

2007-08 Annual Report Truancy Mediation Program



**Administrative Office of
the Courts**

Alternative Dispute Resolution Department

2007-08 Annual Report- Truancy Mediation Program
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TRUANCY MEDIATION PROGRAM

An alternative to formal Court intervention

When absences become excessive and court intervention is the next step, students and parents are given the option of entering into the truancy mediation program to resolve truancy problems.

Truancy mediation is a process that brings a student, parents, and school staff together to discuss the reasons for poor attendance. A trained mediator facilitates the discussion. The mediator is a neutral person who does not take sides. The mediator ensures that everyone has an opportunity to speak, that all present understand each other, and that both families and schools work together to find solutions.

Truancy mediations are held at the local school in which the student is enrolled. Students, parents, and school staff meet together with the mediator in a private setting. The mediator will set some basic ground rules and then each person will speak without interruption and tell from their point of view what is happening.

The mediator summarizes the issues that have been shared and each person will be asked to come up with possible solutions. Everyone will share his/her ideas to create an agreement or plan. The mediator will ask everyone to commit to being responsible to make the agreement work.

Mediation provides for the student a safe place to listen and to be heard; an opportunity to move beyond the attendance problem; and options and freedom to make decisions. By giving choice, freedom, and respect, students gain control, self respect and confidence. These skills will empower them throughout their lives.

We view truancy as not just a school issue, family problem, or court responsibility. It is a community issue with significant long-term consequences, not only for students, but to the quality of life in our communities. This program is unique because families, schools, community mediators, and juvenile court work collaboratively to address truancy problems and the root causes of truancy.

The truancy mediation program has proven to be very successful. It creates a collaborative team approach, which during the 2007-08 school year, resulted in 89% of students who have completed mediation avoiding a subsequent referral to Juvenile Court for truancy. Over 94% of all participants in truancy mediation agreed that it was helpful to participate in mediation.

Our greatest resource as a program is the high quality of trained volunteers throughout the state. By utilizing community volunteers we have been able to offer truancy mediation programs across the state without charging participants a fee. Community volunteers also help to make the programs sustainable over time.

**Truancy Mediation Program
Statewide Summary
2007-08 School Year**

Participating School Districts:

(Including # of schools in each district that referred a case to the program)

- Cache County School District - 2
- Davis School District - 3
- Jordan School District - 10
- Ogden City School District - 3
- Salt Lake City School District - 6
- Sevier School District - 3
- Washington County School District - 9
- Weber School District - 1

Year-end Statistics:

Referrals.....	186
Mediations	135
Agreements	130 (96.3% resolution rate)
No shows	15
Mediation canceled.....	14
Didn't attend (other reasons)...	22
Referred to Court	15 (11.1%)

Statewide Evaluation Results:

Participants were asked to respond to 7 questions by circling a number from 1 to 5 indicating their level of agreement to each question. They were also asked to respond to 7 - 9 yes or no questions.

89% of the **students** surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.
96.6% of the **students** responded that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

94.7% of the **parents** surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.
100% of the **parents** indicated that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

99% of the **school personnel** surveyed agreed that the mediation was helpful.
98.9% of the **school personnel** reported that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

Volunteers:

Statewide there were **26** active community volunteers who mediated, observed or co-mediated truancy cases.

First District:

Kathryn Burtenshaw– *Cache*
Bart MacKay– *staff mediator*
Bernice McCowin– *Cache*
Russ Price– *Cache*

Second District:

Deb Badger– *Ogden City*
Mary Bishop– *Ogden City*
Robin Bucaria– *intern*
Kathie Darby– *Ogden City*
Debbie George– *Ogden City*
Sonnet House– *Ogden City*
Tammy Smith– *Ogden City*
Chris Wilson– *staff mediator*

Third District:

Dan Andrus– *Salt Lake*
Joyce Barnes– *Jordan*
Sue Click– *Salt Lake*
Virginia Ellinwood– *Salt Lake*
Tami England– *Salt Lake*
Mary Fogg– *Jordan*
Sherri Hannon– *Salt Lake*
Mina Koplín– *Salt Lake*
Emily Lobato– *Salt Lake/Jordan*
Mike MacKay– *Salt Lake/Jordan*
Gina Trujillo– *staff mediator*
Char Valentiner– *Jordan*
Athelia Wooley– *Jordan*

Fifth District:

Jodie Jones– *Washington*
Bart MacKay– *staff mediator*
Suzanne Potts– *Washington*
Iris Sparks– *Washington*

Sixth District:

Madolyn Bills– *Sevier*
Mandie Stanton– *Sevier*

**Truancy Mediation Program
1st District Juvenile Court
2007-08 Summary**

Participating Schools:

Box Elder County School District

- No schools participated this year

Cache County School District

- South Cache 8/9 Center (17)/2

- North Cache 8/9 Center (9)/1

**number in parentheses indicates # of referrals to program
followed by number subsequently referred to Court*

Year-end Statistics:

	<u>District Total</u>	<u>Cache</u>	<u>Box Elder</u>
Referrals.....	26	26	0
Mediations	18	18	0
Agreements	18 (100% resolution rate)	18	0
No shows	6	6	0
Mediation canceled.....	2	2	0
Didn't attend (other reasons).	0	0	0
Referred to Court	3 (16.7%)	3 (16.7%)	0

Evaluation Results:

Participants were asked to respond to 7 questions by circling a number from 1 to 5 indicating their level of agreement to each question. They were also asked to respond to 7 - 9 yes or no questions.

92.3% of the **students** (n=12/13) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

92.3% of the **students** (n=12/13) responded that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

92.3% of the **parents** (n=12/13) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

100% of the **parents** (n=13) indicated that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

100% of the **school personnel** (n=12) surveyed agreed that the mediation was helpful.

100% of the **school personnel** (n=12) reported that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

Volunteers:

In the **First District** there were **3 active community volunteers** and **1 staff** member who mediated, observed or co-mediated truancy cases.

Kathryn Burtenshaw– 6

Bart MacKay– 7

Bernice McCowin– 5

Russ Price– 9

**number indicates # of mediations assigned*

Comments from Participants:

Students:

- It was pretty good.
- I think this will help me with my absents.

Parents:

- I was very impressed..
- Very helpful and informative.

School:

- I think this will help.

**Truancy Mediation Program
2nd District Juvenile Court
2007-08 Summary**

Participating Schools:

Ogden City School District:

- Lynn Elementary (3)
- Mound Fort Middle (26)
- Mt. Ogden Middle (6)

Davis County School District

- Reading Elementary (2)
- Central Davis Junior High (3)
- North Layton Junior High (1)

Weber School District:

- Wahlquist Jr. High (1)

**number in parentheses indicates # of referrals to program*

Year-end Statistics:

	<u>District Total</u>	<u>Ogden</u>	<u>Weber</u>	<u>Davis</u>
Referrals.....	42	35	1	6
Mediations	37	30	1	6
Agreements	36 (97.3% resolution rate)	29	1	6
No shows.....	3	3	0	0
Mediation canceled.....	1	1	0	0
Didn't attend (other reasons)..	1	1	0	0
Referred to Court	2 (5.4%)	0	0	2

Evaluation Results:

Participants were asked to respond to 7 questions by circling a number from 1 to 5 indicating their level of agreement to each question. They were also asked to respond to 7 - 9 yes or no questions.

100% of the **students** (n=24) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

100% of the **students** (n=23) responded that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

100% of the **parents** (n=26) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

100% of the **parents** (n=23) indicated that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

100% of the **school personnel** (n=25) surveyed agreed that the mediation was helpful.

96% of the **school personnel** (n=24/25) reported that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

Volunteers:

In the **Second District** there were **6 active community volunteers** and **2 staff** members who mediated, observed or co-mediated truancy cases.

Deb Badger– 7

Mary Bishop– 4

Robin Bucaria – 4

Kathie Darby– 4

Debbie George– 3

Sonnet House– 11

Tammy Smith– 3

Chris Wilson– 19

**number indicates # of mediations assigned*

Comments from Participants:

Students:

- I think ok (in response to the question, “Please tell us how you feel”)
- The mediator was nice and very kind.
- It’s a good program.
- I thought she was very nice and that we were close even though she don’t know what I’ve been through.
- I have nothing to say.

Parents:

- I am thankful for your help. Thank you.
- I would like to thank you for being here.
- I think the program is very helpful and the mediator helpful and understand.
- Helped me out a lot. Going to send [my son] to school everyday.
- I wish this program has been around when I was in grade school. Strongly recommend!
- Thanks for the help and the arrangements that were made.
- It made it really nice cause my son talks to others better than me.
- I appreciate the mediator’s compassion and caring attitude toward our daughter.
- She achieved to have my son open up and take accountability for his actions.
- I didn’t have any bad opinions of school personnel to begin with. The mediator was very respectful and a good listener.

