A BILL

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IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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To amend, on an emergency basis, Article II of An Act To provide for compulsory school attendance, for the taking of a school census in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes to direct the Mayor to establish a truancy pilot for the purpose of referring students with unexcused absences to the Department of Human Services and documenting attendance and academic outcomes of students receiving interventions from the Department of Human Services.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Pilot Truancy Reduction Emergency Amendment Act of 2024.”

Sec. 2. Section 7 of Article II of An Act To provide for compulsory school attendance, for the taking of a school census in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes, effective September 19, 2013 (D.C. Law 20-17; D.C. Official Code § 38-208), is amended by adding a new subsection (c-1) to read as follows:

“(c-1) Notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (c) of this section:

“(1)(A) By August 12, 2024, the Mayor shall identify 6 secondary educational institutions and 3 primary educational institutions in the District that had a truancy rate greater than 50% in the 2023-2024 school year to participate in a truancy pilot with the Department of Human Services during School Year 2024-2025.

“(B) The Mayor shall notify the identified educational institutions of their participation in the truancy pilot at least 10 business days before the first day of instruction in School Year 2024-2025. The notice shall include appropriate agency contacts, timelines, and procedures for complying with paragraph (2) of this subsection.

“(2) Three of the secondary educational institutions identified pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection shall refer each student who is 14 years of age through 17 years of age to the Department of Human Services no later than 2 school days after the accrual of 10 unexcused full school day absences within a school year.

“(3) Three of the secondary educational institutions identified pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection shall refer each student who is 14 years of age through 17 years of age to the Department of Human Services no later than 2 school days after the accrual of 15 unexcused full school day absences within a school year.

“(4) The three primary educational institutions identified pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection shall refer each student who is 5 years of age through 13 years of age to the Department of Human Services no later than 2 school days after the accrual of 10 unexcused full school day absences within a school year.

“(5) By March 31, 2025, the Department of Human Services shall publish a preliminary report that:

“(A) Describes the interventions and services provided through the truancy pilot;

“(B) Provides the ten most common reasons, such as housing instability, transportation issues, or medical emergencies, for which minor students were referred to services or programs at the Department of Human Services;

“(C) Presents aggregate data on the ten most common services or programs utilized by minor students;

“(D) Provides a pre-post analysis as follows:

“(i) Comparing the attendance outcomes, academic performance, and delinquency status of students referred to the Department of Human Services to his or her attendance outcomes, academic performance, and delinquency status during the same time period in the prior school year;

“(ii) Comparing the attendance outcomes, academic performance, and delinquency status of students referred to the Department of Human Services before and after the Department of Human Services referral during School Year 2024-2025;

“(iii) Comparing the attendance outcomes and academic performance of schools participating in the pilot with primary and secondary schools that did not participate in this truancy pilot but are socio-demographically similar, and also with similar school year 2023-2024 truancy rates, to participating schools during the applicable time period for School Year 2024-2025; and

                        “(E) Categorizes and explains the root causes of truancy, to the extent possible, for the students for whom they received referrals.

“(F) For purposes of D.C. Official Code § 38-208(c-1)(5)(D)(i) and (ii), the term “delinquency status” means whether a minor student was arrested by a law enforcement official during the time period analyzed in the report.

(5) By August 15, 2025, the Department of Human Services shall publish a final public report that :

“(A) Describes the interventions and services provided through the truancy pilot;

“(B) Provides the ten most common reasons, such as housing instability, transportation issues, or medical emergencies, for which minor students were referred to services or programs at the Department of Human Services;

“(C) Presents aggregate data on the ten most common services or programs utilized by minor students;

“(D) Provides a pre-post analysis as follows:

“(i) Comparing the attendance outcomes, academic performance, and delinquency status of students referred to the Department of Human Services to his or her attendance outcomes, academic performance, and delinquency status during the same time period in the prior school year;

“(ii) Comparing the attendance outcomes, academic performance, and delinquency status of students referred to the Department of Human Services before and after the Department of Human Services referral during School Year 2024-2025;

“(iii) Comparing the attendance outcomes and academic performance of schools participating in the pilot with primary and secondary schools that did not participate in this truancy pilot but are socio-demographically similar, and also with similar school year 2023-2024 truancy rates, to participating schools during the applicable time period for School Year 2024-2025; and

“(E) Categorizes and explains the root causes of truancy, to the extent possible, for the students for whom they received referrals.

“(F) For purposes of D.C. Official Code § 38-208(c-1)(5)(D)(i) and (ii), the term “delinquency status” means whether a minor student was arrested by a law enforcement official during the time period analyzed in the report.

Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement of the Budget Director as the fiscal impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

Sec. 4. Applicability

1. This act shall apply as of August 12, 2024.

Sec. 5. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), and shall remain in effect for no longer than 90 days after the applicability date of this act, as provided for emergency acts of the Council of the District of Columbia in section 412(a) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 788; D.C. Official Code § 1-204.12(a)).