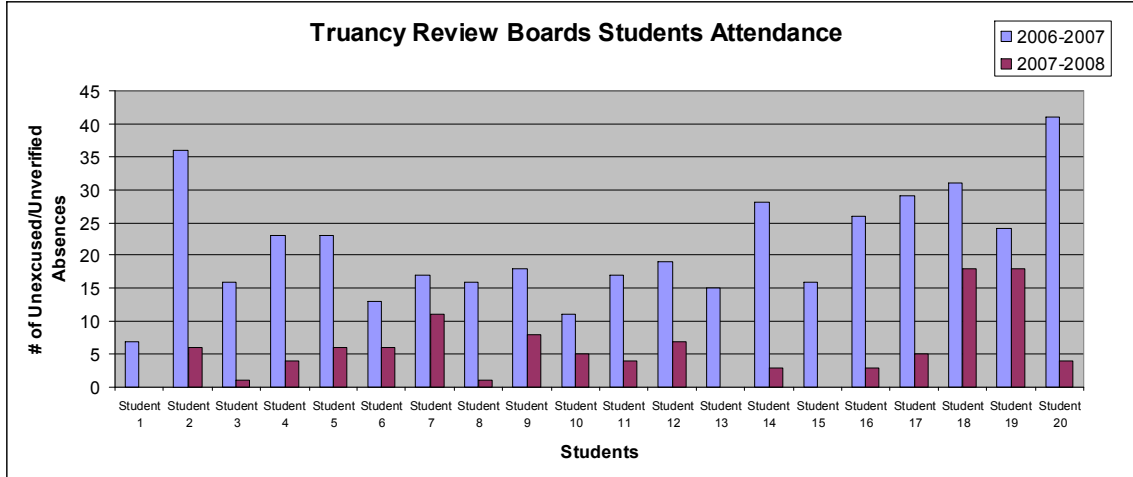
The following chart indicates the number of cases heard by the TRB since it was formed in September of 2006:



A total of 47 student cases (36 families) will be heard by the end of February. The following chart indicates the number of cases by school. Please note that even though this is an elementary pilot, if a student had a sibling at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, then the case was heard.

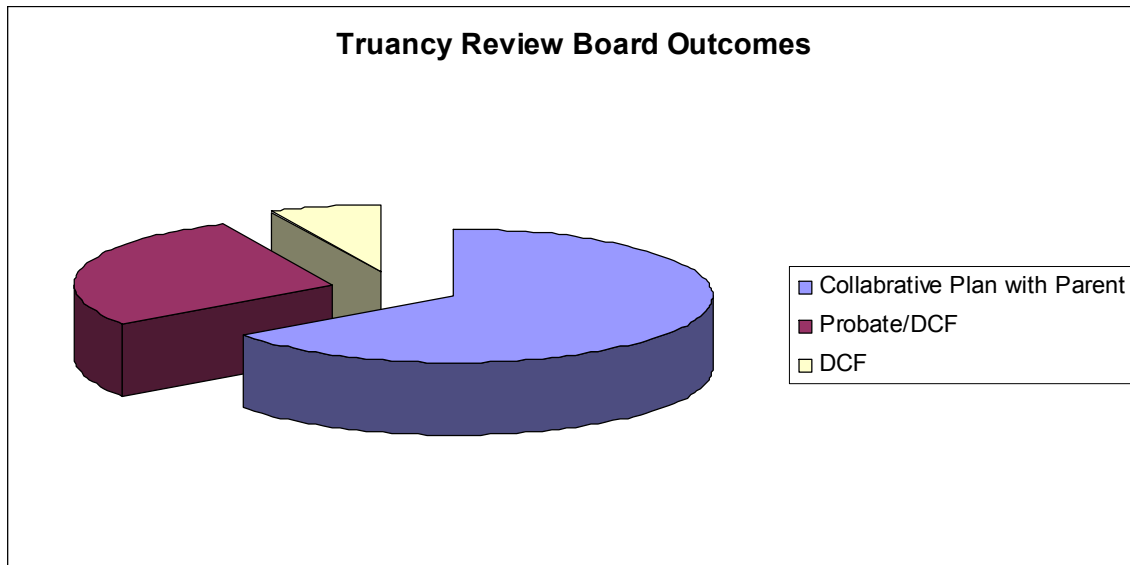


The following chart is a comparison for the cases heard during the 2006-2007 school year and their attendance (unverified or unexcused absences) or the current academic year (2007-2008). Please note that seven students exited NLPS prior or during the school year, making a comparison impossible.

