

2001-02 GRAND JURY FINAL DRAFT REPORT
Truancy Problems and Solutions in Ventura County

Respondent: Board of Supervisors

Recommendation R-4: A “boot camp” type program like VIDA needs to be established countywide to reach at risk youth before incarceration becomes necessary.

Response: The Board of Supervisors concurs with the need to work with 601 (truant) youth, in an effort to direct them away from more serious delinquency. A “boot camp” program like Los Angeles County’s VIDA Program might be successful in assisting at-risk youth to avoid the behavior that would lead to incarceration. The funding constraints facing the County at this time, however, preclude the implementation of new net cost programs, unless corresponding net cost reductions are made in existing programs.

The Board is pleased to note, however, that, as cited in the Grand Jury Report, there are a number of programs and services targeting 601 youth that are in place within the County. These include: Student Attendance Review Boards (SARBs) (F-3); the Student Truancy Offender Program (STOP) in Oxnard (F-4); Community Oriented Policy and Problem Solving (COPPS) and Sheriff’s Truancy Education Program (STEP) (F-5); the Truancy Habits Reduced Increases Vital Education (THRIVE) Program (F-11); and the Truancy Referral and Prosecution Program (TRPP) (F-11 & F-12). Additionally, the Early Intervention Program, funded by the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA), is a model that provides services and support to individuals under the age of 15 with a combination of factors, including attendance and performance problems at school. The Probation Agency also contracts with Interface for two programs that serve pre-delinquent youth, including truants: the Oxnard Youth Services Bureau, a multi-service resource center; and a “cool home” program for runaways.