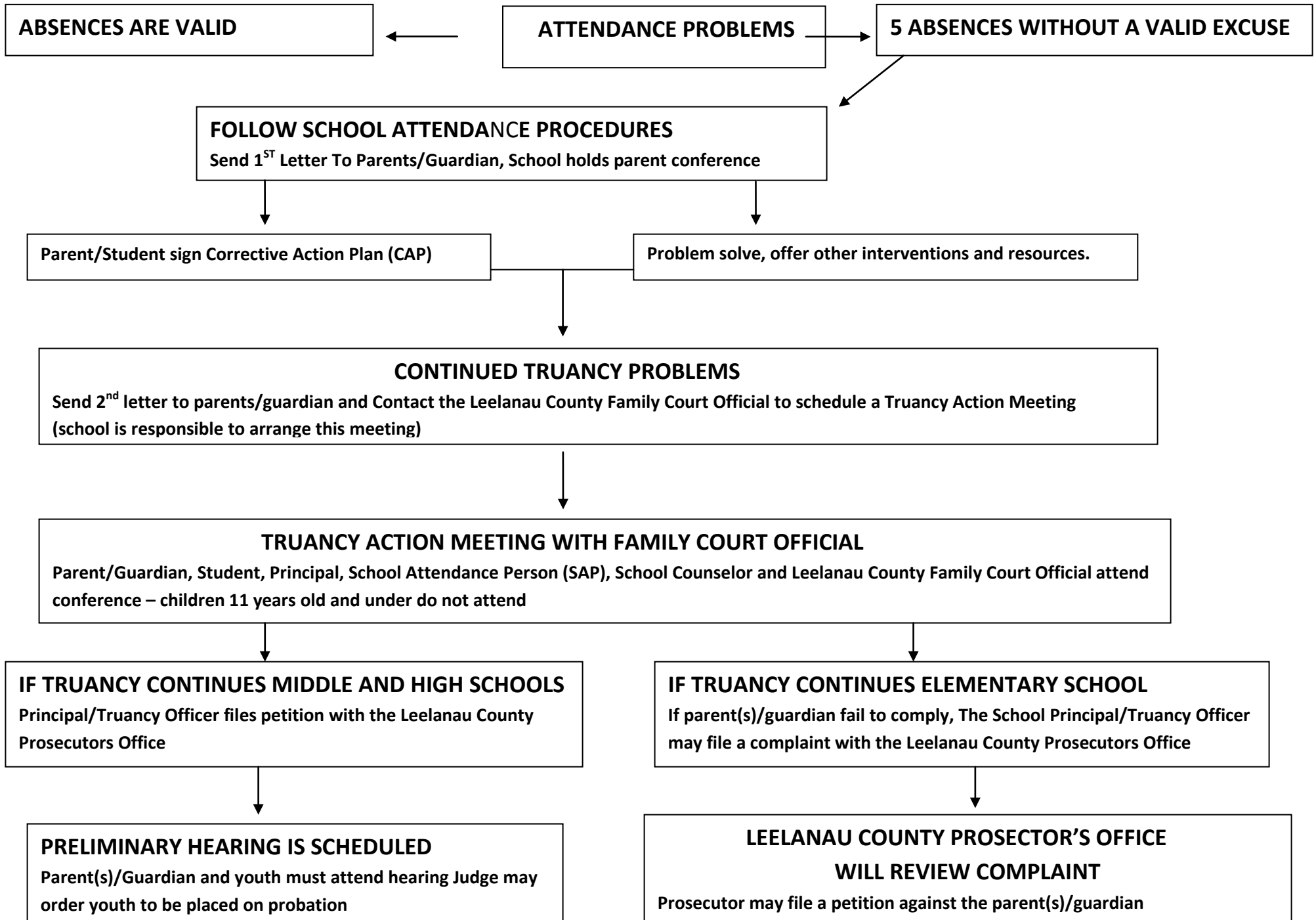


LEELANAU COUNTY TRUANCY PROTOCOL FLOW CHART



LEELANAU COUNTY SCHOOL AND COURT TRUANCY PROGRAM

The Michigan Compulsory Attendance Law (MCL 380.1147, 380.1278a, 380,1278b, 380, 1284, 3801284b, 380.1561, 380.1599. MCL 388.1701) (2010) now states that students must attend school from ages 6 to 18 years, with few exceptions. The law mandates a student who turned age eleven on or after December 1, 2009, or who was age eleven before that date and entered grade 6 in 2009 or later, must attend school until they are to eighteen years of age. The following chart may be used as a guideline for determining which class will have to attend until the age of 18 years of age.

The change applies to a child who:

- Turns age 11 on or after December 1, 2009. (child's DOB is 12/01/98) or after)
- Was age 11 before December 1, 2009, and entered grade 6 in 2009 or later.

This change does not apply to a child who:

- Turned age 11 before December 1, 2009, (child's DOB prior to 12/01/98)
- Entered grade 6 before 2009
- Is at least age 16 and whose Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have provided the District with written notice that the child has permission to stop attending school (Opt-out provision).

Age 11, December 2009	OR	6 th Grade 2009-2010 School Year
Age 12, December 2010		7 th Grade 2010-2011 School Year
Age 13, December 2011		8 th Grade 2011-2012 School Year
Age 14, December 2012		9 th Grade 2012-2013 School Year
Age 15, December 2013		10 th Grade 2013-2014 School Year
Age 16, December 2014		11 th Grade 2014-2015 School Year
Age 17, December 2015		12 th Grade 2015-2016 School Year

School truancy is a serious concern for our youth in Leelanau County. Truancy is not only detrimental to success in education, but is a stepping-stone to delinquent and criminal activity. Reports have concluded that chronic absenteeism is the most powerful predictor of delinquent behavior. Absences in excess of 5 days/semester and 10 tardies without a valid excuse (proper documentation is needed) are considered excessive.

**Federal Policy is directing the Department of Human Resources to require school attendance as a condition of temporary cash assistance eligibility for all children ages 6-18 effective October 1, 2012.

- Age 6-15 – A dependent child age 6 through 15 must attend school full-time. If a dependent child age 6-15 is not attending school full-time, the entire FIP group is not eligible to receive FIP.