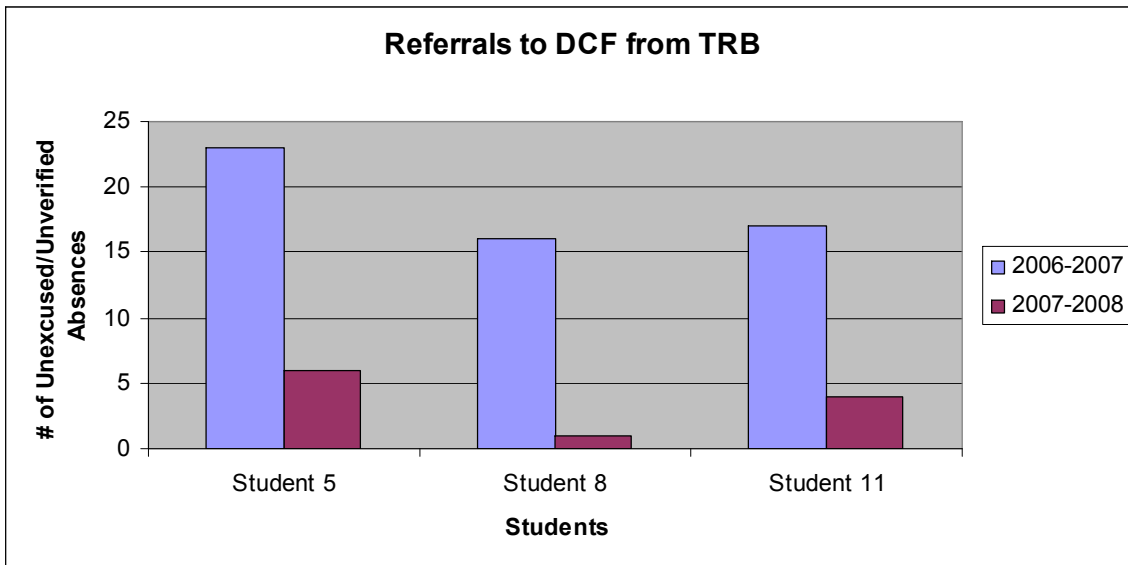
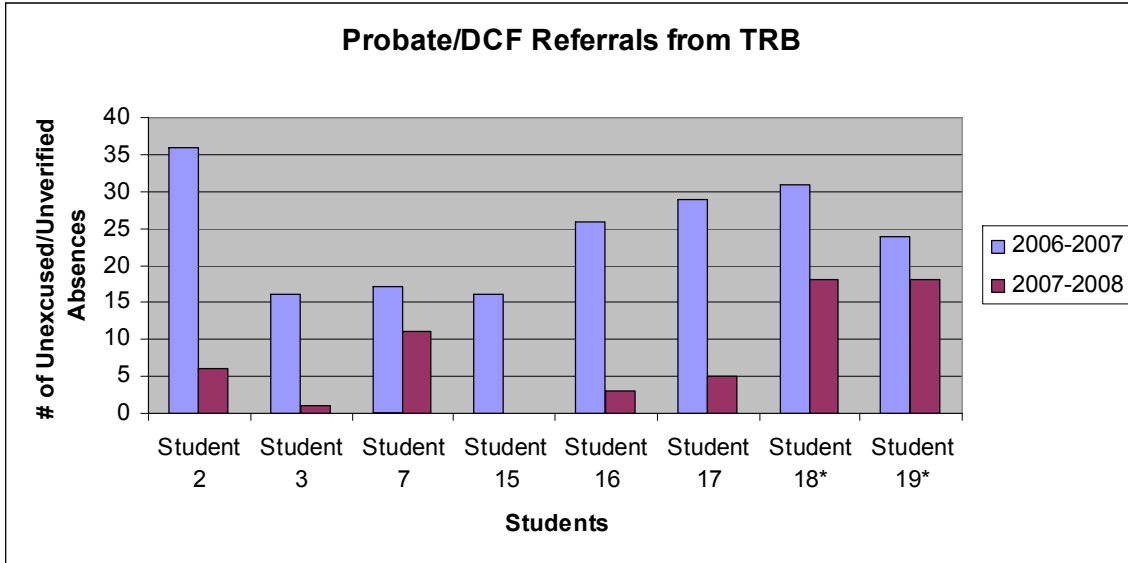


You will note that in almost all cases, a significant improvement in attendance occurred between the two years.

To give an overview of the decision making progress of the TRB, the following chart indicated the recommendations of the TRB:



As noted, most of the issues were resolved by developing a collaborative plan with the parents. In some cases, where the TRB suspected that there might concerns of abuse (either serious neglect or physical abuse - 3 cases) a direct call was made to the DCF hotline. All of the other cases were referred to both Probate and the Department of Children and Families (for educational neglect). The following charts indicate the comparison for students that were referred to an outside agency.



\*Students were originally reviewed last year by TRB but were referred to Probate and DCF this year.

As you are aware, per my recommendation, the policy committee is currently looking at the Attendance Policy to resolve issues that have come up upon implementation of the TRB. It is my hope that those issues will be resolved at the March Policy Committee Meeting. As we continue to look at the success and expansion of the TRB, there are a number of logistical issues that need to be addressed:

- Overlap with Families with Service Needs Petitions (Juvenile Court) for secondary students.
- Increasing frequency of TRB, this may need to include involvement of additional community representatives given the time commitment.

- Support for the coordination of paperwork and follow-up required (at both the building level and TRB or district level).
- A mechanism for collecting data on building level efforts in SASI to track data.
- Ensuring the consistency of the policy implementation at the building level.