



**Wright County
Attorney**

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Dear Parents:

In 2007, the Wright County Attorney's Office participated in creating the Truancy Program by collaborating with Wright County schools, Social Services, Court Services and the Courts to assist families facing truancy issues. The goal of the Truancy Program is to help families facilitate successful completion of their children's education. The program has been a success, reducing the amount of truancy cases filed with the Court in Wright County by 75%, with the exception of the last couple of years, due to challenges presented by COVID-19 and distance learning.

If your child has been identified by his or her school as a truant, you will be asked to participate in the Wright County Truancy Program. This program is designed to present information to parents and children about the effects of truancy on the child's future, what can happen if the child remains truant and services that can be offered to help ensure that your child gets the education he or she deserves.

The Wright County Truancy Program is held at the Wright County Justice Center and generally occurs at 5:00 p.m. on the last Monday of the month from September to June, excluding holidays. If your son or daughter has been identified as a truant, you will receive an invitation to meet with representatives of the County during one of these meetings.

In the State of Minnesota, all children should attend school until the age of 18 and **must** attend school until the age of 17. *Minn. Stat. §120A.22, subd. 8.* **Continuing Truant** means a child who is under 17 years old who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for three days if the child is in elementary school or for three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school, junior high or high school. *Minn. Stat. §260A.02, subd. 3.* **Habitual Truant** means a child under the age of 17 years old who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, junior high or high school, or the above or the child is 17 years old and has not lawfully withdrawn from school. *Minn. Stat. §260C.007, subd. 19.*

It is important to understand that a CHIPS (Child in Need of Protective Services) Truancy Petition may be filed after the meeting if your child continues to be absent from school without lawful excuse. If you have any questions about your child's attendance, please contact your child's school.

Let us work together to reduce the truancy rate in Wright County. We owe it to our children. I ask for your help. I ask for your support. I thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

Brian A. Lutes
Wright County Attorney