A New Approach to Targeting Truancy

On Sept. 1, 2015, new rules addressing truancy take effect. Use this flowchart to see the new process that will send a truant student to court.

If a student has three unexcused absences in a four-week period...

The school must inform parents of the child's absences, warn them of potential truancy measures and request a face-to-face meeting.

The school must implement truancy prevention measures.

If a student has 10 unexcused absences in a six-month period...

The school must evaluate whether the student's absences are the result of a pregnancy, homelessness, foster care or because he or she is the primary earner for the family.

If they are, the school may not refer the student to truancy court. Instead, the school will offer additional counseling and support.

Source: Texas Municipal Courts Education Center,

Texas Office of Court Administration

Credit: Mallory Busch, mbusch@texastribune.org

🔼 THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

The Texas Tribune is a nonpartisan, nonprofit media organization that informs Texans — and engages with them — about public policy, politics, government and statewide issues.

823 Congress Ave, Ste 1400 Austin, TX 78701 P (512) 716-8600 F (512) 716-8601 www.texastribune.org

To see this flowchart and accompanying story online, use this link: trib.it/truancy-tx

If they are not, the school may file a criminal complaint against the parents in court. Schools must prove the absences were unexcused and a result of the parents' negligence.

If the school finds its truancy plan is not working, the student can be referred to a truancy court. If the school determines its truancy prevention plan is working, then a referral to court will not be made.

The student can be fined \$100, have his or her driving privileges revoked, or be referred to the juvenile court system.