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Technical Assistance Paper Compulsory School Attendance: Update

Summary:

Patterns of nonattendance and truancy are identified as early warning signs of academic failure. The continuum of truancy to delinquency typically includes other behaviors that result in suspension, expulsion and drop out. Students with chronic absenteeism are found to have the lowest academic achievement, which puts them at greater risk for dropping out of school.

The purpose of this technical assistance paper (TAP) is to provide information to school district personnel and community partners who work with school attendance-related programs and initiatives. This TAP replaces TAP FY 2010-48, Compulsory School Attendance: Update, and clarifies the urgency for consistent local school district efforts to comply with attendance enforcement requirements.

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- New technical assistance paper
- Revises and replaces existing TAP: FY 2010-48, Compulsory School Attendance: Update

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A. Background

Patterns of nonattendance and truancy are identified as early warning signs of academic failure. The continuum of truancy to delinquency typically includes other code-of-conduct behaviors that result in suspension, expulsion and drop out. Students with the highest truancy rates are found to have the lowest academic achievement, which puts them at greater risk for dropping out of school.

Today's research continues to support earlier findings related to the high correlation of attendance to how students perform in school (student achievement). The National Center for School Engagement uses the "Theory of Change" to underscore the important role that school engagement plays in the development of policies, practices and strategies. This means that success in school and school completion are based on the integration of: (a) the student's regular participation (attendance) in school, (b) the student and family's meaningful connection (attachment) with the school, and (c) the assurance that the student has the necessary tools and resources to complete courses and graduate from high school (achievement). These findings solidify the role of attendance in the broader context of school engagement and provide the impetus for strengthening efforts in support of educational opportunities and success for Florida's public school students.

Section 1003.26, Florida Statutes (F.S.), specifies the following:

- Poor academic performance is associated with nonattendance.
- School districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance.
- Each district school superintendent is responsible for enforcing school attendance.
- Each district school superintendent is responsible for supporting the enforcement of attendance by local law enforcement agencies.
- Early intervention in school attendance is the most effective way of producing good attendance habits.
- Establishing regular school attendance habits supports student learning and achievement.

The purpose of this TAP is to provide information to school district personnel and community partners who work with school attendance-related programs and initiatives and to clarify the urgency for consistent local school district efforts to comply with attendance enforcement requirements.

B. Introduction

B-1. Is the parent of a school-age student responsible for school attendance?

Yes. Florida school attendance law in s. 1003.24, F.S., requires that the parent be responsible for regular attendance in school. It clarifies, however, that a parent is not held responsible for a student's absence if:

- The principal granted permission for the absence.
- The absence was without the parent's knowledge or consent (or handled as a dependent child).
- The parent was financially unable to provide for the student (under certain conditions) and the superintendent made a determination of the parent's inability.
- Attendance was inadvisable because of sickness or injury attested to by a written statement from a licensed practicing physician; or attendance was impracticable because of some other insurmountable condition.

B-2. What responsibilities do school superintendents and district school boards have for attendance enforcement?

S.1003.26, F.S., identifies that the school superintendent is the person responsible for the enforcement of regular attendance of all school-age students in the district and for supporting the school attendance efforts of local law enforcement agencies. The superintendent's responsibility includes recommending policies and procedures to the district school board that require the following:

- Response in a timely manner to every unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown,
- The parent to justify the reason for the absence and the school to evaluate the justification based on district school board policy defining excused and unexcused absences, and
- Public schools to track excused and unexcused absences and to contact the home in the case of an unexcused absence to prevent a pattern of nonattendance from developing.

S. 1003.24, F.S., requires each district school board to establish an attendance policy that includes the required number of days each year that a student must be in attendance and the number of absences and tardies, after which a statement explaining the absences and tardies must be on file at the school. The policy must require each school in the district to determine if an absence or tardy is excused or unexcused according to criteria established by the district school board.

In addition, s. 1003.02, F.S., authorizes district school boards to establish policies that allow accumulated unexcused tardies, regardless of when they occur during the school day, and early departures from school to be recorded as unexcused absences. S. 1003.24, F.S., also allows students to be referred to the child study team before reaching the required 5 absences in 30 days or 10 absences in 90 days, pursuant to s. 1003.26(b), F.S.

B-3. Does Florida have a school attendance requirement related to driver’s licenses?

Yes. The Florida Legislature requires schools to report the name, birth date, sex and social security number of any minor who attains the age of 14 and accumulates 15 unexcused absences in a 90-calendar-day period to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV). The legislation states that minors who fail to satisfy attendance requirements are ineligible for driving privileges. School districts must report all students who withdraw from school with a withdrawal code, calculated in the dropout rate, to DHSMV.

According to s. 322.091, F.S., a minor is not eligible for driving privileges unless he or she:

- Is enrolled in a public school, nonpublic school or home education program and satisfies relevant attendance requirements;
- Has received a high school diploma, high school equivalency diploma, special diploma or certificate of high school completion;
- Is enrolled in a study course in preparation for the high school equivalency assessment and meets relevant attendance requirements;
- Is enrolled in other educational activities approved by the school board and that satisfy relevant attendance requirements;
- Has been issued a certificate of exemption according to s. 1003.21(3), F.S.; or
- Has received a hardship waiver, pursuant to s. 322.091, F.S..

TAP FY 2013:150, Implementation of Attendance Requirements for Minors to Maintain Their Driving Privilege, located at <http://info.fl DOE.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7010/dps-2013-150.pdf>, provides updated technical assistance to school district personnel who participate in school attendance activities associated with DHSMV requirements.

B-4. What is the Learnfare Program and is it still required?

The Learnfare Program is primarily related to student attendance for families who are eligible to receive temporary cash assistance (TCA). S. 414.1251, F.S., requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to reduce the amount of TCA for families with students who are identified as habitual truants or dropouts. Implementation procedures require DCF to provide a list of TCA-eligible children to the Northwest Regional Data Center monthly. Each school district will download the list and identify students who are truants or dropouts. The school district’s response is then shared with DCF who takes the appropriate action. In response, DCF reviews the case record to make certain determinations. If good cause does not exist, the parent of a student who is a habitual truant or a dropout receives notice of possible reduction of the benefit amount. DCF procedures include a fair hearing process. If a sanction is imposed to the benefit amount, the student may be reinstated when:

- The truant student’s substantially improved attendance during a subsequent grading period is confirmed or

- After a student who has dropped out of school reenrolls in school, receives a high school diploma or its equivalent, enrolls in preparation for the high school equivalency assessment or enrolls in another educational activity approved by the district school board.

B-5. What are the attendance requirements and provisions regarding children and youth who are experiencing homelessness?

The State of Florida distributes McKinney-Vento funds and Title I funds to local school districts to satisfy certain requirements. Local school districts must ensure that all children and youth experiencing homelessness have equal access to public education. School districts are required to designate a liaison to identify children and youth who are homeless and to ensure they attend school by immediately enrolling them.

“Children experiencing homelessness” are those who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes children and youth who are:

- Sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
- Living in motels, hotels, dilapidated trailers, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate housing;
- Living in emergency or transitional housing;
- Abandoned in hospitals;
- Awaiting foster care;
- Having a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations;
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or bus and train stations; and
- Migratory students meeting the descriptions above.

TAP FY 2005-7, The Education of Homeless Children and Youth, provides additional information and technical assistance associated with educational opportunities for students who are homeless. The TAP and the list of homeless education liaisons and contacts are available on the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) website under Publications and Contacts, respectively. These and other related resources are located at nfo.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6622/dps-2012-07.pdf

B-6. What are the attendance requirements and provisions regarding children and youth who are in foster care?

S. 39.0016, F.S., addresses youth in “out-of-home” care who are also the subject of federal legislation called the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. State and federal laws for these youth are based on evidence of need across a wide continuum, including, e.g., educational stability, transition between schools, school attendance and completion, and truancy prevention.

The provisions in s. 39.0016(2)(a), F.S., require an interagency agreement between state agencies, including DCF, FDOE, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Agency for Persons with Disabilities and the Agency for Workforce Innovation. The state-level agreement is intended to provide educational access for the purpose of facilitating the delivery of services or programs to children who are in foster care. DCF is also required to enter into agreements with local district school boards and other entities regarding education and related services for children in foster care.

B-7. Do military dependent (minor) school-age students receive additional excused absences?

Yes. S. 1000.36, Article V(E), F.S., states that “a student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined by the Compact, and has been called to duty for, or is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the school superintendent.” The additional excused absences are to allow the student to visit with the student’s parent or legal guardian for the reasons specified. Notwithstanding the above, the local school superintendent or head of school may provide a maximum number of additional excused absences.

