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## Cass County Public Schools Truancy Protocol

The law requires that children from the ages of 6-18 are to be enrolled in a structured educational program.

In the absence of attendance standards, acceptable and unacceptable absenteeism is a matter left to local school boards.

Regular attendance is necessary for academic progress, and poor attendance interferes with academic learning and continued student achievement.

Therefore, the following protocols will be used in addressing truancy matters among the public schools of Cass County:

Up to 6 unexcused absences: To be handled by local school personnel through telephone calls, letters, meetings with student and/or parent(s). Parent(s) given notice of intent to refer to County Truancy Officer.

6-9 unexcused absences: School contacts County Truancy Officer and provides documentation of prior efforts, including date, time, and outcome of meeting with parent(s).

Upon review, the County Truancy Officer may refer the matter to Family Court for further review by the Court and/or petition the matter for Court jurisdiction. If a petition is filed, a copy must be sent to Lewis Cass ISD. The school district, however, may refer the matter earlier than nine unexcused absences if, in the opinion of the Truancy Officer, prevention services are needed based upon prior records and patterns of behavior. Each School District maintains autonomy and full authority to establish criteria for excused and unexcused absences, and prior absences in other years may dictate that a matter be referred before nine unexcused absences.

Local school districts also have ability to make accommodations for extenuating circumstances.

Students moving from one Cass County School to another shall take their documented attendance with them to maintain continuity in addressing truancy issues within the County.

In the event that a truancy matter is petitioned into court, a representative from the local school district shall attend the proceedings.