- Age 16 or 17 – A dependent child age 16 or 17 who is not attending high full-time is disqualified from the FIP group in Bridges
- Minor Parents – A minor parent must attend school full-time. If a minor parent fails to comply with this requirement, the minor parent and the minor parent's child(ren) are not eligible for FIP.

The Truancy Program is a collaborative effort between the Glen Lake Public Schools, Lake Leelanau St. Mary's Catholic Schools, Leland Public Schools, Northport Public Schools, Suttons Bay Public Schools, Traverse City Area Public Schools, Traverse Bay Area ISD, Leelanau Montessori, Leelanau County Family Court/13th Circuit Court, Leelanau County Prosecuting Attorney, 86th District Court, Grand Traverse Band Tribal Court, Grand Traverse Band Education Department, Leelanau County Sheriffs' Office, Grand Traverse Band Tribal Police, Michigan State Police and the Department of Human Services.

Parent Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to see that their child attends school regularly and on time. By law, “every parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of a child from age six to the child’s eighteenth birthday, shall send that child to the public schools during the entire school year.” Violation of this law is a misdemeanor punishable by up to 90 days in jail and/or a fine. Exceptions to this law exist, including attendance at approved non-public schools and home schooling. MCL 380.1599

School Responsibility:

Schools must inform parent(s)/guardian(s) when their child is not in school. Comprehensive attendance procedures should be adopted by public schools that are understandable and reasonable. The law requires that the school meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s), with the child to address educational problems including truancy. It is important that the school address the issue of truancy as quickly as possible. Schools must accurately document every absence and respond appropriately and immediately in offering support to students. An effort should be made to resolve issues contributing to the student’s attendance problems.

