



501 3rd Street, NW · 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20001
T 202.467.4900 · F 202.467.4949
www.childrenslawcenter.org

Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council
Committee of the Whole
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Public Hearing:

- B25-0740 - Truancy Reduction for Student Success Act of 2024
- B25-0754 - Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy Reduction Amendment Act of 2024
- B25-0758 - The Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024
- B25-0791 - Utilizing Partnerships and Local Interventions for Truancy and Safety (UPLIFT) Amendment Act of 2024

Danielle Robinette
Senior Policy Attorney
Children's Law Center

Introduction

Good morning, Chairman Mendelson, Committee members, and staff. My name is Danielle Robinette, and I am a Senior Policy Attorney at Children's Law Center. Children's Law Center believes every child should grow up with a strong foundation of family, health and education and live in a world free from poverty, trauma, racism and other forms of oppression. Our more than 100 staff – together with DC children and families, community partners and pro bono attorneys – use the law to solve children's urgent problems today and improve the systems that will affect their lives tomorrow. Since our founding in 1996, we have reached more than 50,000 children and families directly and multiplied our impact by advocating for city-wide solutions that benefit hundreds of thousands more.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding the four bills seeking to address the issues of student engagement and school attendance in DC public schools. Children's Law Center represents DC students who regularly face barriers in accessing their education. Through our medical-legal partnership, Healthy Together, we represent parents whose children are facing school attendance challenges related to chronic health conditions, lack of access to special education, housing conditions, among other concerns. We also represent children in foster care who face myriad challenges accessing and engaging with their education. My testimony and recommendations today arise from our experience representing students who are often furthest from opportunity.

Last month, this Committee held a public roundtable in which local and national experts, including Children’s Law Center, were invited to discuss legislative solutions to the improve school attendance and student engagement in the District. As the Committee reviews the bills before it,¹ we urge you to be guided by the research and expertise shared at the roundtable and ensure that any proposals moved forward are supported by evidence and, thus, more likely to make meaningful improvements to the District’s continuum of attendance interventions and supports.

A common theme at last month’s roundtable was the need for better data to inform attendance policy and practice. Currently, the District relies largely on OSSE’s annual report which offers a high-level overview of which students consistently miss the most school. But more is needed. DC’s response to chronic absenteeism must be informed by:

1. The reasons why DC students miss school;
2. Real-time monitoring of student attendance; and,
3. The efficacy of our existing attendance interventions.

It is not enough to know that X percent of students miss Y percent of days. Policymakers must know why students aren’t attending and whether our existing interventions actually improve attendance. As Dr. Balfanz testified at last month’s roundtable, “different causes require different solutions and if you guess wrong, your solution can actually make it worse.” Without adequate data on the drivers of absenteeism in the District, the Committee is left with the unenviable task of trying to guess which of the various legislative proposals before you will best address the needs of DC students and

families. Guessing wrong would not only waste the District's limited resources but might just make the problem worse.

In addition to the data needed to support decision-making, national experts in attendance reform argue that "a comprehensive approach that includes prevention efforts, problem solving responses aligned to the major sources of absenteeism in the districts, and mitigation actions that help students recover the learning and social connections lost when they are absent."² The four bills before the Committee today propose dozens of legislative changes purporting to reform the District's response to student absenteeism. The provisions in the bills address myriad issues related to students, families, schools, several government agencies, and the child welfare and juvenile legal systems.

As the Committee reviews these bills, we urge you to be guided by the research and best practices shared at last month's public roundtable and to pursue those proposals that improve the District's data collection, prevention efforts, problem-solving abilities, and mitigation actions. Appended to my testimony is a chart that analyzes each bill individually to demonstrate whether and how the bill's provisions fall within best practices as articulated by the experts.

My testimony below identifies the provisions within the bills before the Committee that would improve the District's attendance data collection and evaluation. Children's Law Center believes that this foundational understanding of DC's

absenteeism issue is a necessary precursor to any change to the system. Especially in a time of such tight budgets, we encourage the Council to make data-informed decisions about what DC students and families need before making investments in new programs or interventions. The District already has several evidence-backed tools to address school attendance and student engagement. However, too often these programs or interventions are not able to reach all the students who might benefit from them. As such, my testimony outlines ways in which the Council could improve the implementation of existing programs better meet the needs of DC students. Lastly, we caution the Committee against provisions that expand the role of child welfare as a response to absenteeism. Child welfare investigations pose significant risk of harm to children and families and are unlikely to improve student attendance. Therefore, we strongly urge the Committee to avoid any increase in the use of child welfare to address attendance concerns.

Improving Attendance and Engagement Will Require Detailed Data about the Reasons Why DC Students Do Not Attend School and What Works to Bring Them Back

The District cannot develop meaningful solutions to its attendance and engagement issues without first understanding the breadth and depth of the problem. As Dr. Balfanz testified at the last month's public roundtable, "schools and districts have to know their challenge well."³ Given the currently available data, DC does not have a clear picture of what drives DC's chronic absenteeism and truancy rates. At the roundtable in May, we outlined the need for better data and offered three recommendations for improvement: 1) Report data on excused and unexcused absences

by reason; 2) Publish attendance data several times each year; and, 3) Conduct a root cause analysis of chronic absenteeism in the district, especially for student groups known to miss the most school.⁴ These recommendations were supported by the national experts who testified at the May roundtable.⁵

Without a strong sense of why students are missing school, it is not possible to prevent absenteeism resulting from common barriers or problem solve as absences of a particular type start to accumulate.⁶ Without actionable, real-time data, it is difficult for schools and service providers to intervene with students exhibiting early warning signs. Moreover, without any evaluation of the efficacy of specific interventions for specific students, DC's absenteeism response system will struggle to connect students to the support most likely to improve their attendance. "This is the only way to really learn what works locally, for which students, under what circumstances, and to continually improve."⁷ Among the bills before the Committee, several provisions address data concerns in each of these three areas.

