

Truancy Mediation Program

Helpful Hints for Schools

Listed below are some “hints” learned along the way to increase the effectiveness of truancy mediation.

Scheduling a truancy mediation:

- Contact the parent or guardian of the student by telephone or in person to schedule a date and a time, they are available to attend a mediation. Attendance at mediation by the parent is usually better if the parent has had a say in the scheduling process. This improves the parent’s cooperation as well by showing respect for their schedule.
- Confirm the parent’s attendance at truancy mediation by sending a written letter or by making a reminder phone call the day before (or day of) the mediation.
- Make sure the parents and student receive a copy of the Truancy Mediation Program Information for Youth & Parents. This information sheet can be mailed, faxed or given to the parent. Parents are usually less apprehensive or defensive when they can better understand the truancy mediation process. Some schools use the information sheet to talk to parents about truancy mediation when they first approach them with the suggestion to mediate.
- Many school administrators have their support staff schedule the mediations. Administrators’ schedules are very busy and the scheduling of a mediation may be “put off” to deal with more pressing issues.

At the truancy mediation:

- Holding the mediation in a private room (conference room, spare office) free from interruptions and distractions works best. The room should be large enough to accommodate 6-10 people.
- The school administration’s presence is vital to the process. Please make yourself (or a proxy) available to attend the entire mediation session. School counselors should also attend the mediation since students and families often need the counselor’s services or a referral to a community agency. The most comprehensive plans are created by teams and not just one person. The people in a team each bring something from their area of expertise. These additional participants could be present for only part of the mediation if need be.
- Be familiar with available resources within the school district and community that can help students and families. Many students/families have problems or issues that require outside agency or school services to support and effectively resolve the attendance issue or problem.