

This Notice of Truancy was co-written by Todd Rogers and the team at Harvard's [Student Social Support R&D Lab](#) and by Hedy Chang and the team at [Attendance Works](#).<sup>1</sup>

This Notice of Truancy leverages the following behavioral science insights:

- **Simplification:** This Notice of Truancy is written in relatively easy language to understand, and in as few words as possible.
- **Self-Efficacy:** This Notice of Truancy emphasizes that guardians have agency to influence student absenteeism.
- **Accumulation:** This Notice of Truancy emphasizes that a couple of absences per month add up over the course of a school year, which is easy for guardians to lose track of.
- **Partnership:** This Notice of Truancy underscores that the school district and the guardian are partners who share the same interest in the student's success. This is in contrast to the common adversarial, legalistic tone.

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<sup>1</sup> To learn more about similar easy-to-implement and rigorously proven absence-reduction interventions see [https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/todd Rogers/files/sdp\\_revision.10.30.2017\\_final.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/todd Rogers/files/sdp_revision.10.30.2017_final.pdf), or contact [todd@inclasstoday.com](mailto:todd@inclasstoday.com) ([www.inclasstoday.com](http://www.inclasstoday.com)). To learn more about a range of strategies for reducing absenteeism visit [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org), or contact [info@attendanceworks.org](mailto:info@attendanceworks.org).

## **ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL: YOUR HELP NEEDED**

We need your help. [STUDENT NAME]’s absences from school are concerning, and your partnership is critical. Students who miss just one or two days of school each month can fall seriously behind.

[STUDENT NAME] is now “truant” because [SHE/HE] missed school (or was more than 30 minutes late) without a valid excuse on:

*Thursday, September 12, 2015*  
*Thursday, September 19, 2015*  
*Thursday, September 27, 2015*

Being absent can lead to doing poorly in school. Students who miss many days of school are more likely to:

- Fail their classes
- Drop out from high school
- Have poor relationships with parents and teachers

We are required by California law to send you this letter and to warn you of the consequences of additional unexcused absences (see sidebar).

Please remember that every absence matters and just a couple days each month adds up. **You are key** to improving [STUDENT NAME]’s attendance.

Sincerely,  
Principal X

**Truancy- California Education Code** School administrators determine what types of absences are excused or unexcused based on state law and on the facts of the pupil’s circumstances. When a child is absent from school and/or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on three (3) occasions in one school year without a valid excuse, the law considers that child to be truant.

Education Code Section 48260.5 requires us to inform you of the following:

- *That the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the pupil at school.*
- *That parents or guardians who fail to meet these obligation may be guilty of an infraction and subject to prosecution pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 48290) of Chapter 2 or Part 27.*
- *That alternative education programs are available in the district.*
- *That the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the pupil’s truancy.*
- *That the pupil may be subject to prosecution under Education Code Section 48264.*
- *That the pupil may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the pupil’s driving privilege pursuant to Section 13202.7 of the Vehicle Code.*
- *That it is recommended that the parent or guardian accompany the pupil to school and attend classes with the pupil for one day.*

If you have concerns about your child’s attendance or if you believe our records are inaccurate contact the school at «SCHOOL\_PHONE\_NUMBER».