

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

State Law requires every child to attend school until his/her eighteenth birthday or until he/she has a high school diploma or GED.

A student who has five or more unexcused absences is **TRUANT**.

Our juvenile court system recognizes failure to keep minor children in school as one of the worst kind of child neglect.

If a student is truant and is cited before the Juvenile Court, any or all of the following actions could be taken:

- Parent may be fined \$50 for every day the student missed school without excuse.
- Court costs will be assigned.
- Student may be required to perform 6 hours of public service work for each unexcused absence.
- Parent may be required to attend parenting classes.
- Parent may be required to attend school with the student.
- Student may be required to take a Life Skills class.
- Student may be placed on probation.
- Parents may be sent to jail.
- The Department of Children's Services may become involved.
- Students could be removed from the parents.
- A counselor could be appointed to go into the home and work with the family.

Consequences of Truancy

Student attendance plays a major role in student achievement and has a direct correlation with a child's academic success. Absence from school is detrimental to students' achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and employment potential.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency, recognizes that truancy is an early indicator of juvenile delinquency, social isolation, and educational failure. Truancy is a gateway to crime. High rates of truancy are linked to high daytime burglary rates and high vandalism. Truancy is a powerful predictor of juvenile delinquent behavior.

Youth who are truant are more likely to become dropouts. Dropouts often abuse drugs, have marital problems, and career problems. Research indicates a link between truancy and later problems such as violence, adult criminality, and incarceration.

Each year's class of dropouts will cost the country over 200 billion dollars during their lifetimes in lost earnings and unrealized tax revenues. Dropouts comprise nearly half of the heads of households on welfare and an even higher percentage of the prison population.