

What actions may be taken against the student?

- *An infraction under Welfare and Institutions Code 601 (b) may be filed against the truant student.*
- *Penalties against the student may include, but not be limited to, the following:*
 - *19 to 40 hours of community or school service*
 - *Saturday work or school*
 - *\$100 fine*
 - *Suspension or revocation of driving privileges*

What penalties may be imposed on the parent or guardian?

- *For a misdemeanor, the penalties may include a fine of \$50 to \$500, imprisonment (5 to 25 days in jail with up to one year of probation), and/or mandatory attendance in parenting classes.*
- *Contributing to the delinquency of a minor (under the age of 18 years) is considered a misdemeanor and punishable by law. In addition to imprisonment in a county jail for up to one year, a parent may be fined up to \$2,500 and receive up to 5 years of probation (Penal Code section 272).*

This brochure was developed by the
Kern High School District
in conjunction with the
Kern County District Attorney's Office.

STEP POLICY

The following **STEPS** are a series of progressive measures and interventions set by the KHSD to improve student attendance. Though each student will be held accountable for his/her actions and each parent held responsible for his/her student's truancy, it is an overall goal of each school to increase daily attendance for the purpose of ensuring student achievement and success. **It is the goal of the KHSD that each student graduate from high school and receive a diploma.**

- Step 1** Student is contacted and may be counseled. Parent is notified.
- Step 2** Student is contacted and may be counseled. Intervention strategies may be implemented. Parent is notified.
- Step 3** Parent is required to meet with Dean. Intervention strategies may be implemented. Student may be placed on school probation.
- Step 4** Conference with School Attendance Review Team (SART) is required. Community and/or school service may be assigned.
- Step 5** Student and parent are referred to the KHSD Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) and/or student and parent may be issued a citation to appear in court.
- Step 6** Citation of student and/or parent is filed in court. Prosecution of student and/or parent may follow.

Did you know?

Welfare and Institutions Code section 11253.5 authorizes the County CalWORKS office to reduce a family welfare grant if it is determined that the child is not "regularly attending school as required."

Truancy Reduction Program

A Partnership

The Kern High School District



The Kern County District Attorney's Office

A Message to Students and Parents

The youth of Kern County are our most precious resource. One of the earliest indicators that something may be wrong in a young person's life is chronic truancy. It is imperative that we as a community collaborate and share our resources to do all we can to help these children become responsible young adults. My office is pleased to join the Kern High School District and the Kern County Probation Department in a partnership that seeks to reduce truancy in our community. I strongly support early intervention because it prevents juvenile crime and encourages the learning that is so critical to success in life.

Edward R. Jagels
Kern County District Attorney

Thomas Jefferson characterized education as the resource most to be relied upon for "advancing the happiness" of mankind. Firm in that belief, the Kern High School District is committed to ensuring the education of all young people in Kern County. Our efforts in this regard are heightened by the abundance of statistics reflecting the importance of a high school diploma. A very high percentage of those on welfare do not have a high school education. A very high percentage of those incarcerated in penal institutions do not have a high school education. The lifetime earnings of those without a high school education are vastly inferior to the lifetime earnings of those who do have a high school education. It is clear that the right place for a young person to be is in school. The Kern High School District is committed to achieving this end for the good not just of the public, but our young people as well.

Donald E. Carter Ed.D.
Superintendent, Kern High School District

California State Law requires that a student attend school **EVERY day, ALL day.**

§48200 from the Education Code of the State of California states the following:

Each person between the ages of 6 and 18 years is subject to compulsory full-time education ... and shall attend the public full-time day school or continuation school for the full school day.

What can students do to avoid consequences of truancy and REMAIN SUCCESSFUL IN SCHOOL?

- **Attend school EVERY day, for the FULL school day.**
- **Be ON TIME to class; don't be tardy.**
- **Actively participate in class: DO YOUR WORK and DO YOUR BEST.**
- **Complete your homework.**
- **Follow the school's discipline and attendance policies and procedures.**
- **Be a leader: DO WHAT'S RIGHT.**
- **Take charge of your education.**

What can parents do to help their student succeed in school?

- **Stay in touch with your student; know what's going on.**
- **Provide a quiet place for him/her to study and a regular, healthy routine.**
- **Stay in touch with your student's school: VISIT.**
- **Monitor your student's attendance.**
- **Seek help from the school when you need it. The deans and the counselors want to help you and your student.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is a truant?

- A truant is a student who is absent from school 3 times in a school year without having a good reason (an excused absence) or permission from home or school (Education Code §48260).

Who is considered an habitual truant?

- An habitual truant is a student who is absent from school 6 times in a school year without having a good reason (an excused absence) or permission from home or school (Education Codes §48260, 48261, and 48262).

How can I clear an absence for my student?

- If a student is ill or has an excused or warranted reason for his/her absence, a parent may call the school within **72 hours** (3 school days) to clear the absence.

What happens if I don't clear my student's absence?

- If the parent/guardian fails to clear a student's absence within the 72-hour period (3 school days), the absence will automatically turn into a cut, or an unexcused absence. Three cuts will result in truancy, and the student will automatically be placed on STEP 1 of the KHSD attendance system.

What if I'm having a problem with my student attending school?

- Parents are encouraged to seek immediate help from the school if they are having a problem with their student attending school. Schools want to help!