

*Madera County  
Probation Department*

*Stop Truancy  
Opportunity Program*

*Annual  
Performance Report  
2003-2004*



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**Madera County  
Probation Department  
Stop Truancy  
Opportunity Program  
(STOP)**

**Annual  
Performance  
Report**

**07/01/03 – 06/30/04**

**Summary**

*The Stop Truancy Opportunity Program (STOP) completed its third year of operation, beginning on July 1, 2003 and ending on June 30, 2004. Eight participating Madera County Schools included Dairyland Elementary, Enterprise Secondary, Liberty Junior High, Martin Luther King Junior High, North Fork Elementary, Oak Creek Intermediate, Thomas Jefferson Junior High and Wilson Middle.*

**I. Participant Demographics**

*By the end of the 2003-2004 school year, the total student population tracked by STOP had increased to 298, a 65% increase from the 181 students reported at mid-year. Students from Martin Luther King and Thomas Jefferson made up almost half of the STOP population while smaller schools such as Dairyland and Enterprise accounted for less than 10% of the population.*

**Table 1.  
Number and Percent of Participants by School**

<b>Participating Schools</b>	<b>Mid-year</b>	<b>Year-end</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Dairyland Elementary	7	10	3.4%
Enterprise Secondary	3	11	3.7%
Liberty Junior High	12	17	5.7%
Martin Luther King Jr. High	51	76	25.5%
North Fork Elementary	12	28	9.4%
Oak Creek Intermediate	12	31	10.4%
Thomas Jefferson Jr. High	59	83	27.9%
Wilson Middle	25	42	14.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100%</b>

*A majority of the 298 STOP participants during this performance period were Hispanic (60%) or Non-Hispanic Whites (36%). Fifty-four percent (54%) of participants were males and 46% were females.*

**Table 2.  
Number and Percent of Participants by Ethnicity by School**

<b>Participating Schools</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Native American</b>	<b>Non – Hispanic</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dairyland	0	0	5	0	5	10
Enterprise	0	0	9	0	2	11
Liberty	0	0	8	0	9	17
Martin Luther King	4	0	61	0	11	76
North Fork	1	0	1	3	23	28
Oak Creek	0	1	7	0	23	31
Thomas Jefferson	3	0	69	0	11	83
Wilson	0	0	18	0	24	42
Total	8	1	178	3	108	298
Percent	2.68%	.34%	59.73%	1.01%	36.24%	100%

**Table 3.  
Number and Percent of Participants by Gender by School**

<b>Participating Schools</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dairyland	7	3	10
Enterprise	4	7	11
Liberty	11	6	17
Martin Luther King	35	41	76
North Fork	20	8	28
Oak Creek	17	14	31
Thomas Jefferson	50	33	83
Wilson	18	24	42
Total	162	136	298
Percent	54%	46%	100%

**II. Program Statistics**

The program placed six participants on probation for truancy offenses this past year. These six participants made up 2% of the total participant population (N=298). Two of the six participants (0.7% of 298) violated the terms of probation.

Under restitution and community service, two participants were given court ordered community service. One participant successfully completed the court ordered community service.

Participants who did not proceed with the program left due to reasons shown in Table 6.

**Table 4.  
Participants' Probation Status by Semester**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester		2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester		Annual	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Placed on probation for truancy offense	0	0%	6	2.0%	6	2.0%
Violated terms of current probation	0	0%	2	0.7%	2	0.7%
Completed probation	0	0%	1	0.3%	1	0.3%

**Table 5.  
Number and Percentage of Students Given and Completing Restitution and Community Service by Semester**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester		2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester		Annual	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Given court ordered restitution	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Successfully completed restitution	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Given court ordered community service	0	0%	2	0.7%	2	0.7%
Successfully completed community service	0	0%	1	0.3%	1	0.3%

**Table 6.  
Reasons for Leaving the Program by Semester**

	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Annual
	Semester	Semester	
Moved to another city or state	6	19	25
Transferred to another school	6	14	20
602 W & I, wards	4	9	13
Other	0	0	0
Total	16	42	58

The program annually tracks participants' arrest, incarceration and probation violation rates, while specifically identifying if a participant's arrests, incarcerations, or probation violation occurred before or after referrals to the STOP. Tables 7 and 8 show the participants' first semester, second semester and annual arrest and incarceration rates.

The increase in the arrest and incarceration rates can be attributed to the intensified supervision of the participants by program officers as the school year progressed. The arrest and incarceration rates are low in comparison to rates at the County level. The increase in these rates for post-referral STOP participants can be viewed as the results of positive intervention and prevention services being administered to deter further truancy and crime among this group of juveniles.