C. Compulsory School Attendance

C-1. What is the age requirement for school attendance in Florida?

S. 1003.21, F.S., requires that children 6 years of age (or those reaching 6 years of age by February 1 of any school year) or older, through 16 years of age, attend school regularly during the entire school term. The one exception is that a student who reaches the age of 16 during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance if the student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board.

Florida law does not provide an age limit (e.g., 18 years) for kindergarten through Grade 12 (K-12) public education school attendance. However, some school districts have elected to address this issue as “maximum age” in the local policy (attendance, student progression). The law referenced above simply states that a student who turns 16 is not subject to attendance “beyond the date he or she attains that age” if the student formally terminates school enrollment as prescribed.

C-2. What does “regular school attendance” mean?

“Regular school attendance” as defined in s. 1003.01(13) F.S., is attendance in one of the following: a public school; a parochial, religious or denominational school; a private school; or a home education or private tutoring program, provided the program meets state requirements.

C-3. How does Florida define a “habitual truant”?

S. 1003.01(8), F.S., defines a habitual truant as a student of compulsory school attendance age who accumulates 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days. In this definition, “calendar days” refers to all the days in a month, including weekends and holidays.

C-4. How are the terms “unexcused” and “excused” defined?

District school boards are required to define excused and unexcused absences according to criteria established by the district school board. According to s. 1003.26, F.S., a parent’s reason for their child’s absence must be evaluated by each school, based on the local district’s definition of excused and unexcused absences established by the local attendance policy.

State law requires that when a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school, the student must be under the supervision of a doctor in order to receive an excused absence. The doctor’s statement should confirm that the student’s condition requires absence for more than the number of days permitted by the district school board policy. The establishment of local policy allows flexibility in considering characteristics of district schools and communities in the development of definitions and incentives.

SAMPLES: Sample definitions of *excused* and *unexcused* absences, established by local policies, are provided.

Excused (parent notification/documentation required):

- Brief student illness/injury;
- Medical/dental appointments;
- Death of an immediate family member;
- Religious holiday of the specific faith of the student (principal approved);
- Compelled absence (e.g., judicial);
- Natural/major disaster that would justify absence (principal approved);
- School-sponsored/related activity (principal approved);
- Other advance notice absences (principal approved); and
- Insurmountable conditions (principal approved).

Unexcused:

- Missing school bus/oversleeping,
- Shopping/pleasure/vacation trips,
- Excessive illness (without physician verification that medical condition justifies pattern) and
- Failure to communicate the reason for the absence(s).

School district attendance policies differ with regard to the determination of an absence due to (out-of-school) suspension as excused or unexcused. A suspension is an administrative action that prohibits a student from attending school. When a student is subsequently reported for noncompliance with regular attendance as required by law (e.g., driving privileges and Learnfare), a double penalty is imposed on the student, unless the district is able to exclude discipline-related unexcused absences from the count.

Therefore, for the purpose of reporting students for noncompliance with regular school attendance, if a local district policy defines absence due to suspension as an unexcused absence, the district is advised to collect these data using a method to distinguish unexcused absence related to discipline from an unexcused absence not related to discipline. The distinction alleviates the double penalty problem created by reporting a student using accumulated unexcused absences that include those due to suspension.

C-5. How does a student formally terminate school enrollment?

In 2006, the Florida Legislature amended s. 1003.21 F.S., to require completion of specific documents when an eligible student elects to terminate school enrollment.

The Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment is a formal statement filed with the district school board that acknowledges that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce a student's earning potential. (The student and the student's parent or guardian must sign the declaration and the school district must notify the parent or guardian of receipt of the student's intent to terminate school enrollment.) Successful filing of the declaration with the school district satisfies this requirement for terminating school enrollment.

School districts are required to use the Exit Interview Student Survey, which is located at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5576/urlt/0076246-fldropoutsurvey.pdf>, to gather data regarding the student's primary reasons for dropping out of school and actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled. The 2009-10 Exit Interview Student Survey contains specific questions and has been reformatted, for reporting purposes, to include a new data element.

An exit interview must be conducted with an eligible student to determine the reason for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and the actions that could be taken to keep the student in school. Information regarding opportunities to continue the student's education, including, e.g., adult education and GED[®] test preparation, must also be provided to the student. School district personnel may use the Exit Interview (Designated School Personnel) form, located at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5576/urlt/0076244-exitinterviewform.pdf> or develop an exit interview document at the district level.

C-6. What is the process for conducting an exit interview?

According to s. 1003.21(2)(c), F.S., the student's guidance counselor or other school personnel must conduct an exit interview with the student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and actions that could be taken to keep the student in school. The student must be informed of opportunities to continue the student's education in a different environment.

C-7. What steps might schools take to ensure completion of the required student survey prior to terminating school enrollment?

Schools should establish policy and adopt procedures for conducting exit interviews and collecting student survey data. The exit interview presents an opportunity to provide the student with meaningful counsel prior to the student's termination of school enrollment. In addition, the interview must include a discussion of all options to continue the student's education in a different setting. School personnel are encouraged to fully engage students in exploring their options and to identify programs that could support the student's academic objectives and advance the student's potential. The following are suggestions for school districts.

1. Include the requirements of s. 1003.21, F.S., regarding the Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment, exit interview, and exist interview student survey in the district code of conduct and review this information with students at the beginning of each school year.
2. Strengthen efforts to re-engage students at the highest risk for dropping out through an early identification focus. Early warning systems use indicators based on accessible data to predict, during the student's first year in high school, whether the student is adequately progressing toward graduation.¹ Districts and schools are encouraged to work together to implement districtwide early warning systems to aid in the early identification of students at risk for dropping out of school.
3. Collect survey data for students who indicate they will enroll in adult education (withdrawal code W26) in the event enrollment does not occur and the student code is re-classified.

C-8. Are teenage parent students required to meet compulsory attendance requirements?

Yes. All public school students who have reached the age of 16 and have not graduated are subject to compulsory school attendance until a formal Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment is filed with the district school board. Students who become or who are pregnant must not be prohibited from attending school (s. 1003.21(1)(d), F.S.). These students and students who are parents shall receive the same educational instruction or its equivalent as other students, but may voluntarily be assigned to a class or program suited to their special needs.

¹ Heppen, J. B., & Therriault, S. B. (2008, July). *Developing early warning systems to identify potential high school dropouts*. Retrieved from National High School Center website: http://www.earlywarningsystems.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/IssueBrief_EarlyWarningSystemsGuide.pdf.

Consistent with s. 1003.54, F.S., pregnant or parenting teens may participate in a teenage parent program. Pregnant students may also attend alternative education programs or adult education programs, provided the curriculum allows the student to continue to work toward a high school diploma.

C-9. Are teenage parent program participants required to meet minimum attendance requirements?

S. 1003.54, F.S., states that students participating in teenage parent programs are exempt from minimum attendance requirements for absences related to pregnancy or parenting; however, they are required to make up work missed due to their absences. That is, other than absences due to pregnancy or parenting, teenage parent program students are subject to district policy regarding regular attendance. Teenage parents who do not participate in the teenage parent program are not exempt from district minimum attendance requirements.

C-10. Are exemptions granted for compulsory attendance requirements?

According to s. 1003.21, F.S., the district school superintendent may exercise discretion and authorize a certificate of exemption from school attendance requirements under certain circumstances. The exemption is only valid until the end of the school year for which it is issued.

C-11. Are married students exempt from compulsory attendance?

In the absence of an Order of Emancipation, a married minor of compulsory school age is subject to compulsory attendance requirements. Students over the age of 16 are no longer required to attend school if the student formally terminates enrollment as prescribed in s. 1003.21, F.S. However, s. 743.01, F.S., removes the requirement to provide consent from a married minor. Therefore, if a married minor files the Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment, parental consent or notification is not required. In this case, only the minor is required to sign and file the declaration to officially terminate school enrollment.

C-12. What are public schools required to do to promote and enforce regular school attendance?

According to s. 1003.26, F.S., the district school superintendent is primarily responsible for the enforcement of regular school attendance, which includes recommending policies and procedures to the district school board requiring the following of public schools.

