



# Superior Court Judges' Association

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February 7, 2012  
Judge Anne Schindler

Dear Judge Schindler,

The Superior Court Judges' Association request assistance from the Washington State Center for Court Research (Center) to establish a standard and routine evaluation of truancy programs across our state. As you know, the Center published an evaluation of truancy intervention in 2010, funded by the McArthur Foundation. The findings were based on a robust set of data compiled from the majority of school districts in the state; however the largest school districts in the state were not represented (including King, Pierce, and Spokane). We seek to build upon that initial evaluation with an expanded, improved, and standardized report that can establish a baseline and show changes over the years.

The SCJA is eager to apply the findings of evaluation to improve our court programs and services. To that end, we request that a truancy evaluation be completed by the Center on a regular cycle of 1 or 2 years, with input from the association on design, focus, program enhancement descriptions, and recommendations. We request that the evaluation include overviews of current truancy practices, describing reform projects and their corresponding impact on truancy outcomes. Included in the report should be a section of recommendations for improvements based on data or program analysis.

Let me emphasize that the court community is the primary audience for the requested evaluation. This type of performance evaluation informs court leadership about the strengths and weaknesses of the programs they oversee. The findings will inform policy, programmatic, and funding decisions made at the court level. The report also will provide a historical record of program enhancements to truancy programs statewide.

We seek to know whether our programs are operating at the highest level possible based on objective evaluation of outcomes. The purpose of an interactive and recurring report is to show over time the impact of the truancy population on attendance rates, graduation or an education equivalent certification, and will institute larger scale reforms supported by the evaluation.

Signed by Judge Inveen and Bonnie Bush

Cc: Ms. Bonnie Bush, WAJCA  
Dr. Carl McCurley  
Dr. Thomas George