**Table 7.**  
**Participants' Arrest Rates Prior to and After STOP Referral By Type of Offense**

Offense Type	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester		2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester		Annual	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
<b>Arrested prior to STOP referral</b>						
Status offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Felony offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Misdemeanor offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Arrested after STOP referral</b>						
Status offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Felony offense	0	0%	8	2.7%	8	2.7%
Misdemeanor offense	0	0%	4	1.3%	4	1.3%
Total	0	0%	12	4.0%	12	4.0%

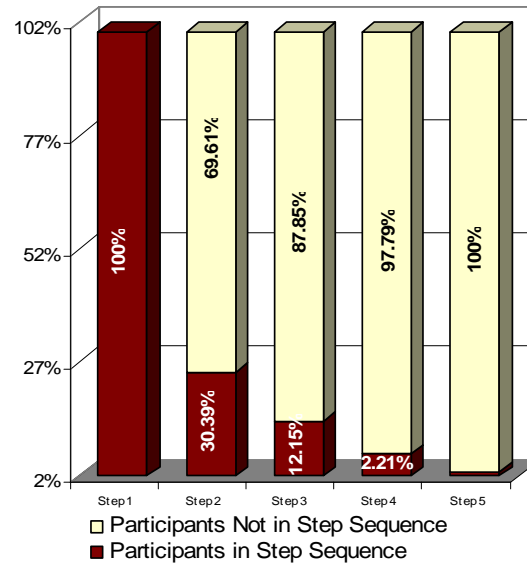
**Table 8.**  
**Participants' Incarceration Rates Prior to and After STOP Referral By Type of Offense**

Offense Type	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester		2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester		Annual	
	Number	Rate	Number	Number	Rate	Number
<b>Arrested prior to STOP referral</b>						
Status offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Felony offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Misdemeanor offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Arrested after STOP referral</b>						
Status offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Felony offense	0	0%	8	2.7%	8	2.7%
Misdemeanor offense	0	0%	4	1.3%	4	1.3%
Total	0	0%	12	4.0%	12	4.0%

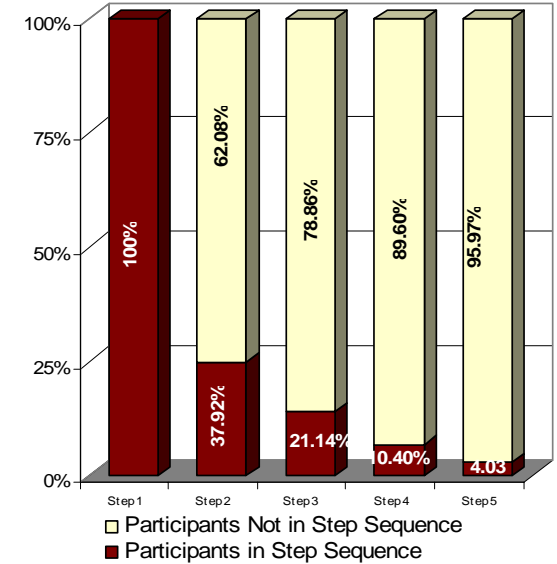
The STOP uses a step sequence to determine students' level of truancy. At Step 1, the student has 1 to 3 unexcused absences and a letter is sent to the parents notifying them of the student's truant behavior. At Step 2, the student incurs a fourth unexcused absence at which time another notification is mailed to the parents. A meeting between the probation officer, the parents, and a school official soon follows. At Step 3, a fifth unexcused absence occurs, the District Attorney mails a third notification to parents, and a required Truancy Mediation Team Meeting is requested for students and parents to attend. At Step 4, a 6<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence occurs and a School Attendance Review Board (SARB) meeting is held. At Step 5 (the final step), the 7<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence occurs. The student is referred to court as a habitual truant and formal probation is requested. One participant had a complaint filed with the District Attorney against his parents as per Penal Code section 272.

Table 9 shows the number of participants reaching each step sequence by mid-year and year-end. All participants in STOP were truant at enrollment and are at least Step 1 participants.