Court Responsibility:

The Leelanau County Family Court/13th Circuit Court has jurisdiction over youth under age 17 who “willfully and repeatedly absents himself or herself from school or other learning program intended to meet the child’s educational needs...” MCL 712A.2(a)(4)

The Principal/ School Attendance Personnel, as well as a Leelanau County Family Court Official, School counselor/Youth Intervention Specialist will hold a Truancy Action Meeting with the parent(s) and child (the child attends the meeting only in middle and high school truancy cases) to resolve truancy issues. If after the meeting, the child’s absences continue, the Principal/SAP may file a Truancy petition (in middle school and high school cases) with the Leelanau County Truancy Coordinator/Prosecutor’s office. In the case of elementary truancy the parent(s) are responsible for attending the Truancy Action Meeting (the child does not attend). If the absences continue following the meeting (in elementary school cases), the Principal/SAP may bring it to the attention of the Leelanau County Truancy Coordinator/Prosecutor’s Office for further review.

School Protocol

The Principal of each school will be the “Truancy Officer” for their school. They will appoint a person (usually support staff) to monitor attendance for absences and excessive tardiness. They will be called the School Attendance Personnel (SAP). They identify impending truancy issues and would alert the Principal of truancy concerns, who would direct the SAP to send #1 letter to parent(s)/guardian.

Absences in excess of 5 days/semester and 10 tardies without a valid excuse is an alert to examine the youth’s attendance for possible truancy issues, especially if other warning signs exist: repeated patterns of truancy in the previous semester or past school year, suspensions for criminal behavior, failing grades, or drug or alcohol use.

Protocol for Elementary Schools:

The Leelanau County Probate Court/13th Circuit Court – Family Division believes that situations involving younger children (ages 6 to 11) should be handled with a complaint to the Prosecutor’s Office against the parent. The following procedures are suggested for Elementary Schools:

1. If a problem exists, the Principal/SAP shall send letter #1 (see sample) to the parent or guardian of the child, indicating there is an attendance problem and a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the absences.
It must be sent via certified, return receipt requested, deliver to addressee only, as well as by regular mail. It may also be personally served on the parent or guardian. Each parent or guardian must receive their own copy of the letter.
2. The meeting must be held with the child’s parent or guardian. Principal/SAP and other appropriate school officials. A Corrective Action Plan (CAP) regarding attendance should be reached and signed. Consequences should be discussed in the event truancy remains a problem. The CAP must include the requirement that the youth will resume regular and consecutive school attendance. The CAP must be signed. Educational and referral services will be offered as well as services provided through the School Counselor/Youth Intervention Specialist.
3. The Principal/SAP will give the child’s teacher a copy of the letter sent to the parents and the CAP so attendance can be monitored and reported to the Principal/SAP.
4. If the child misses two times in the next 30 days or 3 more in the next three months, the Principal/SAP can request a Truancy Action Meeting with the Leelanau County Family Court Official. SAP should contact the Leelanau County Family Court Official to set up a date and time to meet. The Principal/SAP should send letter #2 (see sample) to the parent(s)/guardian. This letter should indicate the date, time and location of the Truancy Action Meeting. The Leelanau County Family Court Official, School Counselor/Youth Intervention Specialist and the Principal/SAP will meet with the parent(s) or guardian.
5. If the parent fails to comply after the Truancy Action Meeting, the Principal/SAP may file a complaint with the Leelanau County Truancy Coordinator /Prosecutor’s Office. The Prosecutor will review the complaint. The Prosecutor could file misdemeanor truancy charges against the parent or guardian, and if found guilty, the Court may recommend for the

parent(s) or guardian(s) participate in parenting class and/or other recommended services or impose a jail sentence or fine.

