

17th Judicial District
Broomfield Combined Courts
17 DesCombes Drive
Broomfield, CO 80020



Judge Francis Wasserman
Magistrate Peter Stapp

Dear Parent,

As your son or daughter begins the new the school year, we want to remind you of the importance of school attendance. We cannot overemphasize the importance of daily attendance. The consequences for absences from school, whether excused or unexcused, can be life impacting and truly devastating for you and your family. Unfortunately, this is something that we routinely see as District Court Judicial Officers. We see youth in Truancy Court that are so far behind in school, they may never recover. We see youth in the Juvenile Delinquency court that have committed crimes while missing school. We see adults in the Criminal Court that dropped out of school early in life and never got back on track.

Research confirms that the well-being of youth is directly correlated to school attendance. According to a study by Nobel Prize-winning economist, James Heckman, successfully graduating from high school radically reduces the probability of crime and incarceration. In fact, research shows that each year a youth remains in school significantly reduces the probability of incarceration. Research also shows that individuals who do not have a high school degree are increasingly disadvantaged in a very competitive employment market. Even with that powerful research data, current high school graduation rates are unacceptably low, particularly in Colorado.

It is important for you to understand that it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that your child attends school. If the juvenile does not attend school and is habitually truant, a truancy case may be filed with the court. When this occurs, the parent is also required to attend court and is required to comply with court orders. If "contempt of court" proceedings are filed, the parent can be subject to fines and even confinement in the county jail.

Children whose parents are actively involved with their school and teachers are less likely to experience attendance problems and are more likely to graduate from high school. Please make education a priority and help your child develop good attendance and study habits. If you begin having problems with your child's school attendance or academic performance, be proactive and get help before the problem grows. Communicate regularly with the school and find local community resources to assist your family so court involvement does not become necessary. It is so important for your child's future!

We wish your child academic success this year.

Sincerely,

Francis Wasserman
District Court Judge

Peter Stapp
District Court Magistrate