School:

- I am new to this process, so I was not prepared.
- [The mediator] does a great job mediating. She is outstanding!!
- Great meeting.
- [The mediator] was professional in every way. We were all comfortable. She helped us to stay focused and facilitated the agreements that were made.
- We are hopeful we will see an improvement! Great program.

**Truancy Mediation Program
3rd District Juvenile Court
2007-08 Summary**

Participating Schools:

Jordan School District

- Alta High School (1)
- Crescent View Middle (3)
- Eastmont Middle (4)
- Elk Ridge Middle (1)
- Midvale Middle (6)
- Oquirrh Hills Middle (2)
- South Hills Middle (1)
- Sunset Ridge Middle (1)
- Union Middle (1)
- West Hills Middle (3)

Salt Lake City School District

- Bryant Middle (13)
- East High (6)
- Glendale Middle (11)
- Hillside Middle (5)
- Northwest Middle (5)
- West High (22)

** # in parenthesis indicate the number of referrals to the program from that school*

Year-end Statistics:

	<u>District Total</u>	<u>Jordan</u>	<u>Salt Lake</u>
Referrals.....	85	23	62
Mediations	50	16	34
Agreements	46 (92.7% resolution rate)	16	30
No shows.....	5	1	4
Mediation canceled.....	9	3	6
Didn't attend (other reasons)..	21	3	18
Referred to Court	7 (14.0%)	2	5

Evaluation Results:

Participants were asked to respond to 7 questions by circling a number from 1 to 5 indicating their level of agreement to each question. They were also asked to respond to 7 - 9 yes or no questions.

88.2% of the **students** (n=30/34) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

100% of the **students** (n=32) responded that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

87.5% of the **parents** (n=28/32) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

100% of the **parents** (n=32) indicated that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

97.1% of the **school personnel** (n=34/35) surveyed agreed that the mediation was helpful.

100% of the **school personnel** (n=34) reported that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

Volunteers:

In the **Third District** there were **12 active community volunteers** and **one staff** member who mediated, observed or co-mediated truancy cases.

Dan Andrus– 5
Joyce Barnes– 2
Sue Click– 1
Virginia Ellinwood– 2
Tami England– 5
Mary Fogg– 3
Sherri Hannon– 3

Emily Lobato– 11
Mina Koplín– 3
Mike MacKay– 12
Gina Trujillo– 12
Char Valentiner– 5
Athelia Wooley- 2
**number indicates # of mediations assigned*

Comments from Participants:

Students:

- Very optional, didn't feel pressured.
- It's good!
- Everything was ok.

Parents:

- Thank you for your help.
- That he go to class on time and he gets good grades.
- Hopefully this agreement will make him go to school!
- It gave us an opportunity to sit and really listen to each other.
- Very helpful and really cared about what was going on.
- Thank you.
- Talking to all parent and student to motive in many ways our children in any situation they are.
- Que me ayoudo mucho la platica. (That the talks help me a lot.)
- Thank you for all the help in giving us chance.
- Good idea.
- El es buena persona y es mucha ay da para los padres. (He is a good person and is a lot of help to the parents.)
- This is a great program. Very helpful.
- Paro mi es excelente el dar su ayuda. (For me, your help is excellent.)

School:

- [The mediator] is very helpful and would request him in the future.
- Very satisfied with mediation. She gets to the point.
- I think this mediator was great– especially for young men.
- Thank you for supporting students and parents at East High School!
- Good open communication.
- Good mediation session– well run--[the mediator] was very patient and direct.
- Thank you!
- I am hopeful that we will see a change.
- Very efficient– less than 1 hour.
- I am worried that this will not be enough to change [the student's] behavior but I am hopeful.