**Figure 1.**  
Percentage of Students at Each Truancy Level at Mid-Year



**Figure 2.**  
Percentage of Students at Each Truancy Level by Year-End



**Table 9.**  
Number and Percentage of Students at Each Truancy Level

Steps	Mid-Year		Annual	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1	181	100%	298	100%
2	55	30.39%	113	37.90%
3	22	12.15%	63	21.10%
4	4	2.21%	31	10.40%
5	0	0%	10	3.36%



**III. School Statistics**

*At the time of this annual report, 298 participants are on file. However, only 253 participants' academic data and attendance data were available. School attendance rates for Fall 2003 were at 94.49% while Spring 2004 rates improved to 95.24%. The Fall 2003 average GPA for the STOP participants was 1.60 while Spring 2003 average grade point average (GPA) was 1.74, a 0.14 improvement.*

**Table 10.  
Mean GPA's and Attendance Rates by School**

Participating Schools		Mean GPA			Attendance Rates		
		Mid-Year	Year-End	+/-	Mid-Year	Year-End	+/-
Dairyland	(N=8)	1.61	1.46	-0.15	96.67%	99.12%	+2.45%
Enterprise	(N=10)	2.06	1.52	-0.54	83.46%	89.33%	+5.87%
Liberty	(N=17)	1.75	1.69	-0.06	96.42%	95.25%	-1.17%
Martin Luther King	(N=64)	1.61	1.99	+0.38	95.44%	95.91%	+0.47%
North Fork	(N=26)	2.33	2.75	+0.42	98.36%	98.45%	+0.09%
Oak Creek	(N=21)	1.52	1.87	+0.35	90.61%	89.42%	-1.19%
Thomas Jefferson	(N=75)	1.54	1.45	-0.10	92.84%	95.71%	+2.87%
Wilson	(N=32)	1.31	1.18	-0.13	97.11%	94.56%	-2.55%
Total	(N=253)	1.60	1.74	+0.14	94.49%	95.24%	+0.75%

To measure STOP participants' behavior, the program tracked the number of students suspended and the total days of suspension during Fall 2003 and Spring 2004. A total of 79 students were suspended in Fall 2003 with the highest percentages of students from either Thomas Jefferson (35%) or Martin Luther King (34%). Students were suspended for a total of 289 days during the Fall, making the average length of suspension per suspended participant 3.66 days. In Spring 2004, a total of 69 students were suspended for a total of 368 days, averaging 5.33 days of suspension per suspended participant. Schools with the highest percentages of suspended participants during the Spring were Thomas Jefferson (26%) and Martin Luther King (25%).

The number of students suspended decreased from Fall to Spring while the total days of suspension increased. Previous investigations revealed that some suspended students were placed on extended suspension because school administration had deemed the student ready for school expulsion. However, only the school board had authority to approve expulsion of a student. Since the school board convened infrequently, some students facing expulsion were placed on continued suspension, remaining at home until expulsion procedures were completed thus increasing the total numbers of suspended days.

**Table 11.**  
**Number of Students Suspended and Total Days of Suspension per Semester by School**

Participating Schools	Number of Students Suspended		Total Days of Suspension	
	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2
	1	2	1	2
Dairyland	4	3	9	15
Enterprise	1	2	3	10
Liberty	5	10	18	51
Martin Luther King	27	17	95	111
North Fork	0	4	0	11
Oak Creek	3	4	5	21
Thomas Jefferson	28	18	121	102
Wilson	11	11	28	47
Total	79	69	289	368

**IV. Participants' Background**

Family dynamics can be an important factor in a student's behavior. Therefore, the program attempts to more exactly understand truant students' behavior by investigating the home environments of individual students. However, this investigation was conducted on a self-report basis and at the students' discretion, so this information may not be fully reliable.

Table 12 shows the number of participants' family members that were incarcerated, on parole, and on probation. Sixty-six participants (24.5%) had family members who entered the criminal justice system.

Table 13 shows STOP participants' involvement with other programs and services. One hundred and sixty-one (54% of 298) participants are eligible for free and reduced lunches, while 119 (40% of 298) of the students' families have been involved with the Child Protective Services due to complaints or interventions. No students were involved with Cal-Learn during this reporting period.

**Table 12.**  
**Number of Family Members Involved in the Criminal Justice System by School**

Participating Schools	Family member incarcerated	Family member on parole	Family member on probation	Annual Total
Dairyland	1	1	3	5
Enterprise	2	0	2	4
Liberty	0	0	0	0
Martin Luther King	0	5	4	9
North Fork	3	1	2	6
Oak Creek	5	2	6	13
Thomas Jefferson	0	0	7	7
Wilson	8	9	12	29
Total	19	18	36	73
Percent	6.4%	6.1%	12.1%	24.5%

**Table 13.**  
**Number of Students Participating in Other Programs and Services by School**

Program / Service	Dairyland	Enterprise	Liberty	MLK	NorthFork	OakCreek	Jefferson	Wilson	Total	Percent
Eligible for Free/ Reduced Lunch	10	7	4	62	8	13	27	30	161	54.1%
Cal-Learn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
ESL	3	1	0	7	0	2	2	4	19	6.4%
Previous Therapy	0	4	4	8	6	13	9	6	50	16.8%
Referred to New Hope Clinicians	0	0	0	0	9	14	1	0	24	8.1%
Referred to Madera Co. Clinicians	0	6	1	11	0	0	13	8	39	13.1%
Referred to STOP Tutoring	0	2	0	21	3	1	15	1	43	14.5%
Family History with CPS	5	9	4	30	6	14	34	17	119	39.9%
Referred to B & G Club	0	0	0	0	1	9	0	0	10	3.5%

*Madera County  
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*V. Conclusion*

*A comparison of statistics from mid-year and annual reports demonstrates the program's effectiveness. Highlights for this year include a 0.75% increase in participants' overall school attendance and a 0.14 improvement in their mean GPA. Attendance rates for all schools improved when compared with attendance rates from the mid-year report.*

*Based on the attendance and grades data, it is clear that the interventions via intensive monitoring by probation officers, tutoring and mental health, proved effective in improving grades and preventing further juvenile truancy. In addition, the early intervention and prevention efforts of the STOP limited the number of participants referred for court action.*

*Most participants remained in the first two steps of the program which indicates that probation officers and clinicians are providing effective services at these levels, ceasing the escalation from the initial steps to the final court action step.*

*A review of the data in this report renders a statistically based analysis of the program. However, the tangible impact can only be demonstrated by the changes seen in the lives of the children serviced by the STOP Program.*

*The STOP program has literally changed the course of many of the participants' lives. The following is one of the many success stories of the positive impact the STOP program probation officers and mental health clinicians have had on program participants: The following is an account of a probation officer who worked with Adam, a program participant.*

*In September of 2002, Wilson Middle School referred Adam S. to the STOP program regarding four unexcused absences. A short time later Adam was contacted and it was discovered that he was afraid to attend school because he was having problems with other students. The problems with the other students were worked out and Adam began attending school regularly. In March of 2003, Adam's mother contacted the Probation Officer and reported that Adam was acting differently at home and was hanging out with new friends. Adams grades were also declining at school and he was not on track to pass the 7th grade. Adam was contacted and it was learned he was sneaking out of his house during late hours of the night and was smoking marijuana. The officer then advised Adam's mother of his recent misbehavior and plans were made to watch his activities more closely. Adam completed the 2002/2003 school year with greatly improved attendance, however, he was required to attend summer school to pass the 7th grade.*

*During the summer school session, the probation officer continued to provide STOP services in order to help Adam succeed.*

*In July of 2003, per his mother's request, the officer took Adam to Madera County Juvenile Correctional Camp to attend a scared straight program. Adam participated in a four-hour program that exposed him to the uneasiness of institutional life in hopes that it would deter him from entering the criminal justice system. Also in July of 2003, Adam was taken on a field trip sponsored by STOP to the mountain area Boys and Girls Club. During this trip, Adam requested to be referred to counseling services provided through the STOP program.*

*At the beginning of the 2003/2004 school year, Adam began 8th grade with the ultimate goal of graduating. Adam passed 7th grade by attending summer school and was referred in August of 2003 to the STOP Clinician for counseling. Adam began the school year by misbehaving in school and not turning in homework assignments. During the first semester of the school year, several meetings took place between Wilson School Staff, the clinician, Adam, his mother and the probation officer. The meetings were held with the intention of helping Adam improve his school behavior and grades. Adam's school attendance was consistent, but the new focus was for him to improve the other behavioral issues and class assignments. Adam made major improvement during the second semester of his 8th grade year. Adam worked hard in changing his educational progress and he eventually brought his grades up enough to graduate from Wilson Middle School.*

*Adam's support system was constant as the clinician, Mr. Cabrera, met with him once a week and the probation officer consistently and effectively supervised and counseled him throughout the school year. Wilson School Staff also provided Adam with the necessary tools and support for him to succeed. The final major constant that greatly contributed to Adam's success was his mother's continued support and cooperation. Without her daily direction for Adam, he would have most likely entered the juvenile criminal justice system, as he was heading in that direction when she first called the probation officer. As for Adam's future, he will be entering his freshman year at Chowchilla High School in the fall. He plans to graduate from the high school and is currently preparing to play football for the junior varsity program.*

*In conclusion, the primary goal of the program is to improve grades and attendance. The program continues to strive for juvenile truancy prevention and to help the participants and their families to succeed in the process. The program offers a positive form of intervention in which the participant may take advantage of the services and assistance provided.*

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