- Respond in a timely manner to each unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown by contacting the student's parent to determine the reason for the absence.
- Obtain parent justification for the absence or tardy and evaluate the reason(s) based on district criteria; determine whether the absence or tardy is excused or unexcused; and if excused, allow the student to make up assigned work without academic

- penalty, unless the work is not made up within a reasonable time.
- Track excused and unexcused absences and contact the home as indicated to prevent the development of patterns of nonattendance.
 - Report that a student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance if the student has had at least 5 unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period.
 - Refer certain cases to the school’s child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing and, if so, whether the absences are excused; schedule a meeting with the parent to identify possible solutions.
 - Refer certain students to the district school superintendent and the district home education contact when it is determined that the student is demonstrating a pattern of nonattendance. Reporting of home education students with patterns of nonattendance to the district superintendent is necessary to implement provisions required in s. 1003.26(1)(f), F.S.
 - Implement intervention and enforcement activities if an initial meeting does not resolve the problem:
 - Frequent attempts at communication between the teacher and the family,
 - Evaluation for alternative education programs and
 - Attendance contracts.

On a case-by-case basis, the child study team may consider implementation of additional interventions, including referral to other agencies for family services or a recommendation for filing a truancy petition according to s. 984.151, F.S.
 - Consider implementation of other interventions, including referral to other agencies for family services or a recommendation for filing a truancy petition pursuant to s. 984.151, F.S.
 - Exercise diligence in implementing interventions and report appropriate cases to the district school superintendent only when all reasonable efforts to solve the nonattendance are exhausted.

To view requirements of Florida statutes regarding enforcement of school attendance, see Appendix A: Florida Statutes—Compulsory School Attendance and Related Requirements.

C-13. Are students enrolled in virtual schools and programs required to meet compulsory attendance requirements; and, if so, how is attendance recorded, monitored and reported for virtual students?

Yes. S. 1002.45, F.S., specifies that students must meet compulsory attendance requirements. S. 1003.27, F.S., requires that the parent be responsible for regular attendance in school. This means attendance must be taken for virtual students and these students have the same guidelines related to truancy as students in brick-and-mortar schools.

Additionally, taking attendance is mandatory and must be recorded on a regular and ongoing basis. Although the parent or learning coach may log attendance on a daily or hourly basis using their individual accounts, the online teachers and virtual school

administrators are responsible for student attendance records and for monitoring and reporting attendance. They do this by examining participation metrics, such as student login data; lessons, assignments, projects and assessments completed; email and phone logs; and student participation in discussion-based assessments, live lessons, discussion boards, blogs, virtual school field trips, etc. Virtual schools must maintain auditable attendance records and provide attendance information to school districts for state-required reporting to the FDOE Automated Student Information System during Surveys 3 and 5.

C-14. When can a student be considered for hospital or homebound services?

According to Rule 6A-6.03020, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), the possibility of hospital or homebound services should be explored when it is anticipated that a student will be absent from school for at least 15 school days, or the equivalent, while under a physician's care because of severe, prolonged or chronic illness. A parent, teacher, social worker, guidance counselor, physician and others may initiate the process as soon as it is anticipated that the student will be absent for the duration specified in the rule. There is no established waiting period that must be met when considering initiating the process.

C-15. Must students be absent for three weeks before they can apply for hospital or homebound services?

No. Rule 6A-6.03020, F.A.C., states the physician must indicate that the estimated duration of absence from school will be three weeks or more, but no prior absence is required. Districts are encouraged to be proactive in initiating procedures to establish eligibility for hospital or homebound services to avoid any interruption of the student's education.

C-16. May school district attendance policies address tardies?

District school boards are authorized, in s. 1003.24, F.S., to establish policies that allow accumulated unexcused tardies and early departures, regardless of when they occur during the school day, to be recorded as unexcused absences. A method for including tardies and early departures in the district attendance policy is not provided in statute, but is determined at the local school district level. For example, many districts assign an unexcused absence when a student accumulates a specific number of unexcused tardies and/or early departures from school (e.g., three unexcused tardies and/or early departures are equivalent to one unexcused absence).

S. 1003.24, F.S., requires each district school board to establish a policy that includes the specified number of days each school year that a student must be in attendance and the number of absences and tardies after which a statement must be on file at the school.

If a local policy allows the accumulation of a certain number of tardies and/or early departures to equal an unexcused absence, an accurate record of this accumulation should be maintained.

C-17. Does the requirement to “determine if a pattern of nonattendance is developing” refer to a specific calendar month or any 30-day period?

The language in s. 1003.26(1)(b), F.S., specifies parameters to trigger specific child study team action to determine if a pattern of nonattendance may be developing (e.g., 5five unexcused absences within a calendar month; or 10ten unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period). The reference to “a calendar month” refers to a specific month. If a student accumulates 5five unexcused absences in April (—or in May)— the provision to determine if a pattern of nonattendance is developing must be followed accordingly because the accumulation of 5five unexcused absences in any given month is excessive and should be examined. Likewise, the accumulation of 10ten unexcused absences over a 90-calendar-day period (which “rolls” from one month to the next) is excessive and is also used as a parameter to trigger examination of whether a pattern of nonattendance is developing.

In addition, s. 1003.02(b), F.S., authorizes district school boards to establish policies that require referral to a school’s child study team for students with fewer than 5 unexcused absences in a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within 90-calendar-days. The intent of this provision is to allow schools to initiate interventions sooner than 5 unexcused absences within a calendar month; or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period, in a proactive effort to prevent patterns of nonattendance from developing.

C-18. What grade level must implement an early warning system?

A school that includes Grade 6, 7 or 8 must implement an early warning system to identify students who need additional support to improve school engagement and academic performance (s. 1001.42(18)(b)(1). F.S.) The early warning system must include the following early warning indicators:

- Attendance below 90 percent regardless of whether it is excused, unexcused or out-of-school suspension;
- One or more in-school or out-of-school suspensions;
- Course failures in English, language arts or mathematics;
- A level one score on the statewide standardized assessments in English, language arts or mathematics; and
- Any other additional indicators as defined by the local school district.

When a student exhibits two or more of the early warning indicators, a school-based team must convene to determine the appropriate intervention for the student. The school will provide the parent or guardian with at least a 10-day written notice of meeting that includes the purpose, time and location, in order to give the parent an opportunity to participate, pursuant to s. 1001.42(18)(b)(2), F.S.

C-19. May schools use an automated phone system to contact the parent?

Although school districts use automated phone systems to notify a parent when a student is absent, s. 1003.26, F.S., also requires that the school contact the parent “to determine the reason for the absence.” Specifically, some form of communication with the parent is necessary to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused based on criteria established by the local attendance policy. Given the requirement to obtain parent information regarding the reason for a student’s absence, districts are advised to consider using multiple communication strategies to satisfy compliance with this section.

C-20. What is the composition of a child study team?

The child study team may be composed of individuals responsible for problem solving and facilitating appropriate interventions. The team may include the teacher, school counselor, school social worker, attendance or truant officer, school nurse, school psychologist, and other school administrator. The composition of the child study team may be altered to adequately and efficiently problem solve student referrals.

C-21. What can happen if a parent refuses to cooperate with child study team interventions?

S. 1003.26(1)(e), F.S., states that the district school board may provide a hearing officer or that the parent shall be given an opportunity to appeal to the district school board regarding the parent’s opposition to the intervention activities of the child study team. The law further states, the school board or hearing officer, if appointed, shall make a recommendation for final action to the school board. If the board’s final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate and the parent still refuses to participate or cooperate, the superintendent then may seek criminal prosecution against the parent for noncompliance with school attendance laws.

C-22. Is there a state minimum attendance requirement for awarding course credit?

S. 1003.436(1)(a), F.S., provides that a course credit, for high school graduation purposes, is defined as a minimum of 135 hours of instruction. This definition refers to minimum instructional hours *provided* and does not imply that a student who is in attendance for fewer than 135 hours of instruction (i.e., due to excused or unexcused absences/tardiness, etc.) is not entitled to receive full course credit. Districts are encouraged to note this clarification and to revise attendance policies, which deny course credit to otherwise eligible students, based on this state definition as indicated.

C-23. What are school districts required to do in cases of nonenrollment?

S. 1003.26(2)(a), F.S., requires that the superintendent or designee shall give written notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent, guardian or other person having control, when no valid reason is found for a child’s nonenrollment in school. The notice

shall require enrollment or attendance within three days of the date of the notice. Additionally, subsequent to the procedures for attendance enforcement required in s. 1003.26(2)(a), F.S., s. 1003.26(2)(b), F.S., states the superintendent or designee shall give written notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent, guardian, or other person in charge of the child, that criminal prosecution is being sought for nonattendance.

D. Truancy Petition and Child-in-Need-of-Services (CINS) Petition

D-1. How does a truancy petition differ from a CINS petition?

