

What is Truancy?

When a student is absent from school without a valid excuse. That is against the law. Schools may excuse certain absences, but a student doesn't have permission to:

- 1. Arrive late**
- 2. Skip class**
- 3. Miss a whole day**
- 4. Leave half a day**

Truancy can have a negative effect on: students, parents, school, and the whole community.

Parents play an important role in preventing truancy. Making sure your child goes to school is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

There are many reasons for a child to be truant here are some:

In the classroom:

- be worried about a test or handing in an assignment
- have a negative attitude towards learning or think that school is a waste of time
- feel out of place because they had to repeat the grade
- have poor academic skills
- have an undiagnosed learning disability
- have trouble making a transition from one grade or school to another

At home: (students trying to cope with)

- repeated moves
- parents' separation/divorce
- family money problems
- a strained relationship with a parent or other family member
- abuse or neglect
- taking on adult responsibility/caring for siblings

With peers/friends:

- feel isolated or unpopular
- are afraid of bullies or gangs
- are being sexually harassed
- are easily influenced or feel pressure to join others who are cutting class/school

In their personal life:

- have low self-esteem
- want to rebel against parents or teachers
- feel hopeless or confused about their future
- not have good problem-solving skills
- not know how to cope with stress
- alcohol or drug related
- may be dealing with a physical or mental issue



Truancy can have negative consequences.

How Truancy Affects...

Students:

- do poorly in school
- quit school
- get in trouble with the law
- join a gang
- use alcohol or other drugs
- have low self-esteem
- Lose privileges or suffer other punishments

Parents:

If a parent neglects their responsibility or ignore attendance laws, they may:

- need to take time off work to solve school and legal problems
- face fines
- be required to attend parenting classes or counseling programs

School:

School may lose certain federal or state funds, if funding is based on attendance rates. This can affect all students in that school.

The Community:

Areas with high truancy rates tend to have higher rates of crime. Law enforcement costs increase, which can result in higher taxes.

Parents play a key role in helping prevent truancy. Here's how you can help:

1. Learn about school policies
2. Get to know the school staff
3. Stay in touch with the school
4. Be firm about school attendance
5. Ask how you can help at the school
6. Take school warnings seriously
7. Talk with your child
8. Work with the school (let the staff know you want to address the problem right away)

DO YOUR PART TO PREVENT TRUANCY

- A. Learn how truancy affects children and other in the community**
- B. Make sure your child attends school every day**
- C. Support your child's efforts at school**
- D. GET HELP IF YOU NEED IT**

STEP UP will do all we can to prevent truancy and monitor your child's attendance. It is ultimately you, the parent/guardian's, responsibility to ensure your child gets to and from school. **We will take a proactive approach to help in this aspect of attendance.**



STEP UP School Attendance Intervention Plan

Parent/Guardian: Please read this plan carefully and put your initial in the box next to each paragraph. When finished, please sign the end of the form. Thank you.

Absences 1 – 4

Upon your student's return to school, they will bring home to you an "Absence" form. to explain the reason for the absence, and require a parent/guardian signature. This must be returned to the Dean of Students at the start of school the next day.

Additionally, the student will be required to make up any work that was missed during their absence. The student's teacher will turn over any work not completed by end of that day to the Dean of Students. The student will then need to stay at school until 4:15 to finish making up missed work. A phone call will be made to the parent/guardian informing them of their student's late pick up time.

By 4:15, any work still not completed will go home with the student. This will be HW to be turned in to Dean of Students at start of next school day. If HW is not properly completed, then student will not receive credit for that work. (Please note: The result of a culmination of these incomplete assignments has it's own internal consequence which is risk of student being retained at that grade level due to not meeting required grade level work and academic minutes to be successful in the next grade level.)

Absences 5 – 9

In addition to the above, the parent/guardian will be called. An additional notice will be sent home explaining the seriousness of their student's absences and the next steps taken by the school to help the student gain back critical academic time lost due to the student's absences.

These steps are: the student will complete a mandatory "STEP UP Club" after school from 3:45 – 4:15 for each day's absence in that time frame. The student may miss any outside activities that day.

Absences 10 - 14

In addition to the above, the student will be put on "school activity probation". This means the student may loose field trip and /or extra-curricular activities.

The parent/guardian will need to come to the school in the morning for a conference with the Dean of Students and the school counselor.

This meeting will be a further means to help the student get to school successfully through an attendance expectation contract, which will be signed by the parent and the student.



Absence 15

The parent/guardian will have a scheduled meeting with a Truancy Officer and the Dean of Students. This meeting serves to explain the legal consequences of their student missing 20 school days in the year.

Absence 20 – this is breaking the state school attendance law

Parent will be notified that the student is in jeopardy of retention and parent is to attend the next scheduled STEP UP Board meeting. At this meeting the parent/guardian will need to explain to the Board the reasons for the excessive absences of their student and give a plan to ensure that their student will be in regular attendance for the rest of the school year.

It will then be the STEP UP Board’s decision to retain or promote the student.

The student may be reported to juvenile probation for a truancy citation to be issued.

I have read the school absence/truancy policy and agree to support my child in being in school.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____



STEP UP School Absence Form

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Your student was absent from school on _____.

This is your student's _____ absence of the school year.

This form needs to be filled out and returned to the Dean of Students no later than

_____.

Reason for absence (to be filled out by parent/guardian):

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

For each day's absence your student will need to stay after school until 4:15 to complete schoolwork missed. These date(s) are _____.

Please plan your pick up time to be NO LATER than 4:15 unless your student is an After School Program participant.

Thank you for supporting your student with making daily attendance to school a priority.

Notes:

Date Returned: _____