Identifying Root Causes of Absenteeism

Beyond the collection and publication of real-time attendance data trends, the District also needs an analysis of the root causes of chronic absenteeism and truancy among DC students. As we testified at the roundtable last month, OSSE and LEAs need to know not only *that* certain student groups (e.g., students with disabilities) miss more school, but also *why* this has been true year after year.⁸ Without any causal analysis of

these trends, schools can only guess at what interventions may better meet the needs of students. A root cause analysis will be crucial to developing appropriate tools for prevention and problem solving within the best practice framework. To address the District's need for root cause analysis, B25-0758, the Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024 (Showing Up for Students Act) includes a requirement that OSSE's annual attendance report "identify the most common root causes of truancy and chronic absenteeism."⁹ Elsewhere, this bill would require OSSE to "make publicly available on a website... the root causes of absenteeism and truancy" every two years.¹⁰ Third, this bill would require the DME to biannually convene relevant agency leaders and community organizations to review trends in school attendance and to address root causes of absenteeism in the District.¹¹ Each of these approaches would improve the District's current knowledge base regarding the root causes of absenteeism among DC students. Moreover, the recurring analysis and reporting would allow stakeholders to monitor changing trends to adjust their responses.

Collecting Actionable, Real-Time Attendance Data

Currently, the DC Code only requires annual reporting of attendance data. Schools are required keep a record of daily attendance¹² and to send their data to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) "within 60 days after the end of a school year."¹³ In turn, OSSE is required to publish an annual report on "the state of absenteeism in the District" by November 30th of each year.¹⁴ The monitoring of individual programs

or interventions is left to the agency or community-based organization charged with implementation. The Council committee with jurisdiction over the relevant agency may seek additional information regarding the efficacy of such programming through the performance oversight process.

Given this annual review timeline, the District is far from the goal of “real-time data” on attendance. The daily attendance record kept by schools could, in theory, allow for real-time monitoring of attendance trends. However, it is unclear whether each Local Education Agency (LEA) uses the same attendance data system and, if not, whether the resulting data is easily comparable across LEAs. We urge to Committee to work with OSSE and LEA leaders to determine what their present technology allows and whether investments in new or expanded systems are needed to gather and report attendance data more often and with greater levels of detail.

Both B25-0740, the Truancy Reduction for Student Success Act of 2024 (Truancy Reduction for Student Success Act), and the Showing Up for Students Act, include provisions that move DC’s attendance data closer to the goal of actionable, real-time data collection. The Truancy Reduction for Student Success Act would require OSSE to publish to its website select attendance data for each school or campus monthly.¹⁵ This would be a significant step forward from the current annual report published by OSSE. The Showing Up for Students Act would require schools to send attendance data to OSSE within 10 business days of last day of school.¹⁶ This provision would move up the

deadline for schools and, theoretically, allow OSSE to publish their annual report sooner, but not necessarily with greater frequency. The Showing Up for Students Act would also require OSSE to establish tiered systems of support for LEAs that is to include a “monthly assessment of absenteeism trends.”¹⁷ While this provision does not explicitly require more frequent data collection, OSSE would presumably need at least monthly data to do an assessment of trends. This provision exemplifies how actionable, real-time data can be used to help schools improve their problem-solving responses based on the unique needs of their school community.

Evaluating the Efficacy of Attendance Interventions

In addition to providing a clearer picture of the scope of the District’s attendance problem, better data is needed to determine which of our existing interventions are working and which could be strengthened going forward. Throughout the FY23 performance oversight, several Council committees sought to evaluate the efficacy of the truancy interventions implemented by agencies within their jurisdiction. Unfortunately, there is little by way of program evaluation made publicly available. Moreover, the breadth of topics covered by performance oversight pre-hearing questions dilute the focus on any attendance intervention run by that agency. Rather than chase this efficacy data across several agencies using different definitions, metrics, and evaluations, the District’s comprehensive approach to addressing chronic absenteeism must include unified reporting across agencies on the outcomes of attendance interventions. Such data

would not only provide clearer oversight of existing programming but would also help identify gaps in the District's array of interventions and where the Council ought to bolster investments going forward.

The District Should Focus on Implementation of Existing Attendance Interventions

With better information about the efficacy of existing attendance interventions, the education sector and supporting agencies can focus on improving the implementation of programs to better meet the needs of as many DC students as possible. Among the best practices recommended by the national experts, several exist to some degree within the District's array of services. Specifically, we highlight school-based student support teams, restorative discipline practices, and the school-based behavioral health (SBBH) program which are already implemented to varying degrees across DCPS and charter schools. However, these tools are limited in their impact due to constraints on their implementation. As the Council seeks to improve the District's response to student absenteeism, we recommend evaluating existing interventions before investing in new program development.

Improving Student Support Teams to Better Meet the Needs of Students

As we testified at last month's roundtable, Children's Law Center supports the robust investment in school-based student support teams (SST) to ensure that they are conducted with fidelity and are targeted to support students with the most acute attendance needs.¹⁸ Only one of the four bills before the Committee addresses the concept

of meeting with students who miss school. B25-0754, the Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy Reduction Amendment Act of 2024 (Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy Reduction Act) requires schools to meet with a student after their fifth unexcused absence in a marking period to “develop an action plan and strategies that are school-based or community-based to enhance the minor’s student’s attendance.”¹⁹ While this provision does not specifically reference SSTs, the directive is substantially similar to the requirement of SSTs as outlined in the regulations.²⁰

However, recognizing the District’s present fiscal reality and the significant scope need among DC students, full implementation of the SST requirements in accordance with 5A DCMR § 2103 is not feasible. As such, our testimony from last month’s public roundtable included three recommendations to improve implementation and efficacy of this intervention – narrowing the population of students served, reducing the number of school staff required, and improving data collection.

