FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

TRUANCY IN BERRIEN COUNTY

For the purpose of these guidelines, school truancy in Berrien County is defined as follows:

*Any unexcused absence, pattern of unexcused absences that are established by a student during the school year, or a continuation of an attendance problem from past years.*

MICHIGAN COMPULSORY EDUCATION LAW

Referral Criteria

The Truancy Office at Berrien RESA will accept a referral from a local district that has met the following criteria:

- School has written communication to the parent/guardian regarding the student’s excessive, unexcused absences.
- Student has 10 or more unexcused absences.
- School/parent meeting has been held or attempted.
- Student is between the ages of 6-17.

HAS COVID-19 CHANGE THE TRUANCY PROCESS?

Our process at Berrien RESA will remain the same during the 2021-2022 school year. The only difference will be cases where the student attends classes virtually. Unexcused absences from a virtual program will not count towards truancy. Per the guidance from the Berrien County Prosecutor’s office only unexcused absences for in-person learning will count towards truancy.

How To Make A Referral

Referral forms are available on our website. Go to www.berrienresa.org, and click on Services for Educators—Education Support Services click “Truancy Support”. Include a copy of the students most recent attendance report and any medical documentation to excuse absences (if applicable). Forms can be returned via email or faxed to:

Berrien RESA
Attn: Michelle Anderson
Fax: (269) 471-2941
Email: michelle.anderson@berrienresa.org
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

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Truancy Referrals: What happens next?

1. Referral to Berrien RESA:
   (10 or more unexcused absences)

2. Berrien RESA serves legal notice

3. Redemption Period:
   School continues to monitor student attendance for improvement.

4. Verbal Notification:
   School informs truancy officer of non-compliance with specific dates missed.
   Truancy officer phones parent/guardian.

5. Mandatory Truancy Meeting:
   If attendance continues to decline, parent/guardian is summoned for a mandatory truancy meeting at school.

6. Advise Legal Action:
   If all efforts fail, then legal action is explored by Berrien RESA.

Need more help? Contact us.

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