

# Facts Parents should know about Attendance Requirements and HB 2398



Robstown Independent School District  
By: Albert Guerra  
Executive Director for Student Support Services  
December 11, 2016

# HOUSE BILL 2398

- House Bill 2398 made numerous changes to the landscape of Truancy Laws in the state of Texas. This session will highlight facts in changes with the State Compulsory Law and district's responsibility to address student truant conduct, including addition requirements for implementation of TPM's, and referral of a student to truancy court

# Understanding Target Market

Who drops out and why? Factors linked to Dropouts:

- Student Retention
- Poverty
- Ethnicity
- Limited English Proficiency
- Pregnancy
- Tracking
- Geographic Location



# You Ought to Know the Facts!

- Just the facts
  - High school dropouts are eligible for only 12% of new jobs
  - Rates of unemployment for minorities are up to 10 times higher for those without a high school education
  - Most Hispanics remain in low-skilled positions
  - Dropouts earn over one million dollars less than a college graduate during their working years.
  - Girls who drop out are more likely to have children at a younger age and to be single parents
  - Dropouts are more likely to be involved in risky behaviors such as drug use and violence

# Why Should You Stay in School?

- **Personal**-Do you know that almost all future jobs will require at least a high school education?
- **Family**-Your family wants to see you walk across the stage and receive your diploma.
- **Community Cares**-Your local community is also interested in your education.

# Get your High School Diploma!

- You will feel **better** about yourself because you have your diploma
- You will get a **better** job
- You will earn a **better** salary
- You will have **better** opportunities for advancement in your career
- you and your family will have a **better** life style
- A high school diploma opens the door to **better** opportunities for your future



# Attendance

- Attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his/her education.
- Absences from class may result in disruption of a student's learning
- Lack of Attendance is leading indicator for Student Retention



# COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

## TEC §25.085

- Student between ages of 6 and 19 must attend school and district-required tutorials.
- Upon enrollment in Pre K (3 or 4), student falls under Compulsory Attendance Law.





# COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

## TEC §25.085

- Student must not be absent ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year
- Three (3) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period. Robstown practice only.



# Allowable Absences

- An extracurricular activity or public performance, approved by the Board of Trustees.
- Required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for Medicaid-eligible students.
- Observance of religious holy days, including travel for that purpose.
- A documented health care appointment if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day(s) as the appointment.

# Absence Accounting

1. If the absence is due to a medical appointment, and the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day as the appointment and brings in documentation (prescription slip, doctor's receipt, or doctor's note), the student must be cleared at the office, and counted present for day of doctor's visit.

## TRUANCY ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

- **WHAT CAN PARENTS TYPICALLY EXPECT FROM THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS?**

# STEP I

After 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Unexcused Absence

AFTER 1<sup>ST</sup> PERIOD ATTENDANCE, PHONE CALLS WILL BE MADE FOR STUDENTS NOT PRESENT BY ATTENDANCE OFFICE OR AUTOMATED PHONE MACHINE.

# STEP 2

## After 3<sup>rd</sup> Unexcused Absence

- ATTENDANCE OFFICE WILL MAKE DOCUMENTED PHONE CALLS TO PARENTS AND NOTIFY ADMINISTRATION. ALSO, A WARNING NOTICE WILL BE SENT TO NOTIFY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN IF THIRD ABSENCE IS WITHIN A FOUR WEEK PERIOD.

# STEP 3

## After 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence

- AN ASSIGNED TRUANCY OFFICER WILL MAKE A HOME VISIT TO NOTIFY PARENT OR ADMINISTRATOR/PARENT CONFERENCE WILL TAKE PLACE WITH THE INTENT OF ADDRESSING THE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES AND CONSEQUENCES THAT MAY FOLLOW AS RESULT OF TRUANT ATTENDANCE

# Step 4

## If Unexcused Absences Continue

- Implementation of Truancy Preventive Measures (TPMs)  
HB 2398 requires one or more of the following TPMs
  1. Behavior Improvement Plan
  2. School-based community service
  3. Counseling or Mentoring program



# Behavior Management Plan

1. A SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION OF THE BEHAVIOR THAT IS REQUIRED OR PROHIBITED FOR THE STUDENT
2. PERIOD FOR WHICH THE PLAN IS EFFECTIVE, NOT TO EXCEED 45 SCHOOL DAYS
3. PENALTIES FOR ADDITIONAL, INCLUDING DISCIPLINARY ACTION OR REFERRAL TO TRUANCY COURT



[www.shutterstock.com](http://www.shutterstock.com) · 300389357

# School-Based Community Service

- BEHAVIOR CONTRACTS WITH STUDENTS ARE FAMILIAR ADMINISTRATIVE TOOLS TO ADDRESS ISSUES

**1. THE STUDENT WILL**

**2. THE PARENT WILL**

**3. THE SCHOOL WILL**

STUDENT SIGNATURE

PARENT SIGNATURE

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL/DESIGNEE SIGNATURE



# Counseling or Mentoring Program

- REFER THE STUDENT TO COUNSELING, MEDIATION, MONITORING, TEEN COURT, OR OTHER IN-SCHOOL OR OUT-OF-SCHOOL SERVICE AIMED AT ADDRESSING THE BEHAVIOR



# STEP 5

- WHEN TPM'S FAIL TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM, REFERRAL TO A TRUANCY COURT THAT CAN IMPOSE CIVIL (NOT CRIMINAL) CONSEQUENCES IS STILL AN OPTION FOR STUDENTS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 12 AND 18, UNLESS THE FAILURE TO ATTEND SCHOOL IS THE RESULT OF PREGNANCY, BEING IN THE FOSTER CARE PROGRAM, HOMELESSNESS, OR BEING THE PRINCIPAL INCOME EARNER FOR THE STUDENT'S FAMILY

# LIMITATION PERIOD

- School districts must be mindful of the 45-day limitations period. A petition alleging truant conduct must be filed by a truant conduct prosecutor within 45 days after the tenth absence—not 45 days from the date a school district refers a child to a truancy court



# “Principle Philosophy”

- **UNDERSTAND** THAT WHEN PARENTS ARE INVOLVED, STUDENTS ACHIEVE MORE REGARDLESS OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, ETHNIC/RACIAL BACKGROUNDS, OR THE PARENT’S EDUCATION LEVEL
- **BELIEVE** THAT THE MORE EXTENSIVE THE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, THE HIGHER STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WE HAVE IN ALL AREAS , ACADEMIC. EXTRA-CURRICULAR, AND ATTITUDES.