Use SSTs to Support Students with Acute Attendance Concerns

First, we recommend narrowing the population of students served by SSTs to ensure that this intensive intervention is targeting students with the highest concentration of absences. Currently, the regulations require schools to refer any student having “accumulated five (5) full day unexcused absences in one (1) marking period or other similar time frame” to an SST.²¹ However, DCPS’s Attendance and Truancy Policy states that they will hold a Student Attendance Conference (SAC) when a student reaches

“5 cumulative full-day unexcused absences.”²² The DCPS policy is more expansive than the regulation and gives no consideration for the time period across which a student has accumulated those five absences. There should be a different level of concern and thus urgency of response for a student who accrues five unexcused absences by Thanksgiving than for one who crosses that threshold in March.

For students who miss five school days across several months of the school year, there may not be the types of attendance barriers that require the high level of support and follow-up that we expect from an SST. Maybe one day in September they slept through their alarm. Once or twice, they missed their bus and decided to turn around and go home. In January they attended an athletic competition that was not school sponsored. These things happen and are not indicative of persistent barriers to attendance. If implemented with fidelity, the intensive support and follow-up provided by SSTs would be better suited to students facing ongoing barriers that continually interfere with school attendance.

Staff SSTs with Those Best Able to Support Students' Needs

Second, we recommend altering the composition of SST membership to lessen the burden on school staff and ensure the team is best suited to support the student. Presently the regulations state that SST should include “a general education teacher, a school nurse, psychologist, counselor, and/or social worker, if applicable, and a school administrator with decision-making authority.”²³ While we support the premise of a multi-disciplinary

team that can bring different fields of expertise, the inclusion so many school staff may be too burdensome. Ultimately, the SST ought to include someone with knowledge of attendance issues and the various supports available and someone who has an established relationship with the student. This might be a current teacher, a former teacher, an athletics coach, or a counselor, among others. Their title is less important than the relationship they have with the student. Moreover, this person may not even need to be an employee of the school. Several schools across the District work with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to address attendance concerns in their school community.

Improve SST Data Collection and Reporting

In addition to the important support they could offer to students, a robust system of SSTs could produce important data to inform attendance policy and practice going forward. D.C. Code § 38-203(i)(A-i)(i)-(v) requires LEAs to report extensive information about the work of their school-based student support teams – including:

- “(i) The number of students who were referred to a school-based student support team;
- “(ii) The number of students who met with a school-based student support team;
- “(iii) A summary of the action plans and strategies implemented by the school-based student support team to eliminate or ameliorate unexcused absences; and
- “(iv) A summary of the services utilized by students to reduce unexcused absences;
- “(v) A summary of the common barriers to implementing the recommendations of the school-based student support team;”²⁴

Moreover, 5A DCMR § 2103.3 states, “In addition to the report required at the end of each school year pursuant to DC Code § 38-203(i), an educational institution shall provide to OSSE, upon request, student-level data and records evidencing the work of school-based student support teams.”²⁵ However, none of OSSE’s attendance reports have published or analyzed this information. It is unclear whether this is because the data are not collected by LEAs, not requested by or shared with OSSE, or simply not included in OSSE’s annual reporting. Regardless, without this information, it is nearly impossible to know what SSTs have tried, how effective their efforts have been, and what should be improved. We urge the Committee to use its oversight role to ensure that LEAs and OSSE are gathering and publishing this critical information so that it can be used to inform future work in this space.

Expanding the Use of Restorative Discipline

Restorative discipline practices are alternatives to the traditional school discipline models that focus on punishment and exclusion in response to undesirable student behavior. Restorative discipline – like restorative justice in the criminal legal system – focuses on resolving conflict and repairing harm.²⁶ When thinking about how decisions about how school discipline can impact attendance and engagement, there is a clear benefit to practices that seek to keep students in school as compared to traditional exclusionary discipline tools such as suspension and expulsion. Discipline responses that push students out of the classroom exacerbate absenteeism in several ways. Most directly,

a suspended student is explicitly barred from attending school for a certain period. Like with absences for any other reason, suspended students miss valuable learning time while they are barred from school. This missed instruction is likely to result in worse academic outcomes and reduced engagement.²⁷ Moreover, students who feel disengaged from school are less likely to attend going forward.²⁸ Restorative discipline practices offer an alternative to exclusion that keep students connected to their school while also addressing the harms that their behaviors may have caused.

Restorative discipline is not a new concept for DC schools. Since 2015, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education has funded RestorativeDC, a project of SchoolTalk, to support DCPS and DC public charter schools in their implementation of restorative practices.²⁹ These supports range from individual training sessions for students and staff, facilitation of important restorative conversations, restorative justice conferencing, classroom circles, and dialogue circles.³⁰ As of SY20-21, Restorative DC had worked directly with 86 DC schools and provided training to more than 1,200 educators across 179 schools.³¹ Moreover, principals reflect that working with RestorativeDC has positively impacted their school community.³² Given these promising takeaways from the early implementation of this work, we encourage the Committee to work with OSSE and RestorativeDC to see what is needed to expand the use of restorative discipline practices to more, if not all, DC schools.