A truancy petition, defined in s. 984.03, F.S., may be filed by a district school superintendent (or designee) when a school determines that a student of compulsory school age is either demonstrating early patterns of nonattendance or is determined to be a habitual truant. This petition, as referenced, may only be filed after all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance are exhausted.

S. 1003.27(3) states, if the district school superintendent chooses not to file a truancy petition, the superintendent or designee shall file a CINS petition, defined in s. 984.15, F.S. The school representative, a parent, law enforcement, a court, or the DJJ shall initiate a referral to a CINS provider or a case staffing committee established pursuant to s. 984.12, F.S., and procedures established by the district school board. The purpose of the referral to CINS is to secure prevention services for a habitually truant student and the family (s. 1003.27(3), F.S.). Prior to the filing of the CINS petition, reasonable time must be allowed to complete interventions to remedy conditions contributing to the truant behavior and must comply with the requirements of s. 1003.26, F.S.

If a school district experiences difficulty accessing appropriate services from their local CINS provider, the district should request assistance from the FDOE contact person indicated in this TAP; DJJ headquarters, Office of Prevention; or the DJJ state-level contracted CINS/families-in-need-of-services (FINS) provider agency.

D-2. May a school initiate a referral to truancy court?

Early access to court is one intervention, among others, available to the child study team as indicated in s. 1003.26, F.S. This action may occur if the team determines that the student is exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance or if the student is determined to be habitually truant from school.

D-3. Is the school district required to have an attorney present for truancy court?

No, the presence of an attorney is not required. However, the student and the student's parent shall attend the hearing. S. 984.151, F.S., also states that the circuit court may use a general or special master to preside over the truancy court. The petition must contain the student's name, age and address; the name and address of the student's parent or guardian; the school in which the student is enrolled; efforts made by the school to

resolve the attendance problem; the number of out-of-school contacts between the school and the parent; and the dates and number of days the student has missed. An out-of-school contact refers to a district's attempt to contact the parent or guardian. Examples include, home visits, phone calls and mailed notices. Districts are advised to maintain an account of attempted and completed contacts as they occur.

D-4. Can truancy petitions be filed in juvenile court?

Yes. S. 984.151, F.S., states that jurisdiction over the truancy court lies in the circuit court. The juvenile court is a circuit court. In addition, many judges presiding over truancy courts are also juvenile court judges.

D-5. Are contempt sanctions available if a student or family violates a court order?

Yes. S. 984.151, F.S., requires the parent, guardian, or legal custodian and the student to participate in any sanctions or services required by the court. The court enforces participation through contempt powers. This statute states that students who violate court orders will be referred to CINS. This would suggest that sanctions available to the truancy court are primarily designed for parents within the circuit court's jurisdiction.

D-6. Is the truancy petition filed against a parent?

Yes. The truancy petition outlined in s. 984.151, F.S., requires both the child's and the parent's names. This allows the court to establish jurisdiction over the parent or guardian.

D-7. Are school districts authorized to file a petition by way of the Office of the State Attorney?

Yes. S. 984.03(27), F.S., states the Office of the State Attorney may file a CINS petition on a child who is truant or not enrolled in school.

E. Student Attendance Recordkeeping

E-1. What is the school district's responsibility for maintaining daily attendance?

S. 1003.23, F.S., requires districts to "keep all records" and to promptly submit all reports, including "a register of enrollment and attendance," required by law, State Board of Education (SBE) rule, and district school boards. The statute further requires that the enrollment register "show the absence or attendance of each student enrolled for each school day of the year in a manner prescribed by the State Board of Education." The school year includes the regular 180 days, plus the respective summer session(s).

Each district shall maintain attendance, absence and withdrawal information on students enrolled in the district and be able to prepare, upon request, a record of each student's entry, re-entry and withdrawal dates, as well as that student's days present and absent. For more information related to these requirements, see the *Automated Student*

Attendance Recordkeeping System Handbook at <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/database-manuals-updates> (“Attendance Recordkeeping Handbook” under Related Links).

The handbook also provides the following definitions to assist school districts with recordkeeping requirements.

Absence—Absence is the nonattendance of a student at scheduled times when attendance is taken on days when school is in session. According to Rule 6A-1.044, F.A.C., any student must be counted absent who is not physically present at school or at a school activity during the prescribed count time as defined under the compulsory attendance law. In the administration of the daily compulsory attendance law and local school system policies, a student’s absence in prekindergarten through Grade 12 (PK-12) may be considered as “excused” or “unexcused” and appropriately identified. In all cases, however, the student who is not present is counted absent. In addition, beginning with the 2006-07 school year, s. 1003.02(1)(b), F.S., included the following provision: “District school boards are authorized to establish policies that allow accumulated unexcused tardies, regardless of when they occur during the school day, and early departures from school to be recorded as unexcused absences.”

Attendance—Attendance is the presence of a student during the prescribed count time on days when school is in session. The student must be actually at the school or schools to which the student has been assigned or present at an educational activity that constitutes part of the approved school program for that student.

Tardy—Tardy is the absence of a student at the time attendance is taken provided the student meets the definition for being present before the close of the day.

E-2. Are districts required to maintain daily attendance for students receiving hospital or homebound services?

Because hospital or homebound students are provided instruction, even though it is not in a regular setting, districts are required to maintain daily attendance in their automated system. Unless the student is not present during the assigned instructional time, the student is assumed present for the duration that the student is assigned to the program. Therefore the student should be counted as present on days when the teacher visits the student, is not scheduled to visit, or is scheduled but unable to visit the student.

E-3. How does the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) collect attendance data from school districts?

Rule 6A-1.044(2), F.A.C., requires that an electronic recordkeeping system be used to maintain student attendance records. Rule 6A-1.0014(1), F.A.C., states that each school district shall develop and implement an automated information system component that shall be part of, and compatible with, the statewide comprehensive management

information system. To this end, the following criteria must be met by the automated student attendance management system.

- The system shall provide complete and accurate attendance data and shall make provision for maintaining auditable records for three years or until applicable audits are completed.
- The system shall include a sign-on indicator to assure that attendance is being taken regularly. Daily sign-ons shall be reported by exceptions (e.g., by who has not signed on each day). An exception report shall be generated on a regular basis so that the principal or the principal's designee may assure that some positive action is taken in each course/period.
- A daily log shall be generated and maintained that will include sufficient information to ascertain when and by whom attendance data was entered, changed or deleted. Data to be included in the daily log shall include the following:
 - Identification (ID) of teacher or responsible adult;
 - Date of attendance;
 - Attendance code;
 - Course;
 - Section;
 - Period;
 - Student ID;
 - Date of action; and
 - Transaction code (add, change, delete).
- The system shall provide backup and redundancy procedures to ensure the security of the data:
 - Backup of each individual personal computer's (PC) data should be automatic, ensuring that the backups are current. To achieve this goal, PC backup software with tools to centrally setup and monitor the PC backup and recovery process shall be employed.
 - Replication software shall be used to manage a process whereby a source directory is replicated onto one or more destination directories by adding, deleting and updating files on the destination until they match those on the source. This automated process reduces the chance of human error and ensures that the file replication takes place either on schedule or in real-time.

For additional information, see the *Automated Student Attendance Recordkeeping System Handbook* at <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/database-manuals-updates> ("Attendance Recordkeeping Handbook" under Related Links).

E-4. How does FDOE collect student survey data from school districts?

According to s. 1008.385(2), F.S., school districts are required to have a management information system that is compatible with the state's system. Districts are responsible for the accuracy of the data submitted to FDOE. Student survey data is submitted to FDOE through the Student and Staff Information Database System during Survey 5 reporting.

E-5. When is it appropriate to withdraw a student using W15 (due to nonattendance)?

The Florida Legislature requires diligence on the part of school districts regarding their role to promote and enforce attendance. Early intervention with school attendance problems is widely documented as an effective strategy in reducing truancy and a student's risk of dropping out of school. Consequently, a school is not authorized to withdraw a student from enrollment due to nonattendance (W15) as long as the student attends school, albeit sporadically. A student may only be withdrawn from school due to nonattendance or due to whereabouts unknown (W22), after all intervention procedures outlined in ss. 1003.26 and 1003.27, F.S., have been followed and documented.

Withdrawal due to other reasons (W23) should not be used unless all other avenues have been exhausted and the district specifically approves of its use.

S. 1003.26, F.S., states that each district school superintendent is responsible for enforcing school attendance of all school-age students in the district and for supporting school attendance enforcement by local law enforcement agencies. This responsibility includes recommending policies and procedures to the district school board that require public schools to respond in a timely manner to every unexcused absence, and every absence for which the reason is unknown, of enrolled students. The policies must provide that public schools track unexcused absences and contact the home in the case of an unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown.

