



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

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DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As summer winds down and the beginning of the school year approaches, we welcome you and your child to a year of successful learning. While we understand that you have many responsibilities and stressors, we want to encourage you to prioritize your child's education and ensure his/her daily school attendance.

Attendance is an important life skill that will help your child graduate from college and keep a job. Even missing 10 percent, or two days per month, of the school year can drastically affect a student's academic success. Students are considered chronically absent even if they only miss a day or two every few weeks.

You might wonder why the Contra Costa District Attorney's Office is writing you rather than a school official. The reason is simple. Research shows that children lacking an education are far more likely to be unemployed and at risk of becoming involved in crime, both as victims and offenders. More than 80 percent of prisoners in the country are high school drop-outs, which suggests a direct correlation between public education and public safety. In Contra Costa County, police have reported that 60 percent of juvenile crime occurs between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. on weekdays, when children should have been in school.

California law *requires* every child from the ages of six to eighteen to attend school. **Parents of school-aged children are responsible for their children's attendance in a full time, educational program.** Three or more unexcused absences can result in your child being recorded as "truant," and being referred to the School Principal, the District Superintendent, and/or the District Attorney's Office. The District Attorney's Office regularly prosecutes parents and children in court for the child's failure to regularly attend school.

Your school is here to help your child learn and ensure that he/she has a successful future. Please do everything within your power to give your child the priceless gift of education. Your efforts will make all the difference in your child's life.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Delehunt", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Laura Delehunt  
Deputy District Attorney  
Contra Costa County