Unfortunately, nothing in the attendance bills currently before the Committee directly address an expansion of restorative discipline. In fact, B25-0791, the Utilizing Partnerships and Local Interventions for Truancy and Safety Amendment Act of 2024 (UPLIFT Act), doubles down on the use of exclusionary discipline.³³ Specifically, the UPLIFT Act would allow schools to issue out-of-school suspensions to students in grades 6-8 for a broader range of behaviors.³⁴ Additionally, the bill would allow schools to issue 11-45-day out-of-school suspensions to students in grades 6-12.³⁵ Were these provisions to be passed, DC would see significant increases in the use of exclusionary discipline which would push more students out of school and result in more absences and increased school disengagement. These consequences are directly in conflict with the goal of improving student attendance. For these reasons, we urge the Committee not to move forward with any of the UPLIFT Act provisions that would expand the use of exclusionary discipline.

Ensuring Student Access to School-Based Behavioral Health

We are in the midst of a youth mental health crisis.³⁶ Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimated one in five DC children had a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral problem.³⁷ Nearly half (47%) of DC's children have had adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), such as being exposed to abuse or unmet basic needs, which can negatively impact their well-being and behavior.³⁸ The 2021 Youth Risk Behavioral

Survey (YRBS) revealed that 28% of DC middle school students and 18.3% of high schoolers said they have seriously thought about killing themselves.³⁹

Moreover, recent research has shown that students with behavioral health challenges miss more school than their peers and that absences due to behavioral health issues account for more than 10% of all absences.⁴⁰ Locally, DCPS reports that “student health, including student mental health and COVID concerns or diagnoses, is the most common barrier to regular attendance cited during [Student Attendance Conferences].”⁴¹ One way to address the intersection of school engagement and behavioral health needs is to integrate systems of care.⁴² To do so, the Council, the education sector, and the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) established and expanded the School-Based Behavioral Health (SBBH) program to place a mental health clinician in every school.

The goal of the SBBH program is to ensure students in every DC public school have access to the full range of behavioral health services. The Multi-Tier System of Supports model (MTSS) is administered by a licensed clinical social worker or therapist and funded by DBH through community-based organizations (CBO). Tier 1 and Tier 2 programming look like school-wide skill-building or group sessions on special topics like conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, bullying, suicide prevention, coping mechanisms, and self-care.⁴³ Tier 3 services are one-on-one therapy for those with the most acute needs and includes the ability to bill insurance for these clinical interventions.

Importantly, both the school-wide and one-one-one services address root causes of students' disengagement and absenteeism.⁴⁴

Where staff are in place, and referrals are made, recent surveys of students, caregivers, school staff and coordinators show high satisfaction with services. "Many school staff who reported referring students for behavioral health services believed the students benefited from treatment services in several ways such as decreased behavior incidents and improved symptoms."⁴⁵ However, more is needed. About half of the students surveyed for a program evaluation were not confident about where to go for help. Caregivers were frustrated by the lack of marketing and transparency about available services. Students would also like better support for well-being after negative events. As one said in 2022, "one time we were promised a schoolwide session where we can express our mental grief with a school lockdown, and we never got it."⁴⁶ To meet the growing need for SBBH and to address persistently high rates of school disengagement, we urge the Council to work with DBH, CBOs, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that the SBBH program is able to meet the needs of as many students as possible.⁴⁷

Expansion of the Child Welfare Investigations Will Harm Students and Families and Is Unlikely to Improve Attendance

At last month's hearing, Dr. Balfanz explicitly warned against the use of punitive tools noting that "the evidence base is fairly overwhelming that prevention and family engagement is much more effective than punitive."⁴⁸ While there will not be a one-size-fits-all solution to absenteeism, there are certain tools that we know are ineffective at

improving attendance and pose risk of harm to DC children and families. Specifically, we are deeply concerned about the provision within the Showing Up for Students Act that expands the definition of child neglect and would significantly increase the number of students and families investigated by the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA).⁴⁹ Investigating the family of every child who misses 30 days of school over the course of a school year casts too wide a net. Such an overbroad identification process would pose undue harm on families facing real barriers to regular school attendance. Moreover, the additional workload for CFSA would require either an expansion of their budget or cuts to other crucial work performed by the agency. And, finally, even if we were to ignore the risk of harm and the resource constraints, CFSA does not have the tools to address the root causes of absenteeism. As such, we strongly urge the Council to avoid expanding the role of CFSA in the District's response to chronic absenteeism.

The vast majority of children referred to CFSA for educational neglect are experiencing neither a threat to their health or safety nor educational neglect.⁵⁰ As we testified before this Committee in December⁵¹ and again at last month's roundtable, referrals to child welfare are an ineffective and harmful tool in addressing chronic absenteeism. Our position is informed not only by CLC's decades of experience representing children involved in the child welfare system, but by research showing that referrals to child welfare agencies and juvenile courts cause more harm than good.⁵²

The Showing Up for Students Act would deem any student “who has 30 or more absences in any an [sic] academic year that are not subject to a valid excuse” as neglected.⁵³ Of the common drivers of absenteeism identified by research – external barriers, school or commute avoidance, disengagement, and misconceptions, none provides indicia of child abuse or neglect. Drawing an arbitrary line in the sand does not make children safer or make disengaged students more likely to attend school. The bill includes language that would allow CFSA to determine whether the “parent, guardian, or custodian’s actions or pattern of inaction are the proximate cause of the child’s failure to secure an education.” While this caveat may prevent the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) from pursuing a case against some caregivers, an investigation by CFSA would be necessary to determine whether the caregiver was the “proximate cause” of the student’s absences. Moreover, any contact with CFSA, even an investigation where allegations are not substantiated, can be traumatic and damaging for children and families.⁵⁴

Additionally, the resources spent on reviewing and responding to the large number of referrals limits the ability of CFSA to reach children who are experiencing unsafe circumstances which require the type of intervention that CFSA is best equipped to provide. Based on OSSE’s attendance data, 15,438 students missed more than 20%, or 36 days, of the 2022-2023 school year. While the data does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, if even half of those students accrued at least 30

unexcused absences, the Showing Up for Students Act would require investigation of more than 7,700 students and families.⁵⁵ This would put a significant strain on CFSA and would limit the agency's ability to identify and intervene in cases where a child is experiencing abuse or neglect. Expanding CFSA investigations at the scale imagined by the Showing Up for Students Act would require the Agency to double, if not triple, their investigation staff. Taking on thousands more investigations will make it even harder for staff to identify the children experiencing abuse or neglect.

