

# ALE Webinar: Truancy

11/21/13

# OSPI Contacts

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# About the webinar

- Continuing our ALE webinar series
  - Recordings available:  
[digitallearning.k12.wa.us/ale/webinars/](https://digitallearning.k12.wa.us/ale/webinars/)
  - Next: January date/time (TBD) – Substantially Similar
- To ask a question, type it into the question window at any time
- Objectives:
  - Review why we have truancy laws
  - Identify what truancy looks like in ALE
  - Provide guidance on complying with truancy laws
  - Q & A

# The big questions...

- Do truancy laws apply to ALE students?

Yes!

- What does truancy look like when you don't "take attendance"?
- How do I comply with the laws?

We need some guidance for clarity and consistency of practice.

- Thus, the memo...

<http://www.k12.wa.us/BulletinsMemos/Memos2013/M058-13.docx>

# Why do we have truancy laws?

- 13 year old named Becca truant in 1993
- “Becca Bill” (SB 5349) to stop truancy before it becomes a problem (RCW 28A.225.020)
- Identify and intervene with truant students who are facing problems and potential danger
- Empower parents and courts

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/Truancy/default.aspx>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.225.020>

# ALE Attendance

- Used contact as the basis for “attendance”
- Weekly contact requirement with a certificated teacher
- Weekly contact can be
  - Direct personal contact
  - In-person instructional contact
  - Synchronous digital instructional contact
- WAC 392-121-182 Section 4(b)  
<http://digitallearning.k12.wa.us/ale/support/4.php>

# No contact in ALE = Truant

- No weekly contact without a valid justification
- Excused absence defined in WAC 392-400-325  
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=392-400-325>
- Take steps to achieve weekly contact

# Recommended Practice

Contact	Action
No contact in 5 consecutive school days	Inform parent and explain potential consequences of additional unexcused absences
No contact in 10 consecutive school days	Initiate a conference with parent/guardian and student to develop a strategy
No contact after the conference	May refer the case to a Community Truancy Board or file a truancy petition
Student fails to attend the conference	May refer the case to a Community Truancy Board or file a truancy petition
Parent/guardian fails to attend the conference	Hold the conference with the student; notify the parent/guardian of the strategies to achieve weekly contact



# Continue ALE Practices

- Monthly evaluation: unsatisfactory progress
- Intervention plan to address contact issues

ALE Contact	Enrollment Reporting
Student resumes contact and participates in intervention plan.	Can claim the student in your enrollment count.
Student does not have contact with a certificated teacher for 20 consecutive school days.	Can not claim the student in the enrollment count.

# Questions

- If I can't contact the student or parent, do I withdraw the student?

No. File the petition and work through the courts until it is resolved. The petition is viewed as an intervention.

# Questions

- Does the communication of the valid excuse count for weekly contact?

No. Contact must be with a certificated teacher for the purposes of instruction, review of assignments, testing, reporting of student progress, or other learning activities.

# Questions

- On a Choice transfer, which district is responsible?

The nonresident district has responsibility for the student until the end date on the transfer.

# Questions

- For nonresident districts, what jurisdiction do I petition?

There is not a specific answer....

A common approach is to file a local petition and then that municipality pushes the petition out to the municipality of the student's resident school district. Unfortunately, it depends on the working practice of the municipalities and is not a set procedure.

# Questions

- Why is the word “may” used in this guidance?  
Do I have to follow it?

Schools are required to comply with truancy laws. Truancy in ALE is not defined, so this is recommended practice. Remember the intent of the law--look out for students; empower parents and courts to intervene.

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