Name(s)	Project Number
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Project Title

TruantToday

Abstract

Objectives/Goals

My project, TruantToday, is a website for schools that allows them to use text messages and emails to contact parents in realtime when a student is marked truant. The website, however, is just a means to an end -- the project is using the website to see if increased awareness of student behavior leads to parents forcing a change in that behavior. The goal of my project was to raise the amount of students who came back to school after being reported as truant for the day.

Methods/Materials

I build a web-based program using PHP that checks a mySQL database. What this means is that a school can log-in securely from any computer (Mac, PC, or Linux) and still access the TruantToday program. For the experiment, I took a group of highly truant students at Port Richmond High School in New York and compared their rates of truancy before using the program and during the program's use.

Results

Results are still coming in from Port Richmond, but early conclusions show that a good number of students are coming back to school after their parents have been notified of their absences.

Conclusions/Discussion

In my experience, there is a huge need for TruantToday (as a product, not a sociological experiment) in the school system. The majority of schools currently lose funding (anywhere from $20-40 per student per day) as a result of truant students. My experiment has shown that the best way for schools to regain funding (and for students to have the opportunity to learn) is through increased, realtime communication with parents.

Summary Statement

My project, TruantToday, allows schools to communicate via text message or email with parents and reclaim lost funding at a rate of $20-40 per student per day while giving students the opportunity to learn.

Help Received

Advisor taught me to code