

Southeast Delco School District Public Safety : Truancy

Help Us Keep Our Students In School. For our students to be successful in school and in life they need a good education. In order to get a good education students MUST attend school everyday. Help us; help your student be successful.

Who must attend school?

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Compulsory Attendance Law (24 P.S. 13-1326, 13-1327, 13-1332, 13-1333) states:

"Compulsory school age" is defined in Section 13-1326 - All children of "compulsory school age", between the ages of 8 and 17, must attend school in Pennsylvania. The child's parent or guardian can decide when to start their children but it must be no later than age 8 and the children must attend school regularly until their 17th birthday or upon graduation from high school.

How Many Absences Are Too Many?

In Pennsylvania, truancy is defined as when a child of compulsory school age is absent from school for three or more days without a valid excuse.

Before bringing an action against a parent or guardian under this act, the school must give the parent or guardian three (3) days written notice of the violation. The notice comes from the school attendance clerk. If a child is truant again, the parent does not have to receive additional notice to be held liable.

What happens if you are charged with violating the Pennsylvania School Code (24 P.S. 13-1327-1333) Compulsory Education Attendance Law?

As a parent, guardian or person in a parental relationship who is responsible for a child between the ages of 8 and 17, you are liable for making sure the child attends school regularly.

This section holds every parent or guardian of a school-age child responsible for the child's attendance at school. If a child is found to be truant, his or her parent or guardian can be subject to the following:

1. A FINE, UP TO \$300.00.
2. COURT COSTS.
3. ORDERED TO ATTEND PARENTING CLASSES.
4. SENTENCED TO UP TO FIVE (5) DAYS IN JAIL.
5. SENTENCED TO UP TO SIX (6) MONTHS COMMUNITY SERVICE.
6. REMOVE THE CHILD FROM HIS OR HER HOME AFTER THE COURTS HAS DECLARED THE CHILD DEPENDENT.

What can be done to improve attendance?

Schools

- Develop a system so that there is immediate response to absenteeism. Student and families need to know that absences are noticed by the school staff.
- Involve the entire school staff in the process of monitoring and improving attendance. Attendance must be viewed as everyone's job!
- Partner with families. Attendance must be the shared responsibility of students, families and the school. Communicate with families on a regular and ongoing basis.
- Develop a school wide system of incentives and sanctions. For most students incentives to attend school are unnecessary; however, there are students for whom this may be necessary. Make the goal of improving attendance a classroom, small learning community, and whole school goal.

Family

- Let children know that school is important. Show them that you are interested in their activities.
- Communicate regularly with school staff. Let them know if your child is going to be out of school or if you have a concern about your child's progress.
- Develop a daily schedule. Children do best with planned routines. Make sure children get to bed and get enough sleep so that they wake up in time to get to school on time and ready to learn.

Community

- Regular attendance in school is everyone's concern. If you see children not in school during school hours call the school or the children's families, or the Registrar (See Below).
- If you own a business, do not serve students during school hours.

To Report Children Not Attending School contact:

Southeast Delco School District Registrar: Mrs. Constrisciani
610-522-4300 Ext: 5301

Truancy Officer

Dana McBride – 610-522-4300 Ext: 5397
Fax 610-532-6252