

OFFICE OF THE
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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to the new school year! As you know, providing your child with the opportunity to receive the best education possible is one of the greatest and most significant gifts a parent can give their child. A good education serves as the foundation for a child to grow to become a happy, healthy, and productive adult. As such, society recognizes this importance and puts safeguards in place to ensure that each child benefits fully from their educational opportunities. With that said, I want to share with you some important information regarding those safeguards that require school attendance.

Education Code §48200 requires all children between the ages of 6 and 18 to attend a full-time education program as designated by the governing board of the school district in which the parent or legal guardian resides.

Education Code §48260(a) defines a "truant" as a student who three times during the school year either misses more than 30 minutes of instruction or is absent from school for three full days without a valid excuse. Because society recognizes the importance of regular school attendance, Education Code §48205 defines when a student may be validly excused from school.

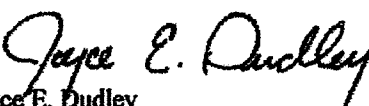
All parents of school-aged children should know that compulsory education is the law in the State of California, and the law provides that truant students may be detained or arrested during school hours. The law also provides that parents of students are responsible for ensuring school attendance and can be held accountable with legal sanctions amounting to an infraction and/or a misdemeanor when the case is aggravated.

As a grandmother and a mother of four sons, as well as your district attorney, I know that often children who do not attend school run the very real risk of either committing crimes or becoming crime victims. Additionally, research has proven that those students who do not graduate from high school will face more challenges in finding meaningful work and succeeding in life.

Your school is here to help your child become well educated. Truancy can result from many causes and your school district is ready to assist you as a parent in obtaining help from government- and community-based organizations to address issues that may be associated with truancy. With support and encouragement your child can thrive and reap the rewards from developing successful organizational skills, engaging in arts, sports, and sciences, solidifying strong school-oriented friendships, and appreciating the value of academics, hard work, and studying.

Your school district and I are committed to keeping the children of Santa Barbara County in school and doing all we can to ensure their individual joy and success. I hope that you have found this information useful and I wish you and your child a safe and productive school year.

Sincerely,


Joyce E. Dudley
District Attorney

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CLASS Program

Step 1	<u>Truancy Notification Letter 1</u> A letter informing parents of their child's unexcused absences and the relevant laws regarding school attendance.	3 days of unexcused absences or its equivalent in period absences
Step 2	<u>After School Meeting (ASM)</u> A group meeting focusing on parent and student accountability, social and legal consequences of truancy, and information regarding county and community resources.	6 days of unexcused absences or its equivalent in period absences
Step 3	<u>Administrator Meeting (AM)</u> A meeting with an administrator focusing on addressing individual attendance needs, and where a contract with the school may be signed.	9 days of unexcused absences or its equivalent in period absences
Step 4	<u>Truancy Mediation Team (TMT)</u> A meeting with representatives from the school and the District Attorney's Office focusing on addressing individual attendance needs, and where a TMT contract may be signed.	12 days of unexcused absences or its equivalent in period absences
Step 5	<u>School Attendance Review Board (SARB)</u> A meeting with an independent panel of district, county and community participants, with possible referral to Probation or the District Attorney.	14 days of unexcused absences or its equivalent in period absences

↓ Referral to Probation or the District Attorney for prosecution

Legal Consequences of Truancy

For Parents	For Students						
<p>Infraction (Education Code § 48293)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fines <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>1st Conviction</td> <td>\$100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2nd Conviction</td> <td>\$250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd Conviction and after</td> <td>\$500</td> </tr> </table> ▪ Court orders to personally send your child to school and to attend parenting classes <p>Contempt (Education Code § 48293)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fines of up to \$1,000 <p>Misdemeanor (Penal Code § 270.1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fines of up to \$2,000 ▪ Jail for up to 1 year <p>Misdemeanor (Penal Code § 272)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fines of up to \$2,500 ▪ Jail for up to 1 year 	1st Conviction	\$100	2nd Conviction	\$250	3rd Conviction and after	\$500	<p>Wardship (Welfare & Institutions Code § 601)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fine of \$50 ▪ Probation for up to 6 months ▪ Curfew between 10:00 PM and 6:00 AM ▪ Court orders to attend school ▪ Submit to drug or alcohol testing ▪ Submit to searches and seizures ▪ Community service between 20-40 hours ▪ Suspension, revocation or delay of driving privileges <p>Contempt (Welfare & Institutions Code § 213)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ House arrest ▪ Electronic monitoring ▪ Juvenile hall
1st Conviction	\$100						
2nd Conviction	\$250						
3rd Conviction and after	\$500						