

be@school

The be@school mission is to increase school attendance and improve community connections across Hennepin County through a collaborative early intervention providing education and support services to school-age youth and their families.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

School Interventions

Schools will contact parents of students who have unexcused absences. These efforts may include telephone calls to parents, a letter from the principal after 3 unexcused absences and other attempts to engage the family or offer available services.

Parent Group Meeting (PGM)

When the student has 6 unexcused absences, the school will make a referral to the Hennepin County Attorney's Office (HCAO). HCAO will send a letter to the parents directing them to attend a Parent Group Meeting (PGM). Students in Grades k- 2 will be assigned a contracted community agency (CCA). At the PGM, a HCAO representative will explain compulsory school attendance laws, consequences for continued unexcused absences, the benefits of education, and the services available to assist families. Families may request assistance from CCAs at the meeting. These agencies provide direct services to assist the family in getting the child to school and to refer the family to other services that may be needed to remove attendance barriers.

Educational Neglect and Truancy Report: The STAR Meeting

If the child has 3 additional unexcused absences after the PGM date (total of 9 unexcused absences), the school will make an educational neglect report for children under 12. The HCAO will review the report and refer each family to a contracted community agency, if an agency is not already working with the family. All families will be directed by mail to attend a School Team Attendance Review (STAR) meeting. All educational neglect reports are sent to Child Protection in the Human Services and Public Health Department. For children 12 and over, the school will send a truancy report to the HCAO. The STAR meeting will be attended by the parent, the student (if over 12 years), an HCAO representative, the contracted community agency and a school representative, if available. The goal of the STAR meeting is a specific plan to resolve barriers which are negatively impacting the student's attendance. Post-STAR, the contracted community agency will monitor the child's attendance weekly and continue to provide assistance.

Court Intervention

Children under 12: If the child accrues 8 additional unexcused absences following the STAR report (total of 17 unexcused absences), the school will submit a second education neglect report to the HCAO. The HCAO will review the report and send it to Child Protection. A decision will be made whether to attempt additional preventive services or file a CHIPS petition. If a CHIPS petition is not filed, and the child subsequently accrues an additional 3 unexcused absences, and additional voluntary services are deemed unlikely to be effective, a CHIPS petition will then be filed in Juvenile Court. In court, the focus will be on assisting the family in resolving the barriers to school attendance.

Children 12 and over: If the child accrues 8 additional unexcused absences (total of 17 unexcused absences) following the STAR report, the school will submit a truancy report to the HCAO. The HCAO will decide whether to attempt additional preventive services or file a truancy petition in Juvenile Court. If a truancy petition is not filed and the child accrues an additional 3 unexcused absences, and additional voluntary services are deemed unlikely to be effective, a truancy petition will be filed in Juvenile Court. In court, the focus will be upon services and sanctions that promote attendance and educational success for the student (e.g., tutoring, credit recovery, mentoring, be@school@your library, etc.). Parent involvement will be actively pursued. If multiple interventions have been attempted and the child becomes an older truant, services may no longer be offered.

Children Referred to be@school the Previous School Year

When a student has 6 unexcused absences, the school will submit a PGM referral to HCAO. If the student finished the previous school year at a PGM intervention level, a PGM will be scheduled and the HCAO will mail a letter directing the family to attend the meeting. If a student finished the previous school year at a STAR level, HCAO will record the previous year's PGM date and the student will be invited to a PGM. If the student reaches 9 or more unexcused absences during the current school year, the school shall submit a STAR report and a STAR meeting will be scheduled. If the child is under 12 years, the report will be sent to Child Protection.

Every day. On time. be@school

www.be-at-school.org