Sabine Parish School Board

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PRESS RELEASE – OCTOBER 20, 2022

On Thursday, October 20, 2022, Sabine Parish Schools hosted a multiagency collaboration to discuss mitigation efforts and plans to combat student truancy. Superintendent Shane Wright, his Central Office staff, Judge Verity Gentry, FINS Intake Officer Kem Jones, Sheriff Aaron Mitchell, Chief Deputy Brad Walker, Assistant District Attorney Anna Garcie, Many Police Chief Cheryl Wooley, and Assistant Chief Mason Wiley attended. All district principals were also in attendance and had an opportunity to voice concerns and share ideas.

As a result of this meeting, SPSB Officials, in coordination with these entities, will identify truant students and work to provide solutions to barriers preventing regular attendance. Discussed in detail was the implementation of more serious consequences for chronic absenteeism and continued truancy by repeat offenders.

School attendance is vitally important for long-term academic success, and it is a parent's responsibility to ensure that his/her children attend school regularly. State law allows a maximum of 10 unexcused absences per school year (5 per semester for grades 9-12). Parents whose children are habitually absent from school will be required to work with the local FINS Intake Officer. In addition, parents may be required to attend FINS meetings, juvenile court, attend mandatory parenting courses, and/or pay applicable truancy fines.

Superintendent Wright stated, "Our school system is pleased to share a strong partnership with these local agencies and know that through our collective efforts, student truancy rates will decline. I appreciate Judge Gentry bringing everyone to the table for today's open dialogue with the ultimate goal of improving outcomes for the students of Sabine Parish."