

# Truancy Letter

## Special Education Students

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A Truancy Letter from a school district is **different** than receiving a Petition Regarding Truancy (PTTRU). A Petition Regarding Truancy is from the Superior Court of Washington, Juvenile Court.

The Truancy Letter from a school district more than likely references Revised Code of Washington RCW 28A.225.010 **Attendance mandatory - Age - Exceptions**

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### Did You Know?!

If the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, it is important to review the following:

Revised Code of Washington RCW 28A.225.020 **School's duties upon child's failure to attend school**

Washington Administrative Code WAC 392-401-020 **Excused absences**

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**Why is RCW 28A.225.020 important to review?**

Read carefully the following section:

(ii) For any child with an existing individualized education plan or 504 plan, **these steps must include** the convening of the child's individualized education plan or 504 plan team, including a behavior specialist or mental health specialist where appropriate, to consider the reasons for the absences.

If necessary, and if consent from the parent is given, a functional behavior assessment to explore the function of the absence behavior shall be conducted and a detailed behavior plan completed.

Time should be allowed for the behavior plan to be initiated and data tracked to determine progress.

**Does this mean meeting with one person from the school is sufficient?**

No

**Does this mean the meeting must include a behavior specialist or mental health specialist?**

It depends.

Does your student have a behavior or mental health concern that could be preventing them from attending school?

Then, yes.

**What should the parent or guardian do?**

Respond, in writing, to the person who sent the Truancy Letter. The response should include the following:

- I am in receipt of your Truancy Letter, dated (insert date).
- Per RCW 28A.225.020 (ii), I am requesting a meeting with my students' IEP Team (504 Team) to consider the reasons for my students' absences.
- Additionally, per RCW 28A.225.020 (ii), I am requesting the involvement of a behavior specialist (mental health specialist).
- I would be available to meet with my students' team on (insert date and time).
- It is my understanding that if necessary, I will sign consent for a functional behavior assessment in order to explore the reasons for my students' absences, resulting in a behavior plan being completed, allowing time for the behavior plan to be initiated and data tracked to determine progress.
- Please provide me with a copy of the school district's policy and procedures regarding attendance and truancy.

**What if the school does not follow RCW 28A.225.020?**

The first step would be to send the Truancy Response Letter to the Special Education Director in your school district.

The next step would be to look at your school districts policy and procedures regarding the "appeal process".

**How do I know what is considered an absence from school?**

Please see Washington Administrative Code WAC 392-401-020. Excused absences.

**What else do I need to know?**

The information in this document is specific to a student who qualifies for Special Education Services and Related Services and for Section 504 in the State of Washington.

**Where can I get more information?**

See below.

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Statewide Definition of Absence, Excused and Unexcused  
Washington Administrative Code WAC 392-401

Student absences - General requirements  
Washington Administrative Code WAC 392-401-040

Multitiered system of support for attendance  
Washington Administrative Code WAC 392-401-045

Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

- Attendance, Chronic Absenteeism, and Truancy
- District Truancy Liaison