**Truancy Mediation Program
5th District Juvenile Court
2007-08 Summary**

Participating Schools:

Washington County School District:

- Dixie Downs Elementary (2)/0
- Red Mountain Elementary (2)/0
- Riverside Elementary (1)/0
- Sunset Elementary (1)/0
- Desert Hills Middle (1)/0
- Tonaquint Intermediate (1)/0
- Hurricane Intermediate (1)/0
- Hurricane Middle (2)/0
- Pine View Middle (4)/1

**number in parentheses indicates # of referrals to program followed by number subsequently referred to Court*

Year-end Statistics:

Referrals.....	15
Mediations	13
Agreements	13 (100% resolution rate)
No shows.....	1
Mediation canceled.....	1
Didn't attend (other reasons).....	0
Referred to Court	1 (7.6%)

Evaluation Results:

Participants were asked to respond to 7 questions by circling a number from 1 to 5 indicating their level of agreement to each question. They were also asked to respond to 7 - 9 yes or no questions.

62.5% of the **students** (n=5/8) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

100% of the **students** (n=8) responded that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

100% of the **parents** (n=12) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

100% of the **parents** indicated that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

100% of the **school personnel** (n=13) surveyed agreed that the mediation was helpful.

100% of the **school personnel** (n=13) reported that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

Volunteers:

In the **Fifth District** there were **3** active **community volunteers** and **one staff person** who mediated, observed or co-mediated truancy cases.

Jodie Jones– 2

**number indicates # of mediations assigned*

Bart MacKay– 13

Suzanne Potts– 2

Iris Sparks– 1

Comments from Participants:

Students:

- Thanks
- It was a good thing to do for me.

Parents:

- I think that everything that we have talked about has taken a great effect on my son and hope he pulls through.
- I hope it solved the problem.

School:

- As the student will be a high school student next year I will recommend follow through by the administration there with [the student].
- Thank you! This may have been the intervention we needed- attendance has been steady since this meeting.
- Good results.
- The mediator always does an exceptional job. He is great at making everyone feel comfortable and willing to risk expressing themselves.
- This mediation experience went smoothly. [The mediators] had helpful comments and insights that added to the whole picture.

**Truancy Mediation Program
6th District Juvenile Court
2007-08 Summary**

Participating Schools:

Sevier School District:

- South Sevier High (5)/0
- North Sevier High (4)/1
- Richfield High School (9)/1

** number in parentheses indicates # of referrals followed by # of students referred to court*

Year-end Statistics:

Referrals.....	18
Mediations	17
Agreements	17 (100% resolution rate)
No shows	0
Mediation canceled.....	1
Didn't attend (other reasons).....	0
Referred to Court	2 (11.8%)

Evaluation Results:

Participants were asked to respond to 7 questions by circling a number from 1 to 5 indicating their level of agreement to each question. They were also asked to respond to 7 - 9 yes or no questions.

83.3% of the **students** (n=10/12) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

83.3% of the **students** (n=10/12) responded that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

100% of the **parents** (n=12) surveyed agreed that mediation was helpful.

100% of the **parents** (n=12) indicated that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

100% of the **school personnel** (n=11) surveyed agreed that the mediation was helpful.

100% of the **school personnel** (n=11) reported that they were satisfied with the outcome of the mediation.

Volunteers:

In the **Sixth District** there were **2** active community volunteers who mediated, observed or co-mediated truancy cases.

Madolyn Bills– 6 **number indicates # of mediations assigned*
Mandie Stanton– 12

Comments from Participants:

Students:

- She was a very nice lady to help me understand better and was very kind in helping me make decisions.
- none

Parents:

- I feel that this is a great way to give kids a chance to improve themselves.

School:

- Well done!

Student Evaluations 2007-08 School Year

Statements rated by participants using the following rating system:

1=Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Unsure, 4= Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree

Statement	First	Second	Third	Fifth	Sixth
Mediation was helpful.	1.46	1.38	1.82	2	1.75
Mediation helped me to have a say in decisions affecting my school attendance.	1.31	1.42	1.59	1.87	1.67
During the mediation, I was able to say what I thought and how I felt.	1.31	1.38	1.74	1.62	1.58
I am satisfied with the agreement.	1.46	1.29	1.68	1.87	2.00
I believe school personnel understand me better.	1.61	1.74	1.97	2.13	2.42
I would recommend mediation to a friend having attendance problems.	1.54	1.75	2.18	2.13	1.75
The mediator helped me feel comfortable and able to share my feelings.	1.38	1.33	1.94	1.87	1.67

