



Court Action

In cases where student attendance does not improve through participation in the Truancy Project or in the case of severe truancy, the school district will petition the court for an intervention order. At the hearing, the court will hear evidence from the school district, the parents and the student to determine if the allegation of truancy is true. If the court determines the student is truant, the court will enter the intervention order to compel compliance with the truancy law. The court may also order a substance abuse evaluation and can issue an order against the parent fining him/her \$25 for each day the child is truant.

If students successfully obey the court order and goes to school without any further unexcused absences, they most likely will not be called back to court for any additional hearings. However, students and parents who willfully violate the court order and continue to have unexcused absences will be referred a truancy officer.

Depending on the student's attendance after the contempt hearing, future "review hearings" may be necessary to monitor the student's progress towards his/her attendance goals. The goal of the court and school districts is to keep kids in school.

Questions

- If you have questions, or want more information:
1. Call your school building administrator
 2. Call the school district attendance office at 360.313.1330

Parent Resources

COUNSELING/MENTAL HEALTH

- Children's Center699.2244
- Clark County Crisis Line696.9560
or1.800.626.8137
- Columbia River Mental Health.....993.3000
- Stepping Stones Grief Counseling Services 695.5100

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

- Children Protective Services.....1.800.562.5624
- Family Reconciliation Services.....993.7903
- Free Clinic of Southwest Washington313.1390

ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES

- Community Services Northwest.....397.8484
- Lifeline Connections397.8246

EDUCATION

- GED Clark College.....992.2588
- Open Doors ESD 112 (GED)750.7500
- Personalized Learning Center.....313.4990
- Job Corps906.1613
- Vancouver Public Schools.....313.1000
- Youth Employment at WorkSource735.5000

- Homeless Outreach Promoting Education
(H.O.P.E.)313.1483

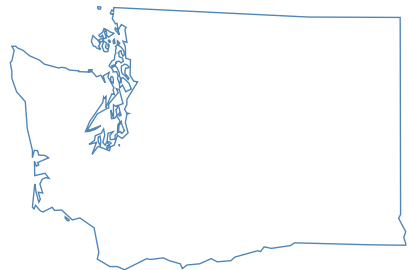
A Parent and Student Guide to the Becca Bill



Help keep our kids

in school and open

the door to their future.



In the State of Washington, it is the law that school attendance is required for all children ages 8 to 17 if enrolled in public school. The law can also apply to children ages 6 and 7 if the parent enrolls a child in public school. Everyone should see to it that no child falls through the cracks.

As parents, you have the very difficult job of trying to manage the lives of your children. There exists no greater challenge than addressing the many difficulties that will confront your children as they grow. However, one issue has the potential to affect them for the rest of their lives ... their education.

Let's work together to keep them in school.



The Becca Bill

(RCW 28A.225 — Washington State Compulsory School Attendance and Admission Law)

Washington's truancy law, often termed "The Becca Bill," is intended to stop truancy before it becomes a problem. The law requires only one thing of the student: attend school. If a student does not attend school, the law **REQUIRES** the school district to take action.

One (1) or Two (2) Unexcused Absences

After a single unexcused absence, the school must contact the parents. This is generally done by phone, letter, or postcard. After a second unexcused absence, the school is required to schedule a conference to discuss solutions to the truancy problem. This can be with the student and parent or just the student if parent is not available.

Five (5) Unexcused Absences

If a student has five (5) full days unexcused absences, the school shall enter into a written attendance agreement with the student and parent/legal guardian to improve attendance.

Seven (7) and Ten (10) Unexcused Absences

When a student has seven (7) full days unexcused absences in a month or ten (10) full days unexcused absences in a year, the law **REQUIRES** the school district to file a petition in Superior Court. This petition can be filed against the student, the parent, or both. After a petition is filed, you will receive a notice and summons with a date and time to appear in Superior Court Juvenile Division. Usually both parent/guardian and student will be required to appear.

Truancy Project

The truancy project is a partnership with school districts in Clark County, ESD 112 and the Clark County Juvenile Court. Participation in the Truancy Project gives the student and his/her family an opportunity to change direction and avoid further court action. Once a petition has been filed with the Clark County Juvenile Court by the School District, the Truancy Project helps staff and conducts a weekly Truancy Attendance Workshop held at the Juvenile Court. The workshop provides the student and parent's information about the Becca Law and the consequences of not attending school. The student and/or parents may sign a Stay of Proceedings which puts the petition on hold for 12 months. If school attendance does not improve following the workshop, the School District staff sends a referral to Truancy Project staff.

All workshops are held at the Clark County Juvenile Center weekly each Monday beginning at 3:00. Students and parents are notified of workshop attendance via a written mailed notice from the school district.

