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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Thursday June 14, 2012**

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**FIRST ATTENDANCE SUMMIT TO ADDRESS TRUANCY  
PROBLEMS AT LOCAL SCHOOLS**

In an effort to fight truancy in El Paso schools and its underlying impact in juvenile delinquency, today the El Paso County Anti-Truancy Task Force is hosting its first Attendance Summit.

The summit brings together school administrators and other educators from all school districts in the county to analyze and seek solutions to improving student attendance in El Paso schools.

In addition to discussing attendance concerns and truancy issues, summit attendees will learn about truancy court procedures, juvenile delinquency in El Paso, and juvenile diversion programs.

More than 400 stakeholders from the El Paso, Ysleta, Socorro, Anthony, Fabens, San Elizario and Tornillo Independent School Districts are expected to participate.

The event will feature Dr. Berk, a licensed psychologist and expert in working with children, adolescents, and families. Also featured is attorney Jose Martin, partner with the school law firm of Richards and Lindsay & Martin in Austin, Texas. Mr. Martin's practice focuses exclusively on disabilities issues and litigation affecting the schools, including special education. Sessions will also be conducted by the County and District Attorney's offices regarding truancy court procedures, juvenile delinquency in El Paso.

Y.I.S.D. Associate Superintendent Dr. Pauline Dow explained this summit is important because "it has the potential for increasing student attendance through a unified county-wide approach, and significantly lowering the incidences of truancy."

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal said fighting truancy is important because it can have an impact in the well-being of the community. “It has been demonstrated that truancy is one of the early-warning signs that youths potentially are headed for delinquent activity or social isolation,” Bernal said.

The 2012 Attendance Summit is taking place today from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Ysleta I.S.D. Central Offices Atrium, 9600 Sims Drive.

For more information, please contact YISD Associate Superintendent Dr. Pauline Dow, at (915) 203-3498.

**WHO: El Paso County Anti-Truancy Task Force**

**WHAT: 2012 Attendance Summit**

**WHEN: Thursday June 14, 2012, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**WHERE: YISD Central Offices Atrium  
9600 Sims Drive, El Paso, TX 79925**

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**About the El Paso County Anti-Truancy Task Force:** It was formed as a collaborative effort between the District and County Attorney’ Offices and the three largest school districts in El Paso County (EPISD, YISD, and SISD). The Task Force meets regularly to discuss court procedures, attendance concerns and truancy issues. The Task Force will expand its membership to include the remaining El Paso County School Districts next year.