E-6. If a student is withdrawn using W22 (due to whereabouts unknown) and later returns to the district and receives instruction, how should the student be coded?

If the school verifies that the student, while away from the district, was attending school elsewhere, then the W22 dropout code should be revised to reflect an appropriate withdrawal code indicating instruction outside the district (W3A, W3B or W04). The student should also be coded with an entry code of E02, E03, E04 or E09. If the student did not receive instruction during the interim, but returns to school, the student should be coded with an R03 re-entry code and the W22 withdrawal code should remain.

E-7. How does the average daily attendance impact transportation full-time equivalency (FTE)?

The change in the reporting and the calculations required for the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) does not relate to transportation FTE or any of its calculations or fund distribution.

E-8. What counts as present for the purposes of calculating the attendance factor for application of the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP)?

Under current requirements regarding attendance recordkeeping, districts are directed to choose a specific time of day to check attendance. Most districts have chosen to determine daily attendance during the second instructional period of the day. A student who is present during that span of time when attendance is taken is considered to be

present. Students who are away from school at an educational program are also considered to be present. Students who are not present during the time when daily attendance is taken, but arrive later are considered to be tardy and therefore, present for the purposes of determining daily attendance. See the *Automated Student Attendance Recordkeeping System Handbook* at <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/database-manuals-updates> (“Attendance Recordkeeping Handbook” under Related Links).

E-9. Are excused absences calculated as part of the percent of attendance factor that is applied to the FEFP?

Yes. All absences, regardless of whether they are excused or unexcused, are included in the calculation of the percent of attendance factor. See the *Automated Student Attendance Recordkeeping System Handbook* at <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/database-manuals-updates> (“Attendance Recordkeeping Handbook” under Related Links).

E-10. How does this impact scheduling plans (e.g., blocks) used in districts?

There should be no impact to scheduling. The attendance factor is based on daily attendance as opposed to period-by-period.

E-11. Does the age of compulsory school attendance impact the percent of attendance calculation?

No. The attendance calculation is based on the days all students are present, not on the age of compulsory attendance. If a student who is over the age of compulsory attendance attends school, the student’s attendance is counted.

E-12. What is the impact of the percent of attendance calculation for prekindergarten (PK) students with disabilities who may not be scheduled for a full 180-day school year?

The percent of attendance calculation is based on a comparison of the total days the student is present and the total number of days the student is scheduled to be present. When reporting the data to FDOE, the district must be careful to report only for those days that the student is scheduled.

E-13. How will the percent of attendance calculation affect the extended school year or a Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) program?

Percent of attendance is calculated by comparing the number of days a student is expected to attend and the number of days the student actually attended. The length of the year (i.e., 180 days, 210 days, 250 days, etc.) has no impact on the attendance factor applied to a district’s FEFP earnings.

E-14. What withdrawal codes should be used for students exiting DJJ facilities?

Special codes are not provided for students exiting DJJ facilities. Transition plans are used to determine the appropriate code for students exiting DJJ facilities.

E-15. Do programs of high risk or high absentee populations receive special consideration?

There are no special considerations given to high risk or high absentee populations when calculating the percentage of attendance.

F. Home Education Programs and Compulsory Attendance

F-1. May the parent of a student who has been found to exhibit a pattern of nonattendance enroll the child in a home education program?

Yes. However, at the time that a student who has been found to exhibit a pattern of nonattendance is enrolled in a home education program, the district school superintendent must provide the parent or guardian with a copy of the home education law, s. 1002.41, F.S., and the accountability requirements of s. 1003.26(1)(f)1., F.S. The parent and guardian must also be referred to a home education review committee composed of members pursuant to s. 1003.26(1)(f)1., F.S.

F-2. What are the accountability requirements for home education once a child has been found to exhibit a pattern of nonattendance?

The parent must submit a portfolio, as defined by s. 1002.41(1)(b), F.S., to be reviewed by a home education review committee every 30 days until the committee determines that the home education program is in compliance with s. 1002.41(1)(b), F.S. The first portfolio review must occur within the first 30 calendar days of the establishment of the home education program.

F-3. Who serves on the home education review committee?

According to s. 1003.26(1)(f)1, F.S., the home education review committee must be composed of the school district contact for home education and at least two home educators selected by the parent from a list of eligible home education parents maintained by the district. Eligible home education parents are those who have conducted a home education program for at least three years and who have indicated a willingness to serve on a home education review committee.

F-4. What constitutes a portfolio?

According to s. 1002.41(1)(b), F.S., the portfolio shall consist of a log of educational activities that is made contemporaneously with the instruction and that designates by title any reading materials used and samples of any writings, worksheets, workbooks or creative materials the student used or developed.

F-5. What happens when the home education review committee determines that the home education program is in compliance with the statute?

Once the committee determines that the home education program is in compliance, the parent will no longer be required to submit a portfolio to the home education review committee. The parent will be required to comply with the requirements of a home education program pursuant to s. 1002.41, F.S., as is any parent involved in a home education program.

F-6. What will happen if the parent of a student who has been found to exhibit a pattern of nonattendance and who has been enrolled in home education fails to provide a portfolio for review by the committee?

The committee must notify the superintendent of schools who must then terminate the home education program and require the parent to enroll the student in an attendance option provided under s. 1003.01(13)(a), (b), (c) or (e), F.S., within three days. Failure of the parent or guardian to enroll a student in an attendance option after termination of a home education program constitutes noncompliance with the compulsory attendance requirement and may result in criminal prosecution of the parent under s. 1003.27(2), F.S.

F-7. When can a student whose home education program has been terminated under the truancy law be re-enrolled in a home education program?

S. 1003.26 (2), F.S., states the parent or guardian shall not be eligible to re-enroll the child for 180 calendar days.

F-8. How long should the home education contact keep a student's name on the list of children who have been found to exhibit a pattern of nonattendance?

If a student was placed on the list more than 90 school days prior to the parent enrolling the student in a home education program, the home education contact must check with the school to determine if the student is still considered at risk for nonattendance. Ninety days is considered reasonable for resolving outstanding nonattendance cases. For reporting purposes, 90 is also the span of times specified in s. 1003.26(1)(b), F.S.

**Appendix A: Florida Statutes—Compulsory School Attendance
and Related Requirements**

S. 1000.36, Article V(E), Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active-duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to, a combat zone or combat support posting shall be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the local education agency superintendent to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian relative to such leave or deployment of the parent or guardian.

S. 1001.53 District school superintendent responsible for enforcement of attendance.

The district school superintendent shall be responsible for the enforcement of the attendance provisions of chapters 1003 and 1006. In a district in which no attendance assistant is employed, the district school superintendent shall have those duties and responsibilities and exercise those powers assigned by law to attendance assistants.

S. 1003.01 Definitions.

(8) “Habitual truant” means a student who has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student’s parent, is subject to compulsory school attendance under s. 1003.21(1) and (2)(a), and is not exempt under s. 1003.21 (3) or s. 1003.24, or by meeting the criteria for any other exemption specified by law or rules of the State Board of Education. Such a student must have been the subject of the activities specified in s. 1003.26 and s. 1003.27(3), without resultant successful remediation of the truancy problem before being dealt with as a child in need of services according to the provisions of chapter 984.

(13) “Regular school attendance” means the actual attendance of a student during the school day as defined by law and rules of the State Board of Education. Regular attendance within the intent of s. 1003.21 may be achieved by attendance in:

- (a) A public school supported by public funds;
- (b) A parochial, religious, or denominational school;
- (c) A private school supported in whole or in part by tuition charges or by endowments or gifts;
- (d) A home education program that meets the requirements of chapter 1002; or
- (e) A private tutoring program that meets the requirements of chapter 1002.

S. 1003.02 District school board operation and control of public K-12 education within the school district.

As provided in part II of chapter 1001, district school boards are constitutionally and statutorily charged with the operation and control of public K-12 education within their school district. The district school boards must establish, organize, and operate their public K–12 schools and educational programs, employees, and facilities. Their responsibilities include staff development, public K-12 school student education including education for exceptional students and students in juvenile justice programs, special programs, adult education programs, and career education programs. Additionally, district school boards must:

(1) Provide for the proper accounting for all students of school age, for the attendance and control of students at school, and for proper attention to health, safety, and other matters relating to the welfare of students in the following fields:

(a) Admission, classification, promotion, and graduation of students. Adopt rules for admitting, classifying, promoting, and graduating students to or from the various schools of the district.

