

Student Attendance is the KEY to Success: *Project KEY Reduces Chronic Truancy by 55%*



Project KEY reduced chronic truancy in six pilot Columbus City Schools by 55% in its first two years, according to a report by the Strategic Research Group. And in a random survey, parents, students and school staff expressed overwhelming

satisfaction with the program.

In May, the Ohio State University hosted 54 students from the three KEY middle schools who had improved their school attendance for a field trip in May. They visited the Horseshoe and walked the field. The visit had a learning component as well students learned about common athletic injuries, surgery and rehabilitation (from a slideshow presentation by medical staff), and training exercises and methods used to prevent such injuries. They heard about the importance of academics from former OSU football captain and pro player Calvin Murray and toured the stadium on the field and in the luxury boxes, including Coach Tressel's private box. This was the first time most of these students had ever been on OSU's campus, even though they all live within five miles.

The Educational Service Center of Central Ohio (ESCCO) is in its second year implementing Project KEY. Other partners in Project KEY are Columbus City Schools, Franklin County



of Jobs and Family Services, the Columbus Foundation, Juvenile Court among others.. At BREAD's 2006 Nehemiah Action, County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien committed to spearhead this effort.

Project KEY works through a mediation model. When students have missed five or more unexcused absences, they are contacted by KEY staff to schedule a mediation between students, parents, and teachers to identify ways to increase attendance. In the mediation, students set goals for the reduction of unexcused absences. Of the 250 students who participated in Project KEY, 189 students (76%) attained at least one attendance goal (30 days with no unexcused absences).

The full text of the SRG evaluation will be available on the BREAD website.

Payday Lending

BREAD members and friends attended the September 30th hearing of the House FIRES Committee hearing on legislative options for curbing further abuses of payday lenders. Legislation passed last year capped payday lending rates at 28%. While half of the payday lenders have gone out of business, the other half have been using consumer loans and small home loans combined with check-cashing, credit check fees and high processing fees to continue charging 300% and more for short-term loans. New legislation (H.B. 209) has been drafted to reign in these abuses. Call your representative to express your support for HB 209.

Neighborhood Blight

More than a dozen BREAD leaders traveled to Cleveland on September 22nd to talk with the leaders of the Cuyahoga Land Bank. These

conversations confirmed BREAD's view that this kind of community land bank is a critical tool for communities that really want to address the explosion of vacant and abandoned housing. Using commitments from our 2009 Nehemiah Action Meeting, BREAD will seek to get City and County leaders to put this plan into action.

Drug Court

The TIES program (our Franklin County Drug Court) increased enrollment to 34 clients (earlier this year, it had been at 17) and Judge Patrick Sheeran reports that he expects the program to be at full enrollment of 50 clients by the end of the year. Plans for getting enrollment to 300 by 2011 are still evolving.

In the meantime, the Columbus Municipal Court has established a drug court for misdemeanor offenses. BREAD is working to clarify what treatment services will be offered to offenders through the Municipal Drug Court.

2009 Listening Process

BREAD kicked off its 2009 Listening Process at Congregation Beth Tikvah. Justice Ministry/Rodef Tzedek Team members reviewed house meeting materials and practiced running those house meetings. House Meetings surface community problems and provide a forum to recruit Justice Ministry/Rodef Tzedek Network members. House meetings will be held throughout October.

During the week of Oct. 22-28, congregational teams will meet for final reporting and collate and categorize community problem reports.

The Justice Ministry Team Assembly will be held on OCTOBER 29. At this meeting teams will report on their house meetings by nominating community problems and the number of Justice Ministry/Rodef Tzedek network members that they have recruited. During the meeting, the Team Assembly will narrow down the three community problems to be presented to the November 16th Annual Assembly. Finally, new congregations will covenant with the organization.

IMPORTANT DATES

Thursday, October 29th *Team Assembly*
at 7 p.m.

University Baptist Church
50 W. Lane Ave.

Monday, November 16th *Annual Assembly*
6:30 p.m.-registration

Rhema Christian Center
2100 Agler Road

Monday, December 7th *Research Kick-off*
7:00 p.m.

Noor Islamic Cultural Center
5001 Wilcox Rd.