

TRUANCY PROCEDURES

Schools will investigate individual student absences on a daily basis, and analyze whole-school absence data on a monthly basis.

In cooperation with parents/guardians, teachers, nurses, counselors, social workers, secretaries and administration, the school's attendance coordinator will assess patterns in unexcused student absences. Interventions will be explored to address the cause for attendance concern(s).

As required by law, the following procedure shall be followed when a student is truant.

- A. The principal, upon determining that a student is truant, shall notify the Superintendent of the student's truancy within five school days of the last unexcused absence.
- B. Within five school days of notification, the Superintendent/designee will refer the student who has been determined to be truant to the school's intervention team (student assistance team, child study team members, problem solving team members, etc.) within five school days.
- C. The school's intervention team will meet to determine the cause of the truancy and assess the effect of the student's absences, as well as any future absences for the student. If it is determined that a negative effect exists, the team shall develop an intervention plan to address the student's absences and the negative effect of these absences.

An intervention plan may include, but is not limited to:

1. Frequent communication between the teacher and the family;
2. Changes in the learning environment;
3. Mentoring;
4. Student counseling;
5. Tutoring, including peer tutoring;
6. Placement into different classes;
7. Consideration of multiple pathways of learned as allowed by law;
8. Attendance contracts;

9. Referral to other agencies for family services; and
10. Other interventions including but not limited to referral to the school attendance coordinator, student assistance team or dropout prevention committee.

The plan should also address how future absences of the student will be dealt with; the timeline for particular activities; and periodic reports to the Superintendent on the student's progress in complying with the plan.

- D. The student and their parents/guardians shall be invited to attend any meetings scheduled to discuss the student's truancy and the intervention plan. Failure of the student and/or their parents/legal guardians to attend any scheduled meetings shall not preclude the school system from implementing an intervention plan.
- E. If the intervention plan does not correct the student's truancy, the Superintendent or their designee shall send written notice to the parent that the student's attendance is required by law. The superintendent may make two documented attempts to serve (or cause to be served) the notice by certified mail. The notice shall:
 1. State that the student is required to attend school pursuant to 20-A MRSA §5001-A (the compulsory attendance law);
 2. Explain the parent's right to inspect the student's attendance records, attendance coordinator's reports, and principal's reports;
 3. Explain that the failure to send the student to school and maintain the student in regular attendance is a civil violation in accordance with 20-A MRSA § 5053-A and will jeopardize the student's status in their current grade;
 4. State that the Superintendent/designee may notify local law enforcement authorities of a violation of 20-A MRSA § 5053-A and if the violation falls under Section 1(B) or 1(C) of Policy JHB, must notify the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS); and
 5. Outline the plan developed to address the student's truancy and the steps that have been taken to implement that plan.
- F. Prior to notifying local law enforcement authorities, the Superintendent/designee shall schedule at least one meeting of the intervention team as required by law and Section C

of this procedure and may invite a local prosecutor.

- G. If after three school days after the second attempted service of the notice described in Section E of this procedure the student remains truant and the parent and student refuse to attend the meeting referred to in Section F, the Superintendent/designee shall report the facts of the unlawful absence to local law enforcement authorities. Local law enforcement may proceed with enforcement action against the parent unless the student is at once placed in an appropriate school or otherwise meets the requirements of the compulsory attendance law.
- H. When a student is determined to be truant and in violation of the compulsory attendance law, and the intervention team has made a good faith attempt to meet the requirements, the Superintendent shall notify the Board of the student's truancy.

LEGAL REFERENCE: 20-A MRSA §§ 5001-A; 5051-A-5054-A
 22 MRSA § 4002(1); (6)(B-2)

CROSS REFERENCE: JHB – Truancy

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