(b) Enforcement of attendance laws. Provide for the enforcement of all laws and rules relating to the attendance of students at school. District school boards are authorized to establish policies that allow accumulated unexcused tardies, regardless of when they occur during the school day, and early departures from school to be recorded as unexcused absences. District school boards are also authorized to establish policies that require referral to a school’s child study team for students who have fewer absences than the number required by s. 1003.26 (1)(b).

S. 1003.21 School attendance.

(1)(a)1. All children who have attained the age of 6 years or who will have attained the age of 6 years by February 1 of any school year or who are older than 6 years of age but who have not attained the age of 16 years, except as otherwise provided, are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term.

2. Children who will have attained the age of 5 years on or before September 1 of the school year are eligible for admission to public kindergartens during that school year under rules adopted by the district school board.

(b) Any child who has attained the age of 6 years on or before September 1 of the school year and who has been enrolled in a public school or who has attained the age of 6 years on or before September 1 and has satisfactorily completed the requirements for kindergarten in a private school from which the district school board accepts transfer of academic credit, or who otherwise meets the criteria for admission or transfer in a manner similar to that applicable to other grades, shall progress according to the district’s student progression plan. However, nothing in this section shall authorize the state or any school district to oversee or exercise control over the curricula or academic programs of private schools or home education programs.

(c) A student who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board. Public school students who have attained the age of 16 years and who have not graduated are subject to compulsory school attendance until the formal declaration of intent is filed with the district school board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning potential and must be signed by the student and the student's parent. The school district must notify the student's parent of receipt of the student's declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment.

The student's guidance counselor or other school personnel must conduct an exit interview with the student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and actions that could be taken to keep the student in school. The student must be informed of opportunities to continue his or her education in a different environment, including, but not limited to, adult education and GED test preparation. Additionally, the student must complete a survey in a format prescribed by the Department of Education to provide data on student reasons for terminating enrollment and actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled.

(d) Students who become or have become married and students who are pregnant shall not be prohibited from attending school. These students and students who are parents shall receive the same educational instruction or its equivalent as other students, but may voluntarily be assigned to a class or program suited to their special needs. Consistent with s. 1003.54, pregnant or parenting teens may participate in a teenage parent program. Pregnant students may attend alternative education programs or adult education programs, provided that the curriculum allows the student to continue to work toward a high school diploma.

(e) Consistent with rules adopted by the State Board of Education, children with disabilities who have attained the age of 3 years shall be eligible for admission to public special education programs and for related services under rules adopted by the district school board. Exceptional children who are deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, dual sensory impaired, severely physically handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, or profoundly handicapped, or who have established conditions, or exhibit developmental delays, below age 3 may be eligible for special programs; or, if enrolled in other school readiness programs, they may be eligible for supplemental instruction. Rules for the identification of established conditions for children birth through 2 years of age and developmental delays for children birth through 5 years of age must be adopted by the State Board of Education.

(f) Homeless children, as defined in s. 1003.01, must have access to a free public education and must be admitted to school in the school district in which they or their families live. School districts shall assist homeless children to meet the requirements of subsection (4) and s. 1003.22, as well as local requirements for documentation.

(2) (a) The State Board of Education may adopt rules under which students not meeting the entrance age may be transferred from another state if their parents have been legal residents of that state.

(b) Each district school board, in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education, shall adopt a policy that authorizes a parent to request and be granted permission for absence of a student from school for religious instruction or religious holidays.

(3) The district school superintendent may authorize certificates of exemptions from school attendance requirements in certain situations. Students within the compulsory attendance age limits who hold valid certificates of exemption that have been issued by the superintendent shall be exempt from attending school. A certificate of exemption shall cease to be valid at the end of the school year in which it is issued.

1003.23 Attendance records and reports. (Attendance defined)

(1) The attendance of all public K–12 school students shall be checked each school day in the manner prescribed by rules of the State Board of Education and recorded in the teacher’s register or by some approved system of recording attendance. Students may be counted in attendance only if they are actually present at school or are away from school on a school day and are engaged in an educational activity that constitutes a part of the school-approved instructional program for the student.

S. 1003.24 Parents responsible for attendance of children; attendance policy.

Each parent of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child’s school attendance as required by law. The absence of a student from school is prima facie evidence of a violation of this section; however, criminal prosecution under this chapter may not be brought against a parent until the provisions of s. 1003.26 have been complied with. A parent of a student is not responsible for the student’s nonattendance at school under any of the following conditions:

(1) WITH PERMISSION.—The absence was with permission of the head of the school;

(2) WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE.—The absence was without the parent’s knowledge, consent, or connivance, in which case the student shall be dealt with as a dependent child;

(3) FINANCIAL INABILITY.—The parent was unable financially to provide necessary clothes for the student, which inability was reported in writing to the superintendent prior to the opening of school or immediately after the beginning of such inability, provided that the validity of any claim for exemption under this subsection shall be determined by the district school superintendent subject to appeal to the district school board; or

(4) SICKNESS, INJURY, OR OTHER INSURMOUNTABLE CONDITION.—Attendance was impracticable or inadvisable on account of sickness or injury, attested to by a written statement of a licensed practicing physician, or was impracticable because of some other stated insurmountable condition as defined by rules of the State Board of Education. If a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school, he or she must be under the supervision of a physician in order to receive an excuse from attendance. Such excuse provides that a student’s condition justifies absence for more than the number of days permitted by the district school board.

Each district school board shall establish an attendance policy that includes, but is not limited to, the required number of days each school year that a student must be in attendance and the number of absences and tardies after which a statement explaining such absences and tardies must be on file at the school. Each school in the district must determine if an absence or tardies is excused or unexcused according to criteria established by the district school board.

1003.26 Enforcement of school attendance.

The Legislature finds that poor academic performance is associated with nonattendance and that school districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance. It is the policy of the state that each district school superintendent be responsible for enforcing school attendance of all students subject to the compulsory school age in the school district and supporting enforcement of school attendance by local law enforcement agencies. The responsibility includes recommending policies and procedures to the district school board that require public schools to respond in a timely manner to every unexcused absence, and every absence for which the reason is unknown, of students enrolled in the schools. District school board policies shall require the parent of a student to justify each absence of the student, and that justification will be evaluated based on adopted district school board policies that define excused and unexcused absences. The policies must provide that public schools track excused and unexcused absences and contact the home in the case of an unexcused absence from school, or an absence from school for which the reason is unknown, to prevent the development of patterns of nonattendance. The Legislature finds that early intervention in school attendance is the most effective way of producing good attendance habits that will lead to improved student learning and achievement. Each public school shall implement the following steps to promote and enforce regular school attendance:

(1) CONTACT, REFER, AND ENFORCE.—

(a) Upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the school principal or his or her designee shall contact the student's parent to determine the reason for the absence. If the absence is an excused absence, as defined by district school board policy, the school shall provide opportunities for the student to make up assigned work and not receive an academic penalty unless the work is not made up within a reasonable time.

(b) If a student has had at least five unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period, the student's primary teacher shall report to the school principal or his or her designee that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. The principal shall, unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, refer the case to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies, and the principal shall notify the district school superintendent and the school district contact for home education programs that the referred student is exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance.

(c) If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the child study team shall implement the following:

1. Frequent attempts at communication between the teacher and the family.
2. Evaluation for alternative education programs.
3. Attendance contracts.

The child study team may, but is not required to, implement other interventions, including referral to other agencies for family services or recommendation for filing a truancy petition pursuant to s. 984.151.

(d) The child study team shall be diligent in facilitating intervention services and shall report the case to the district school superintendent only when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance behavior are exhausted.

(e) If the parent refuses to participate in the remedial strategies because he or she believes that those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent may appeal to the district school board. The district school board may provide a hearing officer, and the hearing officer shall make a recommendation for final action to the district school board. If the district school board's final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate, and the parent still refuses to participate or cooperate, the district school superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.

(f) 1. If the parent of a child who has been identified as exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance enrolls the child in a home education program pursuant to chapter 1002, the district school superintendent shall provide the parent a copy of s. 1002.41 and the accountability requirements of this paragraph. The district school superintendent shall also refer the parent to a home education review committee composed of the district contact for home education programs and at least two home educators selected by the parent from a district list of all home educators who have conducted a home education program for at least 3 years and who have indicated a willingness to serve on the committee. The home education review committee shall review the portfolio of the student, as defined by s. 1002.41, every 30 days during the district's regular school terms until the committee is satisfied that the home education program is in compliance with s. 1002.41(1)(b). The first portfolio review must occur within the first 30 calendar days of the establishment of the program. The provisions of subparagraph 2. do not apply once the committee determines the home education program is in compliance with s. 1002.41(1)(b).