Protocol for Middle School and High Schools:

1. If a problem exists, the Principal/SAP shall send letter #1 (see sample) to the parent(s) or guardian of the child indicating there is an attendance problem and a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the absences.
It must be sent via certified, return receipt requested, deliver to addressee only, as well as by regular mail. It may also be personally served on the parent or guardian. Each parent or guardian must receive their own copy of the letter.
2. The school meeting must include the child, the child's parent or guardian. Principal/SAP and other appropriate school officials. A CAP should be reached regarding attendance and must include the requirement that the youth will resume regular and consecutive school attendance. The CAP must be signed. Consequences should be discussed in the event truancy remains a problem. Educational and referral services will be offered as well as services provided through the School Counselor/Youth Intervention Specialist.
3. The Principal/SAP will give all the child's teachers a copy of the letter sent to parent(s)/guardian and the CAP so attendance can be monitored and reported to the Principal/SAP.
4. If the child misses school two times in the next 30 days or 3 more times in the next three months, the Principal/SAP may request a Truancy Action Meeting with the Leelanau County Family Court Official. SAP should contact the Leelanau County Family Court Official to set up a date and time to meet. The Principal/SAP should send letter #2 (see sample) to the parent(s)/guardian. This letter should indicate the date, time and location of the Truancy Action Meeting. The Leelanau County Family Court Official, School Counselor/Youth Intervention Specialist and the Principal/SAP will meet with the parent(s) or guardian.

Scheduling a Truancy Action Meeting

When requesting a Truancy Action Meeting please contact the Leelanau County Family Court Official (John Boonstra or Joe Povolo) 231-256-9803 and fax 231-256-9845 or email (JBoonstra@co.leelanau.mi.us or JPovolo@co.leelanau.mi.us) the following information to the Leelanau County Family Court Official:

- 1.) Student Information Summary (contact information for both parents or guardian)
- 2.) Student Attendance Report
- 3.) Copy of letter sent to the parent and
- 4.) Copy of signed Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

The Principal/SAP will contact the Leelanau County Family Court Official, School Counselor/Youth Intervention Specialist to set up a meeting date and time. Principal/SAP will send formal letter #2 notifying the parent(s), guardian of conference date and time.

Filing a Truancy Petition:

- a. To successfully prove a case in Court, the Principal/SAP must document every action taken in potential truancy cases. Therefore, each Principal/SAP must keep record of all contacts with the parent(s)/guardian and/or child including who was involved in the contact; the date, time and location of the contact, and a summary of what was said or done. The school district shall exhaust all efforts to help the student before considering filing a truancy petition, including utilizing available school resources and community resources (Child and Family Services, Third Level, Pine Rest) If the Principal is satisfied that he/she has exhausted all efforts, a truancy petition may be filed. In Middle and High School cases, contact the Leelanau County Truancy Coordinator and fax or email the truancy petition and the student's updated attendance report, as well as copies of letters sent, copy of the signed Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and student information summary to the Leelanau County Truancy Coordinator at 231-256-0133 or email llacross@co.leelanau.mi.us.
- b. In some truancy cases, the Leelanau County Truancy Coordinator may request the contact record from the Principal/SAP to establish the parent's lack of cooperation and failure to comply with sending their child to school.
- c. Please see attached sample petition. Which is filed in the Leelanau County Family Court – 13th Circuit Court. A copy of this petition in Word Format is available. When completing the petition, please check "Box 3" if you know of any cases involving the family. If you do not know, just state "unknown." Please make sure to include the contact information for both parents.
- d. At "line 5" please also include the child's county of residence and who the child lives with.
- e. The Leelanau County Truancy Coordinator can assist in filing the truancy petition.

If you have questions regarding scheduling a Truancy Action Meeting or filing a Truancy petition, please contact the Leelanau County Truancy Coordinator at 231-256-9872 or llacross@co.leelanau.mi.us .