

Truancy Letter

Special Education Students

Did you receive a Truancy Letter from your school district?

A Truancy Letter is different than receiving a Petition Regarding Truancy (PTTRU). A Petition Regarding Truancy is from the Superior Court of Washington, Juvenile Court.

The Truancy Letter more than likely references Washington State Law **RCW 28A.225.010 Attendance mandatory - Age - Exceptions. (Effective until July 1, 2019.)**

Did You Know?!

The student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or 504 Plan team is required to follow important steps. These steps are rarely communicated to the parent.

Did You Know?!

If the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, please review **RCW 28A.225.020 School's duties upon child's failure to attend school.**

**Why is RCW
28A.225.020
important to review?**

Read carefully the following section:

(ii) For any child with an existing individualized education plan or 504 plan, these steps must include the convening of the child's individualized education plan or 504 plan team, including a behavior specialist or mental health specialist where appropriate, to consider the reasons for the absences. If necessary, and if consent from the parent is given, a functional behavior assessment to explore the function of the absence behavior shall be conducted and a detailed behavior plan completed. Time should be allowed for the behavior plan to be initiated and data tracked to determine progress.

Does this mean meeting with one person from the school is sufficient?

No

Does this mean the meeting must include a behavior specialist or mental health specialist?

It depends.

Does the student have a behavior or mental health concern that could be preventing them from attending school?

Then, yes.

What should happen next?

Respond, in writing, to the person who sent the Truancy Letter. The response should include the following:

I am in receipt of your Truancy Letter, dated (insert date).

Per RCW 28A.225.020 (ii), I am requesting a meeting with my students' IEP Team (504 Team) to consider the reasons for my students' absences.

Additionally, per RCW 28A.225.020 (ii), I am requesting the involvement of a behavior specialist (mental health specialist).

I would be available to meet with my students' team on (insert date and time).

It is my understanding that if necessary, I will sign consent for a functional behavior assessment in order to explore the reasons for my students' absences, resulting in a behavior plan being completed, allowing time for the behavior plan to be initiated and data tracked to determine progress.

Please provide me with a copy of the school district's policy and procedures regarding attendance and truancy.

What if the school does not follow RCW 28A.225.020?

The first step would be to send the Truancy Response Letter to the Special Education Director in the school district.

The next step would be to look at the school districts policy and procedures regarding the "appeal process".

Where can you find who the Special Education Director is in a school district and their email address?

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has a Special Education and Institutional Education Directory.

What is considered an absence from school?

Please refer to Washington Administrative Code (WAC) under WAC 392-401-020. Excused absences.

Is this information for General Education students?

The information in this document is specific to a student who qualifies for Special Education Services and Related Services and for Section 504 in the State of Washington.

Where can you find more information?

From the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) under:

- Attendance, Chronic Absenteeism, and Truancy
- District Truancy Liaison