

## **School Attendance Review Board (SARB)**

California compulsory education law requires everyone between the ages of six and eighteen years of age to attend school, except sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds who have graduated from high school or passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) and obtained parental permission to leave. Some students, however, violate compulsory education laws and have a pattern of unexcused absences. Although truancy and excessive absenteeism are not new problems, they cause costly, long-term problems for the students, school, and the community.

In 1974, the Legislature enacted California *Education Code (EC)* Section 48320 to enhance the enforcement of compulsory education laws and to divert students with school attendance or behavior problems from the juvenile justice system until all available resources have been exhausted. *EC* Section 48321 provides several organizational structures for School Attendance Review Boards (SARBs) at the local and county level to create a safety net for students with persistent attendance or behavior problems. Although the goal of SARBs is to keep students in school and provide them with a meaningful educational experience, SARBs do have the power, when necessary, to refer students and their parents or guardians to court.

The Sierra Unified School Attendance Review Board (SARB) is a partnership between SUSD and the Fresno County Probation Department, through the Fresno County Office of Education. The SUSD SARB board is a panel of community members and probation officers who gather regularly to review individual student attendance and make recommendations to the school sites and families to improve a student's attendance.