And crucially, CFSA does not have the tools to address the underlying causes of absenteeism. Even if the District were to require CFSA to investigate the family of every student having accrued 30 unexcused absences, there is likely little the Agency could do to address the underlying causes of the absences. Research has found that an "overarching correlate of chronic absence may be poverty. Homelessness, housing instability, family obligations such as caring for younger siblings or elderly family members, and lack of a safe path to school are poverty-related barriers that prevent students from consistently attending schools."⁵⁶ CFSA is not the appropriate agency to address these types of concerns. For example, if a student is disengaged from school because they are several years behind grade level in reading, there is nothing CFSA can do to remedy the underlying concern. If a student is missing school due to mental or physical health concerns, CFSA is not the right agency to support the family in seeking medical treatment. CFSA does not manage Safe Passage or improve school climates or

provide families with safe housing. CFSA is not the right agency to help families overcome the barriers to their student's school attendance.

We have heard the repeated calls for some sort of accountability mechanism for students and caregivers when the student is chronically absent or truant. However, we urge the Committee to be guided by the national experts regarding what works to improve attendance. As Dr. Balfanz testified before this Committee just last month, while "it's challenging to find [accountability measures] that are actually effective. **Pure punitive things have been shown not to be.**"⁵⁷ As such, we strongly urge the Committee to be guided by best practices to ensure that any resulting legislation avoids imposing harm on DC children and families.

Conclusion

Absenteeism has long been a challenge for the District, and several programs currently exist to support students and families in overcoming their barriers to attendance. However, the District currently lacks the data necessary to inform policymaking about appropriate prevention and problem-solving strategies. In the absence of a strong foundation upon which to build a successful attendance response, we strongly urge the Committee to be guided by research and best practices to ensure that any resulting legislation leads to meaningful improvement in attendance and avoids imposing greater harm on DC children and families.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and I welcome any questions.

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- ¹ B25-0740, *Truancy Reduction for Student Success Act of 2024*; B25-754, *Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy Reduction Amendment Act of 2024*; B25-758, *Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024*; B25-791, *Utilizing Partnerships and Local Interventions for Truancy and Safety (UPLIFT) Amendment Act of 2024*.
- ² Dr. Robert Balfanz, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University, Testimony Before the Council of the District of Columbia, Committee of the Whole, Public Roundtable on Student Absenteeism and Discipline (May 13, 2024), p. 5, available at: <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/414>
- ³ Dr. Robert Balfanz, DC Council Committee of the Whole Public Roundtable on Student Absenteeism and Discipline (May 13, 2024), at 33:40, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9jrS7XS4QQ&t=4061s>
- ⁴ Judith Sandalow, Children’s Law Center, Testimony Before the Council of the District of Columbia, Committee of the Whole, Public Roundtable on Student Absenteeism and Discipline (May 13, 2024), p. 4-11, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/resources/committee-of-the-whole-public-roundtable-student-absenteeism-and-discipline/>
- ⁵ See Dr. Robert Balfanz, Testimony Before the Council of the District of Columbia, *supra* note 2; see also Liz Cohen, FutureEd, DC Council Committee of the Whole Public Roundtable on Student Absenteeism and Discipline (May 13, 2024), at 1:11:04, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9jrS7XS4QQ&t=4061s>
- ⁶ Dr. Robert Balfanz, Testimony Before the Council of the District of Columbia, *supra* note 2, p. 4.
- ⁷ See *id.*, at 5.
- ⁸ Judith Sandalow, Testimony Before the Council of the District of Columbia, *supra* note 4, p. 11.
- ⁹ B25-758, *Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024*, lines 56-57.
- ¹⁰ *Id.*, lines 161-163.
- ¹¹ *Id.*, lines 219-225.
- ¹² DC Code § 38-203(a).
- ¹³ DC Code § 38-203(i).
- ¹⁴ DC Code § 38-203(k).
- ¹⁵ B25-0740, *Truancy Reduction for Student Success Act of 2024*, lines 53-64.
- ¹⁶ B25-758, *Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024*, lines 46-54.
- ¹⁷ *Id.*, lines 168-172.
- ¹⁸ Judith Sandalow, Testimony Before the Council of the District of Columbia, *supra* note 4, p. 17.
- ¹⁹ B25-0754, *Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy Reduction Amendment Act of 2024*, lines 103-108.
- ²⁰ See 5A DCMR § 2103.2(c)(3).
- ²¹ 5A DCMR § 2103.2(c)(3).
- ²² District of Columbia Public Schools, *Attendance and Truancy Policy*, p. 5 (Effective October 28, 2022), available at: <https://dcps.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dcps/publication/attachments/Attendance%20Policy%20SY%2022-23.pdf>
- ²³ 5A DCMR § 2103.4(c).
- ²⁴ D.C. Code § 38-203(i)(A-i)(i)-(v)
- ²⁵ 5A DCMR § 2103.3.
- ²⁶ See Next Generation Learning Challenges, “Restorative Practices in Schools: Designing for Equity,” available at: <https://www.nextgenlearning.org/equity-toolkit/school-culture>; see also The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Blog: What Is Restorative Justice for Young People? (May 24, 2022), available at: <https://www.aecf.org/blog/what-is-restorative-justice-for-young->

[people?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCOjwv700BhDwARIsAC0sjWOhPh7J-NEOp7VHgr6BPxS1EOxHsutP2YLLY8d-AHzTh_X0CDTt58aAmKdEALw_wcB.](https://www.future-ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Attendance-Playbook.5.23.pdf)

²⁷ See Phyllis Jordan, FutureEd & Attendance Works, *Attendance Playbook Smart Strategies for Reducing Student Absenteeism Post-Pandemic*, (May 2023), p. 19, available at: <https://www.future-ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Attendance-Playbook.5.23.pdf>.

