

The importance of students attending school regularly, being on time and remaining in school through graduation:

The lack of a high school diploma increases the risk of criminal activity involvement, reduces employment opportunities and lowers earning capacities. All children deserve a quality education to prepare them for the challenges of the world. Young people who do not attend school regularly are more likely to drop out of school and are at a higher risk of becoming involved in behaviors that can cost them their education. School districts lose hundreds of thousands of dollars each year in Federal and State funds that are based on daily attendance figures. Also, local businesses incur the burden of training costs for uneducated workers. Furthermore, taxpayers' assessments are at higher rates for law enforcement and welfare programs.

## Resources

Student Relations—Attendance: 239-377-0524  
or 239-377-0527

Student Services—Guidance: 239-377-0505

David Lawrence Center: 455-8500  
Mental Health Counseling and Substance Abuse Treatment for Children and Adults.

Lutheran Services: 800-651-1853 or 239-278-1140  
Counseling Programs for Youth & Families

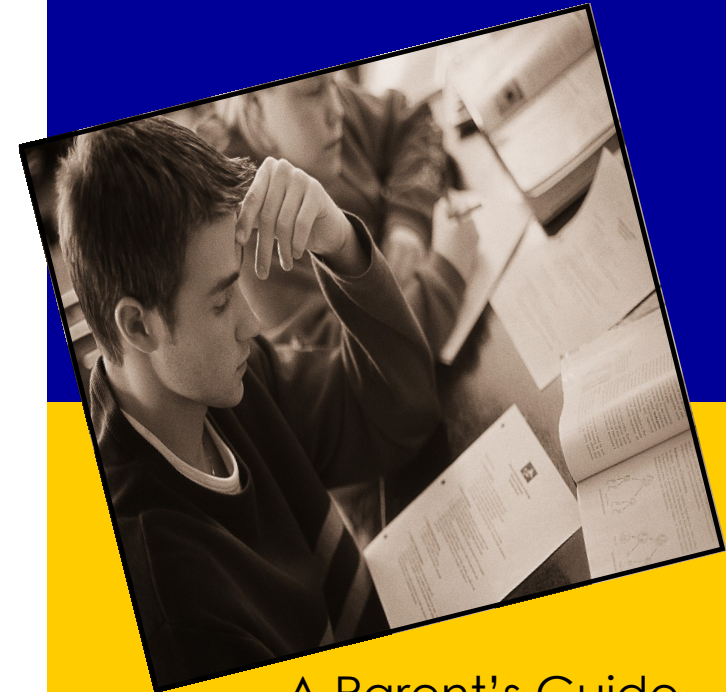
Collier County Sherriff  
Youth Relations Bureau: 239-793-9260  
Juveniles At Risk: 239-530-9711

## Tips for Parents to Improve School Attendance:

- Make your child's education a family priority.
- Do not allow your child to stay home from school.
- Know and follow the school district's attendance policy.
- Make sure your child has a regular bedtime and gets plenty of rest each night.
- Do not enable your child by encouraging or endorsing unexcused absences.
- If your child refuses to go to school, do not hesitate to ask for help from the school staff.
- Be an advocate for your child.
- Offer praise to your child for school tasks well done.
- Assist your child with homework.
- Get involved in your child's education



# Truancy Prevention



A Parent's Guide to Keeping Your Child in School

Published and distributed by  
**Collier County School District**

## Absences procedures:

1. Parents are required to notify the school when their child is absent and inform the school of the reason for the absence within twenty-four (24) hours (telephone or note).
2. The school will make a good faith effort to contact parents per Florida Statute 1003.26
3. Upon each unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown, the principal or designee shall contact the student's parent/guardian to determine the reason for the absence.
4. When a student accumulates **five (5)** days of absences, other than out-of-school suspensions, whether excused or unexcused, the principal or designee shall make a good faith effort to contact the parent or guardian by telephone to discuss the reasons for the absences and shall document such contact.
5. When a student accumulates **seven (7)** days of absences, other than out-of-school suspensions, whether excused or unexcused, a record of absences will promptly be mailed to the parent/guardian of the student. The letter/records of absences will include information about Truancy Court and/or Suspension of Driver's License. For high school students, the communication will include information on attendance as it relates to earning credit. The principal or designee shall document such contact.
6. When a student is absent **ten (10)** or more days, whether excused or unexcused, a record of absences will promptly be mailed to the parent/guardian of the student. High School students and their parents shall be notified that the students may not earn credit for the courses in which these absence limits have been exceeded. If

the discretion of the principal or designees, the parent or guardian may be required to verify absences with appropriate documentation (e.g., doctor's visits, etc.). A student found to be habitually truant will be referred to Truancy Court and/or be referred for suspension of his/her Driver's License.

### Excused/Validated Excuses:

● Illness ● Illness in family ● death ● religious holiday ● family emergency ● hazardous conditions

### Unexcused Excuses:

● Missing the bus ● Oversleeping ● Sleeping In ● "I do not feel like going to school" ● Boredom ● Staying home to baby sit, work or take care of a parent ● Family trips

## Habitually Truant:

Student who has fifteen (15) unexcused absences within ninety (90) calendar days.

Florida Statutes require each school principal or designee to report each habitually truant student to the designated District Administration. Further, it requires school district superintendents or designees to report to the Department of High Way, Safety, and Motor Vehicles the same and other identifying information of students who are habitually truant.

## Out-of-School Suspensions/ Expulsions:

Absences due to out-of-school suspensions or expulsions shall not count as unexcused absences for the purpose of determining truancy. Parents shall be notified of out-of-school suspension or expulsion according to the guidelines of the discipline process.

## Tardiness/Early Dismissal:

A student's tardiness to school or early dismissal from school shall be excused at the discretion of the principal or designee. A student who is habitually late to school and/or chronically dismissed early shall be subject to disciplinary action by the school administration including but not limited to in-school suspension, a required parent conference, and/or referral to Truancy Court.

## High School Course Credit:

High School Course Credit shall be a function of demonstrated mastery of the student performance standards in the course of study as provided by the rules of the School Board.

At the high school level and for high school courses taken at middle school, credit is earned by attaining a passing average for the semester and by accumulating fewer than TEN (10) days absent for the semester.

No distinction will be made between excused, validated, and unexcused absences when calculating absences for earning of credit.

