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Statement of.....

## Policy and Responsibility

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SUBJECT: TRUANCY

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### **Rationale:**

The Board believes that regular attendance and participation in class are essential for students to be successful and prepare themselves for the best quality of life and therefore establishes the following procedure as mandated by Utah State Board of Education rule R277-607.

### **Truancy Procedure for Elementary and Secondary Schools**

School principals and counselors will follow these guidelines to assist parents/guardians and their children in achieving regular school attendance. While this policy is generally applied on an annual basis, prior attendance patterns may be considered and reported when making a referral to the District's Attorney's Office or Third District Juvenile Court.

1. The Student Absence & Compulsory Attendance Policy will be included in the registration packet at the start of each school year.
2. Following 5 Total Unexcused Absences in a school year, student and parent/guardian shall be counseled over the phone regarding the importance of attendance and the legal implications of truancy. The intent is to work together with the parent to help their child succeed. The Compulsory Education Violation/Truancy Citation Notification Letter #1 will be sent home by mail.
3. Following 7 Total Excused Absences in a school year, Notice Requiring a Medical Doctor's Note to Excuse School Absence shall be sent home. Also, parent/guardian will provide a signed Medical Verification for Students with Excessive Absences from the student's physician stating the reasons for the student's previous absences.
4. Following 10 Total Unexcused Absences in a school year, the Compulsory Education Violation/Truancy Citation Notification Letter #2 shall be sent home. Student and parent/guardian shall attend a meeting at school to discuss the student's attendance problem. School-based interventions or adjustments to the student's schedule and/or curriculum may be made as needed.
5. Following 15 Total Unexcused Absences in a school year, Compulsory Education Violation/Truancy Pre-Court Citation Notification Letter #3 shall be sent by certified mail or through personal service from two school representatives requiring signature of

parent/guardian indicating receipt, or sending two letters home with the student – one must be signed by parent and returned). Students (5<sup>th</sup> grade and older) and parent/guardian shall be required to attend the pre-court hearing noted on the citation. Failure to attend shall result in an immediate referral to the District Attorney's Office or Third District Juvenile Court.

6. If attendance does not improve after the pre-court hearing or the student/parent fail to appear for the pre-court hearing, the referral is submitted to the District Attorney's Office. The Compulsory Education/Juvenile Court Habitual Absenteeism/Truancy Citation Notification #4 shall be sent by mail, notifying student and parent/guardian that the student is a habitual truant.

Note: If a student is unenrolled from school following 10 consecutive absences, attendance is still tracked. After five (5) additional absences, then the Third Compulsory Education Violation/Truancy Pre-Court Citation Notification Letter shall be sent by certified mail or through personal service from two school representatives requiring signature of parent/guardian indicating receipt. Student and parent/guardian shall be required to attend the pre-court hearing noted on the citation. Failure to attend shall result in an immediate referral to the District Attorney's Office or Third District Juvenile Court.

Two weeks after the pre-court truancy hearing, the student's attendance will be reviewed. If the attendance has not improved, then the following steps are taken:

For Elementary schools, the following Compulsory Education documents will be completed and forwarded electronically to the Director of Student Services and the Attendance Supervisor Coordinator:

- 1) Request for Compulsory Education Action
- 2) Compulsory Education Fact Sheet
- 3) Attendance summary
- 4) Copies of all Compulsory Education Violation Notification letters issued and evidence that the third letter was sent by certified mail or through person service accompanied by recipient's signature.

For Secondary Schools, the Third District Juvenile Court Truancy Referral documents will be completed electronically and forwarded to the Director of Student Services:

- 1) Request for Juvenile Court Action form
- 2) Social Summary form
- 3) Copies of all truancy citations notification letters issued and evidence the third letter was sent by certified mail or through personal service accompanied by recipient's signature
- 4) Third District Juvenile Court Referral form

### Secondary Truancy Citation Procedure

In accordance with Utah State Board of Education rule R277-607, a principal, assistant principal, or his/her designee shall issue truancy citations to students who are truant from classes during the school day. Truancy is defined as a student being out of class without an appropriate excuse.

Commencing each year, a first citation will carry a fine of \$5.00. Subsequent truancy citations will be increased in increments of \$5.00 to a maximum of \$25.00. For example, a first citation would cost the student \$5.00, second \$10.00, third; \$15.00, fourth; \$20.00, fifth \$25.00. All citations after the fifth will carry a fine of \$25.00 each.

Any student who receives a truancy citation and believes it is unwarranted will have the opportunity to appeal. An appeal committee will consist of a counselor, teacher, student, and administrator. If, in the opinion of the committee, the student is warranted in being out of class the fee for the citation in question and any citizenship reduction will be waived.

Any student who has at least a 3.5 cumulative GPA and is at least 16 years old is exempt from a habitual truancy citation.