

HISTORY & PURPOSE

Maryland law requires that any child between the ages of five and sixteen attend school on a regular basis.

During the 2004 Legislative Session, Maryland State House of Delegates passed legislation granting permission to the First Judicial Circuit to establish a regional truancy reduction program.

In January 2006 the program began in Dorchester County. Truant students and their families participate in a program whose purpose is to improve attendance in children, ages five to sixteen. This project is a collaborative effort involving the Circuit Court for Dorchester County, the Dorchester County Board of Education, For All Seasons, Inc., Sailwinds Family Center, LLC, local legislative representatives and other service providers.

OBJECTIVES

The Truancy Reduction Pilot Program:

- ❖ Focuses on identifying the underlying causes of chronic truancy.
- ❖ Partners with community agencies to improve student attendance and school success rates, through referrals for appropriate services and support.



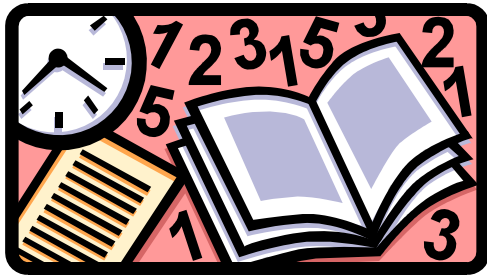
THE PROCESS

- ❖ When a student is determined truant, the Board of Education files a petition with the court.
- ❖ The truant student and their parent or guardian is summonsed to appear before the Court.
- ❖ The court reviews records and obtains information from the Board of Education, the student, and parent(s) or guardian.
- ❖ The student is ordered to attend school and the family is referred for services, as needed.
- ❖ Hearings are held as deemed appropriate by the court, based on student progress.
- ❖ Improved attendance and other positive achievements are recognized and reinforced.

OUTCOMES

Those completing the Truancy Reduction Pilot Program Will:

- ❖ Demonstrate a consistent, long-term improvement in school attendance.
- ❖ Recognize the importance of regular school attendance and the consequences of truancy.
- ❖ Participate in programs and services that improve individual and family lives.



Contact Information

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Truancy Reduction Pilot Program

First Judicial Circuit of Maryland

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