



County of San Bernardino
Office of the District Attorney
MICHAEL A. RAMOS, District Attorney

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to the new school year! In order to raise awareness between school attendance and academic achievement, educators have designated September as Attendance Awareness month. For those parents who have been doing a great job getting their children to school, thank you! Please keep up the great job you are doing! As you know, providing your child(ren) with the opportunity to receive the best education possible is one of the greatest gifts a parent can give. A strong educational foundation enables a child to grow into a happy, healthy, and productive adult, and in San Bernardino County, we are fortunate to have outstanding public schools already working alongside parents and guardians to ensure that your child(ren) will be successful.

As a father, a former member of the Redlands School Board and your District Attorney, I know that children who do not attend school run the very real risk of either committing crimes or becoming victims of crime. Research has shown that students who do not graduate high school will face more challenges finding meaningful work and succeeding in life.

In addition, the law in California requires all children between the ages of 6 and 18 to attend a full-time education program. (Education Code section 48200.) The law also provides that students who fail to attend school, are considered truant and may be detained or arrested during school hours. Education Code section 48260(a), defines a "truant" as a student who, three times during the school year, either misses more than 30 minutes of instruction or is absent from school for three full days, without a valid excuse. (Education Code section 48205 defines when a student may be validly excused from school.) Finally, in an effort to control truancy, the law provides that parents of school age students are responsible for ensuring school attendance and can be held accountable with legal sanctions amounting to an infraction and/or a misdemeanor when the case is aggravated.

The school district and the Lets End Truancy unit of the District Attorney's Office are aware that truancy can result from many causes. We can refer you to various government and community-based organizations for assistance. With your support and encouragement, your child(ren) will reap the rewards of a solid education by developing successful organizational skills, becoming self-confident and appreciating the value of academics and hard work. Your School District and I are committed to supporting the children of San Bernardino County by ensuring that they remain in school and receive an education which will prepare them for a bright future. But we cannot do this without your partnership! I wish you and your child(ren) a safe and productive school year!

Sincerely,

MICHAEL A. RAMOS
District Attorney

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