

# Designing Your Community Engagement Board

The following section gives guidance on the core structures and processes necessary for setting up a Community Engagement Board (CEB) including establishing your team, guiding principles, and board models.

## Establish the Core Planning Team

The first task is identifying the individual(s) responsible for organizing and planning the CEB. The [district truancy liaison](#)<sup>1</sup> is an essential member of this team and will have major responsibility for executing the CEB. You may also consider these roles for the planning team: district reengagement specialists, family engagement specialists, juvenile court staff, school staff, district community liaisons, and community partners. This team will ensure that the details of the CEBs are coordinated and that CEB members are trained.

## Guiding Principles, Goals and Objectives

Ideally school districts will incorporate guiding principles, goals, and objectives into the Community Engagement Board ([RCW 28A.225.025](#)) to support volunteers in participating as expected and to understand their role and purpose in the CEB.

### Guiding Principles

OSPI's Attendance program emphasizes that the goal of the Community Engagement Board is a supportive and inclusive approach, focused on student success, respectful collaboration, and identifying interventions to address attendance and engagement challenges.

OSPI recommends that school districts consider adopting the following guiding principles:

- All students can succeed
- Recommendations and interventions aim to reduce future absences, not to punish absence in the past

---

<sup>1</sup> [RCW 28A.225.026 \(4\)](#) All school districts must designate, and identify to the local juvenile court and to the office of the superintendent of public instruction, a person or persons to coordinate school district efforts to address excessive absenteeism and truancy, including tasks associated with: Outreach and conferences pursuant to [RCW 28A.225.018](#); entering into a memorandum of understanding with the juvenile court; establishing protocols and procedures with the court; coordinating trainings; sharing evidence-based and culturally appropriate promising practices; identifying a person within every school to serve as a contact with respect to excessive absenteeism and truancy; and assisting in the recruitment of community engagement board members.



- The voices of students, families, and community members are valued and respected
- Attendance and engagement are vital for student learning
- All absences matter as they indicate a lack of access to classroom instruction and other learning opportunities at school
- Absences can reveal inequities that are perpetuated or caused by our system
- Absences help us identify when students and families may need additional support
- Exploring root causes for non-attendance is crucial
- Collaboration with students and families to understand barriers is essential
- Prevention and early intervention should be prioritized over legal involvement

## Overarching Goals

Establishing goals during the design phase clarifies the overall purpose of the CEB and aligns CEB members in how to support students and families.

OSPI suggests the following goals:

### Improve Attendance

- Provide student support for regular attendance
- Work with families to avoid court intervention

### Address Root Causes

- Identify specific barriers to attendance: transportation, health, and family obligations
- Connect students with appropriate school and community resources

### Collaboration

- Strengthen communication between students, families, and schools

### Dropout Prevention

- Create support systems to help students stay enrolled and graduate

The guiding principles and goals support the design of a CEB with the intention of volunteer recruitment, training, and implementation.

## Objectives

The school district CEB team can then identify the objectives — i.e. the steps on accomplishing the goals above — before starting your CEB meetings for the year.

Here are examples of objectives:

### Create a Referral Process

- This process will provide clear expectations of school staff on when to refer students in need of Tier 3 Attendance support when school-based interventions are not working to be referred to CEB. The use of a [CEB Referral Form](#) can help to identify the objective for

the specific student and family expected to attend; more on this in Preparing for the Community Engagement Board.

### **Develop Active Listening Expectations**

- To develop active listening expectations, focus on creating a mindset of full attention, engagement, and empathy. This involves intentionally suppressing distractions, using body language to signal interest, and reflecting on what you have heard to ensure comprehension. Embrace the goal of understanding the speaker's message rather than formulating a response. See the following resource for more tips on [Active Listening](#).

### **Identify Attendance Barriers**

- If available, review attendance assessments to identify the root causes affecting school attendance.
- Prior to meeting with the board, plan to offer an attendance or truancy assessment at the CEB if one has not been completed.

### **Build a Resource List**

- Compile a list of school activities and programs available to the student
- Discuss school activities that the family can participate in and resources to support family engagement
- Provide board with local resources and referral information to offer the student and family
- Equip the board with knowledge of alternative educational programs that are available to support the student's needs

## **Community Engagement Board Models**

Community Engagement Boards can be adapted to support students at various points within attendance intervention. The goal is to interrupt a student's continued absenteeism and prevent further court involvement by offering timely, student-centered support. Schools should collaborate with their local court to ensure their chosen model aligns with jurisdictional requirements for filing truancy petitions. The following are various models of CEBs:

### **Points in the Process**

#### **Pre-Petition Support**

- Early intervention to address attendance concerns prior to filing a truancy petition

#### **Court Intervention**

- Intervention after a truancy petition is filed

## Reengagement

- Support students to re-enroll and engage in an approved educational pathway

## Format

### Workshop

- A presentation delivered to a group of parents and students aimed at improving attendance by providing information on attendance expectations, truancy processes, and resources. Afterward, district personnel, court staff, and community partners meet with families individually to develop an attendance plan. Workshops can be offered in person or through a virtual platform. Read more in the [Workshop Model Community Engagement Board](#) section.

### Individual CEB

- A meeting with the student, family, an individual from the school, and community partner(s); ideally 2-3 individuals aside from the student and their family

### Participant Group

- Elementary Students
- Secondary Students

## Templates

The following templates were developed to support school districts in implementing CEBs. These templates are available to supplement any current district materials and are not required by OSPI.

- [Community Engagement Board Invitation Template](#)
- [Community Engagement Board Agreement Template](#)
- [Community Engagement Board Questions Handout](#)
- [Community Engagement Board Referral](#)

Read more about [the workshop model of CEBs here](#).

## Contact

For questions, please contact [Attendance@k12.wa.us](mailto:Attendance@k12.wa.us).