

Article Analysis

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Your **margin** will count for your score in this assessment.

Read the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer's strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.
- Questions

Are Schools Tracking Students With GPS?

Beginning in 2010 public schools began tracking students with GPS transmitters supposedly to ensure their safety and attendance. "Students who skip school will soon be tracked 24 hours a day, seven days a week," reported KBTX.

Palos Heights School District has become one of the first in Illinois to begin using GPS to track schoolchildren riding buses to and from school each day. It had previously been using a GPS technology to track the buses, but now students are tracked with a luggage tag-sized unit in their backpacks that logs when they step on and off the bus. The district spent \$16,000 for the technology, which currently covers 10 buses.

Another district, Contra Costa County, is outfitting preschoolers with tracking devices they say will save staff time and money. However, The system requires preschoolers to wear a jersey that has a small radio frequency tag that will send signals to sensors located throughout the school that help track a child's movements. It also keeps track of their attendance and whether they have eaten or not. In other words, the students have absolutely no privacy. School officials argue that it will free up teachers and administrators who previously had to note on paper files when a child was absent or had eaten.

Anaheim Union High School District was the first in California to use GPS technology to track its students. Students in the seventh and eighth grades who have four unexcused absences are assigned a GPS device about the size of a cell phone. They receive an automated call each and every morning to agitate them to go to school.

Despite the fact that most of these programs are paid for by federal grants, there was no real safety issue to compel this tracking of students. Schools lose money from the federal government when students do not attend class. It is all about money for the local school districts, and for the government surveillance agenda it is all about tracking students 24-7 from preschool to college with GPS technology. This was just the start. Look for this GPS scam to spread throughout the country and around the world. If they start tracking kids now, will it ever stop?

Notes on fact and opinion, writer's strategies, and questions as I read:

What is the "government surveillance agenda"?

Article Analysis

Kids Who Skip School Are Saved by GPS

Frustrated and worried by students habitually skipping class, police and school officials in Anaheim are trying to come up with new ways to help students. Turning to GPS tracking school officials can ensure students come to class. Seventh- and eighth-graders with four unexcused absences or more this school year are assigned to carry a handheld GPS device, about the size of a cell phone.

Each morning on schooldays, they get an automated phone call encouraging them to get to school on time. Then, five times a day, they are required to enter a code that tracks their locations – as they leave for school, when they arrive at school, at lunchtime, when they leave school, and at 8 p.m.

The students are also assigned an adult coach to help and call them at least three times a week to see how they are doing and help them find effective ways to make sure they get to class on time. Students and their parents volunteer for the monitoring as a way to avoid continuation school or prosecution with a potential stay in juvenile hall.

"The idea is for this not to feel like a punishment, but an intervention to help them develop better habits, stay safe—away from the threat of gangs—and get to school," said Miller Sylvan, regional director for AIM Truancy Solutions. Students who routinely skip school are prime candidates to join gangs, police say. "This is our primary concern: to protect our students," said Kristen Levitin, principal at Dale Junior High in west Anaheim said, "Anything that can help these kids get to class and stay off the dangerous streets is a good thing."

In addition to student safety, schools lose about \$35 per day for each absent student, so the program can pay for itself and more if students return to class consistently, Miller said. The GPS devices cost \$300-\$400 each. Overall, the program costs about \$8 per day for each student; however, the program is paid for by a state grant.

It has been well received in places like San Antonio and Baltimore. Where the GPS technology has been implemented, average attendance among the chronically truant jumped from 77 percent up to 95 percent. That attendance rate dips slightly once students no longer carry the tracking device, Miller said, but many learn new habits that help them. The coaches continue talking to them for a year as a final attempt in keeping them safe.

Notes on fact and opinion, writer's strategies, and questions as I read: