

## Consequences for Violations of Compulsory School Attendance Laws:

If you continue to miss school, you will be required to attend a Diversion Meeting with family, school personnel, and a County Truancy Diversion Worker. Failure to attend this meeting and follow through with expectations may result in a petition being filed in Juvenile Court.

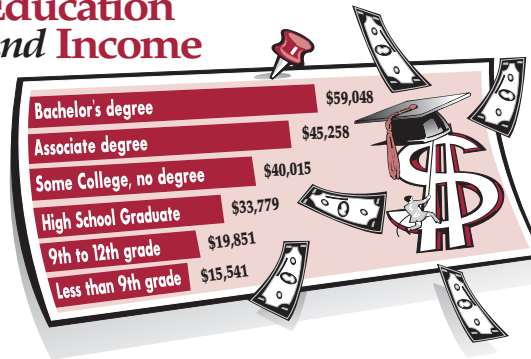
### Continued truancy may result in any or all of the following consequences:

1. School detention, in-school suspension or Saturday school.
2. Supervision by a County Probation Officer or Social Worker.
3. Community service hours or work crew hours.
4. Participate in individual or family counseling, or complete a psychological or chemical health evaluation.
5. Participation in a group or in a series of educational programs through your school or community.
6. Parent court ordered to attend school with you.
7. Fined up to \$100 or parent held liable for prosecution for your truancy with a penalty of up to 90 days in county jail and/or up to a \$1,000 fine.
8. Driver's license suspended or delayed until you are 18 years of age.
9. Home detention. (Home detention means that you cannot leave your house without a parent except to go to school or work.) If you are put on home detention, someone will be monitoring your whereabouts.
10. Placed in a shelter or correctional facility. Your parents will be responsible for the costs involved according to their ability to pay.

## DID YOU KNOW:

Dakota County tax payers invest approximately \$35 per day per student to the school district for educating youth.

### Education and Income



### A message on Truancy from the District Juvenile Court Judges

*This District's Juvenile Court Judges are committed to the principles, values and discipline that are taught to children and young adults as they proceed through school. The Court believes that attending school is an invaluable experience for students in both the long and short term. Student's have a right, privilege, and obligation to attend school.*

*The Court has found that children who do not attend school lack the principles, values, and discipline needed in life, and that these shortcomings hinder their becoming productive citizens. The Court will not allow young students, (or parents who allow them), to not attend school, because the consequences to the individual and society are permanent and detrimental to all.*

*Consequently, any student or parent that believes this Court will not take action to compel them to attend school will receive "an education" the hard way. Or, simply put, either go to school, or we will bring school to you!*

### Office of the Dakota County Attorney

James C. Backstrom

Dakota County Judicial Center

1560 Highway 55  
Hastings, MN 55033  
651-438-4438

## Dakota County School Success Program

# A Truancy Prevention and Intervention Initiative

For questions and information about the School Success Program contact:

Social Services  
952/891-7400

Corrections  
952/891-7200

14955 Galaxie Avenue  
Apple Valley, Minnesota 55124-8581

## A message on Truancy from the County Attorney



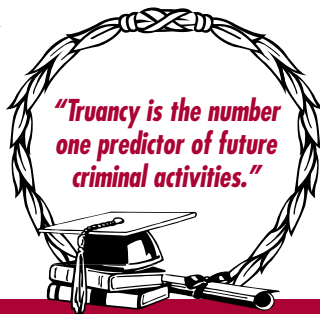
We all want our children to have the best education they can get to become successful, productive adults. Regular attendance at school is the best way to ensure that goal. That is why school attendance is mandatory in the State of Minnesota. Studies have shown that children who are truant from school are far more likely to engage in delinquent or criminal activity, and abuse alcohol or other drugs. We need to address this problem actively to prevent today's truant from becoming tomorrow's delinquent or chemical dependent.

Dakota County Social Services and Corrections, along with my office, have established the School Success Program to deal with truancy issues in Dakota County. First referrals to my office for truancy are diverted to the School Success Program. A worker meets with the family to assess the problem and establish an attendance contract. Other services, as needed, are also set up at that time. School Success also helps parents to become actively involved to insure their children regularly attend school. This diversion process and the services offered have proven to be very effective, as long as everyone follows through on their obligations. If truancy continues, the matter will be petitioned into Juvenile Court to step up the level and intensity of intervention.

The School Success Program is focused on increasing attendance, getting truants in school, and keeping them out of Juvenile Court. This benefits our community, and most importantly, our children.

*James C. Backstrom*

James C. Backstrom  
Dakota County Attorney



Dakota County's School Success Program is a prevention and intervention program designed to improve school attendance. The law requires that the school notify the County Attorney's Office when a student has 7 or more unexcused absences. Upon receiving this notice from the school, a Truancy Diversion Worker will be assigned to your family and you will be required to attend a Diversion Meeting. At the meeting, school staff and the Diversion Worker will work with you to identify barriers to school attendance and recommendations for overcoming these barriers. These recommendations will become part of a Diversion Agreement that you will be asked to sign. The Diversion Worker will also explain to you the legal requirements and consequences if the Agreement is not followed.

### Definition of Truant:

A child is considered a "habitual truant" if she or he is under the age of 16 years and is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days or for one or more class period on seven school days. Children ages 16 and 17 will be considered truant if they have not lawfully withdrawn from school with their parents' permission. [MN Statutes 260C.007, Subd. 19.]

### Excused Absences:

A parent or guardian may seek an excused absence from school for his/her child. A school has the right to accept or deny an application for an excused absence.

#### ACCEPTABLE EXCUSES INCLUDE:

- ✓ Sickness (you may be required to provide written verification from a doctor or nurse)
- ✓ Doctor's visit including mental health
- ✓ Religious holiday
- ✓ Extreme family emergency

#### INVALID EXCUSES (examples):

- ✓ Staying home to baby-sit
- ✓ Work
- ✓ Being tired
- ✓ Travel/vacation
- ✓ Needed at home
- ✓ Cold weather
- ✓ Missed the bus
- ✓ Child is not immunized

### Responsibility of the School:

- Provide a program/schedule that meets the student's educational needs.
- Address problems identified as barriers to the student's ability to attend and learn.
- Maintain accurate attendance records and document communication with the students and parents/guardians about attendance.
- Refer the student to the County Attorney's Office for court intervention when students have seven unexcused absences.
- Attend Diversion Meetings for each student referred to the County Attorney's Office and notify the Case Manager if the Diversion Agreement is not being followed.
- Inform the student and parents/guardians of the legal requirement for school attendance and possible consequences if fail to meet the requirements.

### Responsibility of the Parent:

- Send your child to school.
- Ensure your child has completed required homework.
- Monitor your child's attendance and progress in school.
- Inform the school when your child may need to miss school for an acceptable reason.
- Attend a Diversion Meeting with your child and follow the recommendations of the Diversion Agreement. Contact the Case Manager if this Agreement is not being followed.

### Responsibility of the Student:

- Attend school, every day, every class, and be on time.
- Complete required school work.
- Ask for assistance when needed.
- Attend a Diversion Meeting and follow the recommendations of the Diversion Agreement.