Average Score by Judicial District

Statement	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no
Was taking part in this mediation your own choice?	77%	23%	70%	30%	61%	39%	63%	37%	58%	42%
Were you prepared enough for the mediation session?	77%	23%	91%	9%	81%	19%	88%	12%	66%	34%
Are you satisfied with the outcome of the mediation?	92%	8%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	83%	17%
Do you feel that the agreement was forced on you?	15%	85%	13%	87%	3%	97%	0%	100%	27%	73%
Do you think the mediator took sides during the mediation?	23%	77%	26%	74%	10%	90%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Would you recommend this mediator to other students participating in Tuancy Mediation?	100%	0%	96%	4%	91%	9%	88%	12%	83%	17%

Questions answered by participants circling yes or no:

Was taking part in this mediation your own choice?	77%	23%
Were you prepared enough for the mediation session?	77%	23%
Are you satisfied with the outcome of the mediation?	92%	8%
Do you feel that the agreement was forced on you?	15%	85%
Do you think the mediator took sides during the mediation?	23%	77%
Would you recommend this mediator to other students participating in Tuancy Mediation?	100%	0%

Parent Evaluations 2006-07 School Year

Statements rated by participants using the following rating system:

1=Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Unsure, 4= Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree

It was helpful to participate in Truancy Mediation.
 During the mediation, I was able to express my thoughts and feelings.
 I am satisfied with the agreement.
 My opinion of school personnel has improved.
 I would recommend Truancy Mediation to other parents in my same situation.
 The mediator helped me feel comfortable and able to share my feelings.
 I think the mediation was set up in a timely manner.

Average Score by Judicial District

	First	Second	Third	Fifth	Sixth
	1.54	1.19	1.75	1.42	1.42
	1.62	1.3	1.66	1.33	1.33
	1.85	1.3	1.63	1.33	1.42
	1.92	1.62	1.78	1.58	1.75
	1.46	1.3	1.72	1.42	1.33
	1.62	1.35	1.63	1.33	1.33
	1.77	1.46	1.72	1.42	1.33

Questions answered by participants circling yes or no:

Do you feel your child was adequately held accountable for his/her behavior?
 Was taking part in this mediation your own choice?
 Do you feel you were sufficiently prepared for the mediation session?
 Are you satisfied with the outcome of the mediation?
 Do you feel that the agreement you reached was forced on you or your child?
 Do you think the mediator took sides during the mediation?
 Would you recommend this mediator to others participating in mediation?

	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no
	92%	8%	88%	12%	97%	3%	100%	0%	100%	0%
	85%	15%	92%	8%	88%	12%	92%	8%	92%	8%
	100%	0%	96%	4%	91%	9%	100%	0%	92%	8%
	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
	25%	75%	12%	88%	16%	84%	8%	92%	25%	75%
	8%	92%	15%	85%	23%	77%	0%	100%	8%	92%
	100%	0%	96%	4%	100%	0%	100%	0%	92%	8%

School Evaluations 2006-07 School Year

Statements rated by participants using the following rating system:

1=Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Unsure, 4= Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree

	Average Score by Judicial District									
	First	Second	Third	Fifth	Sixth					
It was helpful to participate in Truancy Mediation.	1.83	1.00	1.57	1.08	1.64					
During the mediation, I was able to express my thoughts and feelings.	1.17	1.00	1.57	1.08	1.27					
I am satisfied with the agreement.	1.67	1.00	1.49	1.31	1.18					
I better understand the needs of the student since meeting with him/her.	1.75	1.00	1.76	1.38	1.91					
I would recommend Truancy Mediation to a colleague.	1.42	1.00	1.52	1.08	1.91					
The mediator helped me feel comfortable and able to share my feelings.	1.33	1.00	1.54	1.08	1.27					
I think the mediation was set up in a timely manner.	1.42	1.08	1.51	1.08	1.36					

Questions answered by participants circling yes or no:

	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no
Do you feel the student was adequately held accountable for his/her behavior?	92%	8%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
Was taking part in this mediation your own choice?	92%	8%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
Do you feel you were sufficiently prepared for the mediation session?	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
Are you satisfied with the outcome of the mediation?	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
Do you feel that the agreement you reached was forced on you or the student?	0%	100%	27%	73%	0%	100%	0%	100%	9%	91%
Did the mediation last longer than 2 hours?	17%	83%	6%	94%	15%	85%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Do you think the mediator took sides during the mediation?	0%	100%	6%	94%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Would you recommend this mediator to other students participating in Truancy Mediation?	100%	0%	97%	3%	92%	8%	100%	0%	100%	0%