2. If the parent fails to provide a portfolio to the committee, the committee shall notify the district school superintendent. The district school superintendent shall then terminate the home education program and require the parent to enroll the child in an attendance option that meets the definition of "regular school attendance" under s. 1003.01(13)(a), (b), (c), or (e), within 3 days. Upon termination of a home education program pursuant to this subparagraph, the parent shall not be eligible to reenroll the child in a home education program for 180 calendar days. Failure of a parent to enroll the child in an attendance option as required by this subparagraph

after termination of the home education program pursuant to this subparagraph shall constitute noncompliance with the compulsory attendance requirements of s. 1003.21 and may result in criminal prosecution under s. 1003.27(2). Nothing contained herein shall restrict the ability of the district school superintendent, or the ability of his or her designee, to review the portfolio pursuant to s. 1002.41(1)(b).

(g) If a student subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the parent or the district school superintendent or his or her designee shall refer the case to the case staffing committee pursuant to s. 984.12, and the district school superintendent or his or her designee may file a truancy petition pursuant to the procedures in s. 984.151.

(2) GIVE WRITTEN NOTICE.—

(a) Under the direction of the district school superintendent, a designated school representative shall give written notice that requires enrollment or attendance within 3 days after the date of notice, in person or by return-receipt mail, to the parent when no valid reason is found for a student's nonenrollment in school. If the notice and requirement are ignored, the designated school representative shall report the case to the district school superintendent, and may refer the case to the case staffing committee, established pursuant to s. 984.12. The district school superintendent shall take such steps as are necessary to bring criminal prosecution against the parent.

(b) Subsequent to the activities required under subsection (1), the district school superintendent or his or her designee shall give written notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent that criminal prosecution is being sought for nonattendance. The district school superintendent may file a truancy petition, as defined in s. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in s. 984.151.

(3) RETURN STUDENT TO PARENT.—A designated school representative may visit the home or place of residence of a student and any other place in which he or she is likely to find any student who is required to attend school when the student is not enrolled or is absent from school during school hours without an excuse, and, when the student is found, shall return the student to his or her parent or to the principal or teacher in charge of the school, or to the private tutor from whom absent, or to the juvenile assessment center or other location established by the district school board to receive students who are absent from school. Upon receipt of the student, the parent shall be immediately notified.

(4) REPORT TO APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY.—A designated school representative shall report to the appropriate authority designated by law to receive such notices, all violations of the Child Labor Law that may come to his or her knowledge.

(5) RIGHT TO INSPECT.—A designated school representative shall have the right of access to, and inspection of, establishments where minors may be employed or detained only for the purpose of ascertaining whether students of compulsory school age are actually employed there and are actually working there regularly. The designated school representative shall, if he or she

finds unsatisfactory working conditions or violations of the Child Labor Law, report his or her findings to the appropriate authority.

1003.27 Court procedure and penalties.

The court procedure and penalties for the enforcement of the provisions of this part, relating to compulsory school attendance, shall be as follows:

(1) **COURT JURISDICTION.**—The circuit court has original and exclusive jurisdiction of all proceedings against, or prosecutions of, students under the provisions of this part. Proceedings against, or prosecutions of, parents or employers as provided by this section shall be in the court of each county having jurisdiction of misdemeanors wherein trial by jury is afforded the defendant.

(2) **NONENROLLMENT AND NONATTENDANCE CASES.**—

(a) In each case of nonenrollment or of nonattendance upon the part of a student who is required to attend some school, when no valid reason for such nonenrollment or nonattendance is found, the district school superintendent shall institute a criminal prosecution against the student's parent.

(b) Each public school principal or the principal's designee shall notify the district school board of each minor student under its jurisdiction who accumulates 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days. Each designee of the governing body of each private school, and each parent whose child is enrolled in a home education program, may provide the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles with the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each minor student under his or her jurisdiction who fails to satisfy relevant attendance requirements and who fails to otherwise satisfy the requirements of s. 322.091. The district school superintendent must provide the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each minor student who has been reported under this paragraph and who fails to otherwise satisfy the requirements of s. 322.091. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles may not issue a driver's license or learner's driver's license to, and shall suspend any previously issued driver's license or learner's driver's license of, any such minor student, pursuant to the provisions of s. 322.091.

(3) **HABITUAL TRUANCY CASES.**—The district school superintendent is authorized to file a truancy petition, as defined in s. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in s. 984.151. If the district school superintendent chooses not to file a truancy petition, procedures for filing a child-in-need-of-services petition shall be commenced pursuant to this subsection and chapter 984. In accordance with procedures established by the district school board, the designated school representative shall refer a student who is habitually truant and the student's family to the children-in-need-of-services and families-in-need-of-services provider or the case staffing committee, established pursuant to s. 984.12, as determined by the cooperative agreement required in this section. The case staffing committee may request the Department of Juvenile Justice or its designee to file a child-in-need-of-services petition based upon the report and efforts of the district school board or other community agency or may seek to resolve the truant behavior through the school or community-based organizations or agencies. Prior to and

subsequent to the filing of a child-in-need-of-services petition due to habitual truancy, the appropriate governmental agencies must allow a reasonable time to complete actions required by this section and s. 1003.26 to remedy the conditions leading to the truant behavior. Prior to the filing of a petition, the district school board must have complied with the requirements of s. 1003.26, and those efforts must have been unsuccessful.

(4) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The circuit manager of the Department of Juvenile Justice or the circuit manager’s designee, the district administrator of the Department of Children and Family Services or the district administrator’s designee, and the district school superintendent or the superintendent’s designee must develop a cooperative interagency agreement that:

(a) Clearly defines each department’s role, responsibility, and function in working with habitual truants and their families.

(b) Identifies and implements measures to resolve and reduce truant behavior.

(c) Addresses issues of streamlining service delivery, the appropriateness of legal intervention, case management, the role and responsibility of the case staffing committee, student and parental intervention and involvement, and community action plans.

(d) Delineates timeframes for implementation and identifies a mechanism for reporting results by the circuit juvenile justice manager or the circuit manager’s designee and the district school superintendent or the superintendent’s designee to the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Education and other governmental entities as needed.

(e) Designates which agency is responsible for each of the intervention steps in this section, to yield more effective and efficient intervention services.

(5) ATTENDANCE REGISTER AS EVIDENCE.—The register of attendance of students at a public, parochial, religious, denominational, or private school, or of students taught by a private tutor, kept in compliance with rules of the State Board of Education is prima facie evidence of the facts which it is required to show. A certified copy of any rule and a statement of the date of its adoption by the State Board of Education is admissible as prima facie evidence of the provisions of the rule and of the date of its adoption.

(6) PROCEEDINGS AND PROSECUTIONS; WHO MAY BEGIN.—Proceedings or prosecutions under this chapter may be commenced by the district school superintendent, by a designated school representative, by the probation officer of the county, by the executive officer of any court of competent jurisdiction, by an officer of any court of competent jurisdiction, or by a duly authorized agent of the Department of Education or the Department of Juvenile Justice. If a proceeding has been commenced against both a parent and a child pursuant to this chapter, the presiding courts shall make every effort to coordinate sanctions against the child and parent, including ordering the child and parent to perform community service hours or attend counseling together.

(7) PENALTIES.—The penalties for refusing or failing to comply with this chapter shall be as follows:

(a) The parent.—

1. A parent who refuses or fails to have a minor student who is under his or her control attend school regularly, or who refuses or fails to comply with the requirements in subsection (3), commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

2. The continued or habitual absence of a minor student without the consent of the principal or teacher in charge of the school he or she attends or should attend, or of the tutor who instructs or should instruct him or her, is prima facie evidence of a violation of this chapter; however, a showing that the parent has made a bona fide and diligent effort to control and keep the student in school shall be an affirmative defense to any criminal or other liability under this subsection and the court shall refer the parent and child for counseling, guidance, or other needed services.

3. In addition to any other punishment, the court shall order a parent who has violated this section to send the minor student to school, and may also order the parent to participate in an approved parent training class, attend school with the student unless this would cause undue hardship, perform community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate. If a parent is ordered to attend school with a student, the school shall provide for programming to educate the parent and student on the importance of school attendance. It shall be unlawful to terminate any employee solely because he or she is attending school with his or her child pursuant to a court order.

(b) The principal or teacher.--A principal or teacher in any public, parochial, religious, denominational, or private school, or a private tutor who willfully violates any provision of this chapter may, upon satisfactory proof of such violation, have his or her certificate revoked by the Department of Education.