²⁸ See Attendance Works, “Chronic Absence: Root Causes,” available at: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/root-causes/>

²⁹ See SchoolTalk, Restorative DC, available at: <https://www.schooltalkdc.org/restoratedc/>.

³⁰ See RestorativeDC, Restorative Practices, available at: <http://www.restoratedc.org/restorativepractices/>.

³¹ See School Talk, Restorative DC, “Restorative Justice in D.C. Schools: Impact of SchoolTalk’s RestorativeDC from Pre-Pandemic Through Recovery,” p. 6, 9, available at: <https://www.restoratedc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/SchoolTalk-RestorativeDC-RJ-in-DC-Schools-2020-21.pdf>.

³² *Id.*, at 8.

³³ See B25-791, *Utilizing Partnerships and Local Interventions for Truancy and Safety (UPLIFT) Amendment Act of 2024*, Title IV, lines 122-202.

³⁴ *Id.*, lines 147-173

³⁵ *Id.*, lines 174-199.

³⁶ See, e.g., Matthew Stone, “Why America Has a Youth Mental Health Crisis, and How Schools Can Help,” EDUCATION WEEK (October 16, 2023), available at: <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/why-america-has-a-youth-mental-health-crisis-and-how-schools-can-help/2023/10>

³⁷ Children’s Law Center, *A Path Forward – Transforming the Public Behavioral Health System for Children and their Families in the District*, (Dec. 2021) available at: https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/BHSystemTransformation_Final_121321.pdf.

³⁸ *Id.*, at 10.

³⁹ In addition to increased suicidality, the 2021 DC Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) revealed that about 12% of middle and high school students had taken prescription pain medicine without a prescription. Over 19% of middle school students and over 25% of high schoolers reported that their mental health was not good most of the time, or always (including stress, anxiety, and depression). One-fifth (20%) of high school students went without eating for 24 hours or more to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight. In the general population, only 20% of children with a behavioral health disorder will ever receive care from a specialized provider. The unmet need is worse for children of color. See OSSE, *2021 DC YRBS Middle School Trend Analysis Report*, QN29, p. 8, QN62, p. 17, available at: https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/2021DCBM%20Trend%20Report.pdf; OSSE, *2021 DC YRBS High School Trend Analysis Report*, QN49, p. 14, QN106, p. 32, available at: https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/2021DCBH%20Trend%20Report.pdf; American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, *Best Principles for Integration of Child Psychiatry into the Pediatric Health Home*, (June 2012), available at: https://www.aacap.org/App_Themes/AACAP/docs/clinical_practice_center/systems_of_care/best_principles_for_integration_of_child_psychiatry_into_the_pediatric_health_home_2012.pdf; Vikki Wachino, et al., *The Kids Are Not All Right: The Urgent Need to Expand Effective Behavioral Health Services for Children and Youth*, USC-Brookings Schaeffer on Health Policy (December 22, 2021), available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/usc-brookings-schaeffer-on-health-policy/2021/12/22/the-kids-are-not-all-right-the-urgent-need-to-expand-effective-behavioral-health-services-for-children-and-youth/>.

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- ⁴⁰ See Christopher A Kearney, et al., School Attendance Problems and Absenteeism as Early Warning Signals: Review and Implications for Health-Based Protocols and School-Based Practices, 8 *Frontiers in Educ.*, at 4 (August 30, 2023), available at: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2023.1253595/full> (citing David Lawrence, et al., Impact of Mental Disorders on Attendance at School, 63.1 *Austl. J. of Educ.* 5 (March 14, 2019), available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0004944118823576>).
- ⁴¹ Cinthia Ruiz, Chief Integrity Officer, District of Columbia Public Schools, Testimony before DC Council’s Committee of the Whole, p. 3 (December 12, 2023), available for download at: <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/171>.
- ⁴² See Kearney, et al., *School attendance problems and absenteeism as early warning signals*, *supra* note 40, p. 9.
- ⁴³ Strengthening Families through Behavioral Health Coalition, *How Does School-Based Behavioral Health Work?*, available at: <https://www.strengtheningfamiliesdc.org/how-does-sbbh-work>.
- ⁴⁴ See Riley J Steiner & Catherine N. Rasberry, *Brief report: Associations between in-person and electronic bullying victimization and missing school because of safety concerns among U.S. high school students*, 43 *J. Adolescence* (August 2015), available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0140197115000998?via%3Dihub> (finding that “[c]ollaborations between health professionals and educators to prevent bullying may improve school attendance.”); see also, Libby Stanford, *Students Are Missing School Because They’re Too Anxious to Show Up*, *EDUCATION WEEK* (October 6, 2023), available at: <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/students-are-missing-school-because-theyre-too-anxious-to-show-up/2023/10#:~:text=Sixteen%20percent%20of%20students%20who,sad%20or%20depressed%20to%20attend> (finding that 16% of students absent for reasons other than physical illness said they didn’t attend because of anxiety, and 12% said they felt too sad or depressed to attend.)
- ⁴⁵ DBH Coordinating Council on School Behavioral Health slides, presented May 15, 2023, on file with the Children’s Law Center.
- ⁴⁶ School Behavioral Health Expansion Evaluation, *Summary of Findings from SY 2021-2022: Providing Multi-tiered Support for Behavioral Health*, Child Trends and DC Department of Behavioral Health, 2023, obtained via the Freedom of Information Act.
- ⁴⁷ To learn more about the SBBH Program, see <https://bit.ly/SBBHFactSheet>.
- ⁴⁸ Dr. Robert Balfanz, *supra* note 3, at 47:25.
- ⁴⁹ B25-758, *Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024*, lines 257, 262-264.
- ⁵⁰ See Office of the State Superintendent of Education, FY2022 Performance Oversight Responses, response to Q20, available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/CFSA-FY22-Performance-Oversight-Hearing-Pre-Hearing-Responses-to-Questions-2-17-2023-FINAL-1.pdf>.
- ⁵¹ See Judith Sandalow, Children’s Law Center, Written Testimony Before the Council of the District of Columbia, Committee of the Whole, Public Oversight Hearing on Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy (December 12, 2023), at 12-15, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/resources/hearing-committee-of-the-whole-chronic-absenteeism-truancy/>; see also Judith Sandalow, Testimony Before the Council of the District of Columbia, *supra* note 4, p. 12-26.
- ⁵² See Casey Family Programs, *Issue Brief: How does investigation, removal, and placement cause trauma for children?* (Updated May 2018), available at: https://www.casey.org/media/SC_Investigation-removal-placement-causes-trauma.pdf; see also Josh Weber & Rebecca Cohen, The Council of State Governments Justice Center, *Rethinking the Role of the Juvenile Justice System: Improving Youth’s School Attendance and Educational Outcomes*, at 9-10 (September 2020), available at: https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CSG_RethinkingtheRoleoftheJuvenileJusticeSystem_15SEPT20.pdf (finding that “youth’s juvenile justice involvement was not associated with improvement in their school attendance.”)

