



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Diana Becton
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Dear

It has come to my attention that your child _____ has not been attending school, or there has been a pattern of excessive tardiness and/or absences. These absences are *not* excused and are considered trancies.

The California Education Code sections 48291—48293 give the District Attorney's Office the power to prosecute: "...any person, guardian, or other person having control or charge of any pupil who fails to comply with the compulsory full-time education requirements, unless excused or exempted." Under these sections, you could be prosecuted for failing to ensure that your child attends school. The fine ranges from \$100 to \$500 *per student*, and the court may also order you to be placed in a parenting education and counseling program.

You may also be subject to prosecution under Penal Code section 272, Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor, if your child's truancy results in delinquent juvenile behavior. This misdemeanor carries a penalty of up to a year in county jail and/or a fine up to \$2500, and/or up to five years' probation.

Our county has recently initiated a Parent Truancy Calendar, which compels parents of chronically absent K-8th graders to attend throughout the school year and avail themselves of services. Such parents may also be prosecuted under Penal Code section 270.1, Failing to Reasonably Supervise or Encourage Child's School Attendance. This statute carries a penalty of up to a year in county jail and/or a fine up to \$2000. The court has the discretion to permit a deferred-entry of judgment program after a guilty plea is entered, which could include periodic reviews in court and parenting classes.

In addition, as a result of failing to attend school, your child could be made a ward of the court pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 601(b).

It is important that you send your child to school every day. Willful violations of the law may result in a Citation, Complaint, or Warrant being issued for your arrest. If you have questions, please call your child's School Attendance Representative at (____)

Sincerely yours,

Laura Delehunt
District Attorney
Contra Costa County
(925) 957-8713

Letter # 2