



August 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

To encourage and improve school attendance, Dysart Unified School District will continue to implement a truancy program in partnership with Maricopa County Juvenile Court. This truancy program is called C.U.T.S. (Court Unified Truancy Suppression). As you know, it is critical that your child be at school every day, unless there is an excused reason not to be.

School attendance is not only a good habit, but state law requires it. Arizona State Law (A.R.S. 15-802 and 15-803) states that every person who has custody of a child between the ages of six and sixteen years shall make sure the child attends school for the full time school is in session. In addition, an absence is defined as follows:

- A minimum of one missed class period per day.
- Any unexcused absence will count as a truant day.
- A student is "habitually truant" if he/she has five or more unexcused absences from school.
- A student that is absent more than ten percent (18 days) of the required number of school days per year is considered to have "excessive absences" whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

Pursuant to A.R.S. §15-901(A)(1), "...excused absences shall be identified by the Department of Education...". The Department of Education defines an excused absence as being an absence due to illness, doctor appointment, bereavement, family emergencies and out-of-school suspensions. All absences in excess of a cumulative 10% of the instructional days for the school year shall be reported as unexcused. Statute does not prohibit the reenrollment of a student withdrawn after 10 consecutive unexcused absences. However once a student crosses the 10% threshold, all absences shall be reported as unexcused regardless of multiple enrollments within the same district.

When a student has five or more unexcused absences or over 18 excessive absences (excused OR unexcused), the student can be cited to the CUTS Program through the Juvenile Court. If the student is cited, an attendance hearing will be held with representatives from Dysart Unified School District and the Juvenile Court. If your child's absences result in a hearing, the consequences may include the following: required attendance of the parent and the child at an education class (to be held on Saturdays), work hours assigned to the child, counseling, etc. The parent will also be assessed a \$50 Diversion Fee. So that you are informed, you should know that failure to complete these consequences – especially for high school students - may result in suspension of your child's driver's license, or inability to get a driver's license until their 18th birthday and/or formal court proceedings. If convicted in a formal court proceeding, it is a Class 3 misdemeanor punishable by jail time and/or fine.

It is certainly our goal to work with you to avoid any consequences. The real goal is to have your child in school. The education of your child is extremely important to us. The CUTS program is another way that Dysart Unified School District is working with our students and parents to ensure academic success. Feel free to call the school, if you have any questions.

Thank you for your support regarding this program.

Power in the preparation...Excellence in the journey...Success for a lifetime

Governing Board: Spencer Bailey, Jay Leonard, Christine A.K. Pritchard, Traci Sawyer-Sinkbeil, Jennifer Tanner