Instead, youth who became involved with the juvenile justice system missed, on average, five additional days of school—a statistically significant difference”).

⁵³ B25-758, *Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024*, lines 257-267.

⁵⁴ See Casey Family Programs, *Issue Brief*, *supra* note 52.

⁵⁵ It is likely that OSSE could provide the Committee with the definitive number, but this information is not publicly available in the agency’s annual report.

⁵⁶ Kathryn Van Eck, et al., *How school climate relates to chronic absence: A multi-level latent profile analysis*, 61 J. SCH. PSYCHOLOGY 89, 90 (2017), available at: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/How-School-Climate-relates-to-chronic-absence-attendance-works-1-s2.0-S0022440516300607-main.pdf>

⁵⁷ Dr. Robert Balfanz, *supra* note 3, at 57:54 (emphasis added).

APPENDIX

B25-0740 - Truancy Reduction for Student Success Act of 2024 (CM Robert White)

	Data		Drivers of Absenteeism				Prevention						Problem Solving			Mitigation								
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provision from Legislation																								
Require OSSE to publish to its website select attendance data for each school or campus monthly (lines 53-64).		✔																						

Legend
 ✔ - Provision likely to support improvement in the designated area.
 \$ - Provision provides funding that could support improvement in the designated area.
 X - Provision likely to undermine efforts or worsen conditions in the designated area.

B25-0754 - Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy Reduction Amendment Act of 2024 (CM Charles Allen)

	Data		Drivers of Absenteeism			Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation								
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provisions from Legislation																								
DMPSJ to determine Safe Passage priority areas based on attendance data (lines 45-65).					☑																			
ONSE Leadership Academy to support schools with highest absenteeism rates (lines 66-97).											☑													
School to meet with students after 5 unexcused absences to develop improvement plan prior to CFSA/OAG referral (lines 98-108).															☑				☑					
OAG to annually submit status report for truancy cases and diversion outcomes (lines 109-119).			☑																					
DHS and schools to share data regarding students in diversion programs (lines 120-125).														☑										
New UPSFF weight for chronically absent students; for principals to fund attendance interventions (lines 126-170).		💰			💰	💰	💰		💰	💰		💰	💰	💰		💰		💰			💰	💰	💰	💰

B25-0758 - The Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024 (CM Zachary Parker)

Provisions from Legislation	Data			Drivers of Absenteeism			Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation							
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Schools to send attendance data to OSSE within 10 business days of last day of school (lines 46-54).		☑																						
OSSE’s annual report to identify root causes, effective interventions, and funding needs (lines 55-61).	☑		☑																					
School to attempt contact with caregiver when student absent without valid excuse (lines 62-73).								☑																
LEA to notify OSSE when student accrues 3 unexcused absences in 30 days; OSSE to send resource guide to caregiver (lines 74-81).								☑						☑										
SY25-26: OSSE to refer 5–13-year-olds to DHS after 7 unexcused absences in a 120-day window (lines 82-87, 106-111).														☑		☑								
SY24-25: OSSE to refer 14–17-year-olds to DHS after 7 unexcused absences in a 120-day window (lines 88-105).														☑		☑								

B25-0758 - The Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024 (CM Zachary Parker)

	Data			Drivers of Absenteeism			Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation							
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provisions from Legislation																								
OSSE to establish process for caregiver to cure errors in student’s attendance record (lines 112-114).																								
OAG no longer required to send caregiver notice re: possible prosecution when student is referred for truancy (lines 115-120).							X	X																
DHS may refer student to CFSA / OAG when student accrues 3 additional unexcused absences and shows no meaningful effort to engage with DHS (lines 121-127).				X				X																
DHS must refer 5–13-year-olds to CFSA if student accrues 20 unexcused absences in a school year (lines 128-133).				X				X																
DHS must refer 14–17-year-olds to CSSD & OAG if student accrues 25 unexcused absences in a school year (lines 133-138).				X		X																		

B25-0758 - The Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024 (CM Zachary Parker)

	Data			Drivers of Absenteeism			Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation							
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provisions from Legislation																								
OSSE to have discretion regarding referrals when student crosses threshold within the final 20 school days of a year (lines 139-142).																								
DHS to provide OSSE and school with contact information of case worker assigned to referred student (lines 143-146).														☑										
SST or DHS case worker to conduct summer home visit for students with 20+ unexcused absences in previous year (lines 147-157).								☑				☑												
OSSE to publish absenteeism trends, root causes, and effective interventions (lines 158-167)	☑		☑																					
OSSE to establish tiered systems of support for LEAs to include monthly assessments, staffing support, interagency coordination, summer outreach support (lines 168-180).		☑												☑		☑								
OSSE to establish attendance incentive programs (lines 181-190).																								

B25-0758 - The Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024 (CM Zachary Parker)

	Data		Drivers of Absenteeism				Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation							
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provisions from Legislation																								
OSSE to amend regs to create additional categories of excused absences (lines 191-211).																								
DCPS to issue updated discipline policy (lines 212-217).																								
DME to biannually convene relevant agencies to examine drivers of truancy (lines 218-225).	☑													☑										
Amends definition of “child in need of supervision” to create affirmative defenses for youth when agency has failed to meet their obligations under the law (lines 226-256).																								
Amends definition of “neglected child” make 30+ unexcused absences <i>per se</i> neglect unless parent is not proximate cause of student’s absences (lines 257-267).				X		X			X															

**B25-0791 - Utilizing Partnerships and Local Interventions for Truancy and Safety (UPLIFT) Amendment Act of 2024
(Mayor Muriel Bowser)**

	Data			Drivers of Absenteeism			Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation							
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provisions from Legislation																								
Court to order family conference when youth is charged with a dangerous crime while armed (DCWA) or a crime of violence (COV) (lines 63-85).	Juvenile Justice Provision Unrelated to School Attendance or Student Engagement																							
CSSD case adjustment process not available to youth charged with DCWA (lines 86-94).	Juvenile Justice Provision Unrelated to School Attendance or Student Engagement																							
Consent decrees not available to youth charged with DCWA or COV while armed (lines 95-110).	Juvenile Justice Provision Unrelated to School Attendance or Student Engagement																							
Deferred disposition agreements not available to youth charged with DWCA or COV (lines 111-121).	Juvenile Justice Provision Unrelated to School Attendance or Student Engagement																							
Adds definitions to DC Code § 38-236.01 regarding exclusionary discipline (lines 124-146)						X																		
Allows students in grades 6-8 to be issued an out-of-school suspension for a broader range of behaviors (lines 147-173).						X																		

**B25-0791 - Utilizing Partnerships and Local Interventions for Truancy and Safety (UPLIFT) Amendment Act of 2024
(Mayor Muriel Bowser)**

	Data			Drivers of Absenteeism			Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation							
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provisions from Legislation																								
Allows for 45-day out-of-school suspensions for students in grades 6-12 via assignment to Alternative Educational Setting (lines 174-199)						X								X										
Limits access to due process hearings to only students receiving out-of-school suspensions of 6+ consecutive days (lines 200-202).						X		X						X					X					
Gives caregivers 10 school days to submit excuse notes for student absences (lines 203-208).																								
OSSE not required to re-send resource guide to families who have already received it (lines 209-215).																								
In SY24-25, schools to refer 5–13-year-olds to CFSA if student accrues 10 unexcused absences in a school year (lines 216-222).																								

**B25-0791 - Utilizing Partnerships and Local Interventions for Truancy and Safety (UPLIFT) Amendment Act of 2024
(Mayor Muriel Bowser)**

	Data			Drivers of Absenteeism			Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation							
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provisions from Legislation																								
In SY25-26, schools to refer 5–13-year-old students to DHS upon accrual of 10 unexcused absences in a school year (lines 223-226).														⬇		⬇								
In SY25-26, schools to refer 5–13-year-old students to CFSA upon accrual of 20 unexcused absences in a school year (lines 227-229).				X		X		X																
In SY25-26, schools to refer 5–13-year-old students to OAG upon accrual of 25 unexcused absences in a school year (lines 230-232).				X		X																		
In SY24-25, schools to refer 14–17-year-olds to DHS if student accrues 15 unexcused absences in a school year (lines 233-237).														⬇		⬇								
In SY24-25, schools to refer 14–17-year-olds to OAG if student accrues 25 unexcused absences in a school year (lines 237-240).				X		X																		

B25-0791 - Utilizing Partnerships and Local Interventions for Truancy and Safety (UPLIFT) Amendment Act of 2024

(Mayor Muriel Bowser)

	Data		Drivers of Absenteeism				Prevention						Problem Solving				Mitigation							
	Identifying Root Causes	Real-Time Data	Intervention Efficacy	External Barriers	Avoidance / Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions	Community Schools	Family Engagement	School Connectedness	School-Based Healthcare	Mentors	Home Visits	Restorative Discipline	Interagency Coordination	School Team Meetings	Wraparound Services	Strategic Partnerships	Student Voice	Making up missed work	Credit Recovery	High-Dosage Tutoring	OST Programming	Summer Learning
Provisions from Legislation																								
Limits actions that OAG may take upon receiving truancy referral (lines 241-253).														X										
Amends mandatory report statute to conform with new referrals timelines (lines 254-257)																								
Amends definition of “weapon” in DC Code § 38-234(a) and grants Mayor authority to expand definition under this section through regs (lines 258-273).																								
OAG to annually report on number of truancy notifications sent to families (lines 274-282).																								
Adds OSSE to list of government agencies who may inspect law enforcement records concerning a child (lines 283-287)														☑										
Allows Family Court, DYRS, & MPD to disclose juvenile information to OSSE (lines 288-294).														☑										