(c) The employer.—

1. An employer who fails to notify the district school superintendent when he or she ceases to employ a student commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

2. An employer who terminates any employee solely because he or she is attending school with a student pursuant to court order commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(d) The student.—

1. In addition to any other authorized sanctions, the court shall order a student found to be a habitual truant to make up all school work missed and may order the student to pay a civil penalty of up to \$2, based on the student's ability to pay, for each day of school missed, perform

up to 25 community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate.

2. Upon a second or subsequent finding that a student is a habitual truant, the court, in addition to any other authorized sanctions, shall order the student to make up all school work missed and may order the student to pay a civil penalty of up to \$5, based on the student's ability to pay, for each day of school missed, perform up to 50 community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate.

1003.28 Continuation of truancy remedial activities upon transfer of student; retention of legal jurisdiction.

(1) If, during the activities designed to remedy truant behavior as described in s. 1003.27, the parent of the student who is the subject of such activities transfers the student to another school district in this state in an attempt to circumvent the remedial procedures which have already begun, the administration of the school from which the student transferred shall provide to the administration of the new school, at no charge, copies of all available records and documents relevant to such remedial activities, and the administration of the new school shall begin remedial activities in the program that most closely meets the transfer student's needs.

(2) In the event that a legal proceeding has commenced, as provided in s. 1003.27, against a student who has been determined to be a habitual truant, the movement of the student who is the subject of such proceeding to another circuit court district in this state will not affect the jurisdiction of the court to proceed with the case under the law.

1003.33 Report cards; end-of-the-year status.

(1) Each district school board shall establish and publish policies requiring the content and regular issuance of student report cards for all elementary school, middle school, and high school students. These report cards must clearly depict and grade:

(a) The student's academic performance in each class or course, which in grades 1 through 12 must be based upon examinations as well as written papers, class participation, and other academic performance criteria, and must include the student's performance or nonperformance at his or her grade level.

(b) The student's conduct and behavior.

(c) The student's attendance, including absences and tardiness.

(2) A student's final report card for a school year shall contain a statement indicating end-of-the-year status regarding performance or nonperformance at grade level, acceptable or unacceptable behavior and attendance, and promotion or nonpromotion. District school boards shall not allow schools to exempt students from academic performance requirements based on practices or policies designed to encourage student attendance. A student's attendance record may not be used in whole or in part to provide an exemption from any academic performance requirement.

1006.09 Duties of school principal relating to student discipline and school safety.

(1)(b) No student shall be suspended for unexcused tardiness, lateness, absence, or truancy.

984.151 Truancy petition; prosecution; disposition.

(1) If the school determines that a student subject to compulsory school attendance has had at least five unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period pursuant to s. 1003.26(1)(b), or has had more than 15 unexcused absences in a 90-calendar-day period, the superintendent of schools may file a truancy petition.

(2) The petition shall be filed in the circuit in which the student is enrolled in school.

(3) Original jurisdiction to hear a truancy petition shall be in the circuit court; however, the circuit court may use a general or special master pursuant to Supreme Court rules. Upon the filing of the petition, the clerk shall issue a summons to the parent, guardian, or legal custodian of the student, directing that person and the student to appear for a hearing at a time and place specified.

(4) The petition must contain the following: the name, age, and address of the student; the name and address of the student's parent or guardian; the school where the student is enrolled; the efforts the school has made to get the student to attend school; the number of out-of-school contacts between the school system and student's parent or guardian; and the number of days and dates of days the student has missed school. The petition shall be sworn to by the superintendent or his or her designee.

(5) Once the petition is filed, the court shall hear the petition within 30 days.

(6) The student and the student's parent or guardian shall attend the hearing.

(7) If the court determines that the student did miss any of the alleged days, the court shall order the student to attend school and the parent to ensure that the student attends school, and may order any of the following: the student to participate in alternative sanctions to include mandatory attendance at alternative classes to be followed by mandatory community services hours for a period up to 6 months; the student and the student's parent or guardian to participate in homemaker or parent aide services; the student or the student's parent or guardian to participate in intensive crisis counseling; the student or the student's parent or guardian to participate in community mental health services if available and applicable; the student and the student's parent or guardian to participate in service provided by voluntary or community agencies as available; and the student or the student's parent or guardian to participate in vocational, job training, or employment services.

(8) If the student does not successfully complete the sanctions ordered in subsection (7), the case shall be referred to the case staffing committee under s. 984.12 with a recommendation to file a child-in-need-of-services petition under s. 984.15.

(9) The parent, guardian, or legal custodian and the student shall participate, as required by court order, in any sanctions or services required by the court under this section, and the court shall enforce such participation through its contempt power.

Appendix B: 2015 CINS/Families-in-Need-of-Services (FINS) Programs

NOTE: Where “Serving Counties” appears for a shelter, the judicial circuit is served by more than one provider/shelter and specific counties are assigned. If a county is not identified, this means the provider/shelter indicated serves all counties within the judicial circuit. A provider/shelter number in parentheses indicates a shelter that has been previously listed.

1st Circuit: Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton

Lutheran Services Florida/ Northwest

Beth Deck, NW Director

4610 W. Fairfield Drive

Pensacola, FL 32506

Phone: 850-453-2772, ext. 13

Fax: 850-453-2866

Bdeck@lsfnet.org

Shelters: **1. Currie House**
Patricia Rock, Shelter Services Manager
Sherri Swann, Clinical Services Manager
4610 West Fairfield Drive
Pensacola, FL 32506
Phone: 850-453-2772
Fax: 850-453-2866
prock@LSFnet.org
Serving Counties: Escambia, Santa Rosa

2. HOPE House
Patricia Rock, Shelter Services Manager
5127 Eastland Street
Crestview, FL 32539
Phone: 850-682-2374
Fax: 850-682-8495
prock@LSFnet.org
Serving Counties: Okaloosa, Walton

2nd Circuit: Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Wakulla

Capital City Youth Services

Kevin Priest, CEO/President

2407 Roberts Avenue

Tallahassee, FL 32310

Phone: 850-576-6000, ext. 311

Fax: 850-576-2580

kpriest@ccys.org

Shelter: **3. Someplace Else Youth Shelter** (this shelter serves counties in other circuits)
Shannon Martin, Program Services Director
2407 Roberts Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32310
Phone: 850-576-6000, ext. 314
Fax: 850-576.2580
Shannon@ccys.org

3rd Circuit: Columbia, Dixie, Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor

Capital City Youth Services

Kevin Priest, CEO/President

2407 Roberts Avenue

Tallahassee, FL 32310

Phone: 850-576-6000, ext. 311

Fax: 850-576-2580

kpriest@ccys.org

Shelter: **(3) Someplace Else Youth Shelter** (this shelter serves counties in other circuits)

Katie Shade, Program Services Director

2407 Roberts Avenue

Tallahassee, FL 32310

Phone: 850-576-6000, ext. 314

Fax: 850-576-2580

Katie@ccys.org

Serving Counties: Madison, Taylor

CDS Family and Behavioral Health Services, Inc.

Jim Pearce, Chief Executive Officer

3615 SW 13th Street

Gainesville, FL 32608

Phone: 352-244-0628, ext. 3824

Fax: 352-244-0668

Jim_pearce@cdfsfl.org

Shelter: **4. Interface N.W.** (this shelter serves counties in other circuits)

Rhonda Lockwood, Program Coordinator

1884 SW Grandview Street

Lake City, FL 32055

Phone: 386-487-0190

Fax: 386-487-0195

rhonda_lockwood@cornerdrugstore.org

Serving Counties: Columbia, Dixie, Hamilton, Lafayette, Suwannee

4th Circuit: Clay, Duval, Nassau

Wayman Community Development Corp.

Non-Residential Services Only

T'Lana Russell, Executive Director

1176 LaBelle Street

Jacksonville, FL 32205

Phone: 904-693-1503

Fax: 904-693-1127

trussell@wayman.org

Youth Crisis Center, Inc

Greg Steele, President

Butch Sims, VP

3015 Parental Home Road

Jacksonville, FL 32216

Phone: 904-720-0002

Fax: 904-724-8513

Butch@ycc.org

Shelter: 5. Youth Crisis Center—The Safe Place (this shelter serves counties in other circuits)

Kim Sirdevan, Director of Programs

3015 Parental Home Road

Jacksonville, FL 32216

Phone: 904-725-6662

Fax: 904-724-8513

5th Circuit: Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion, Sumter

Arnette House

Cheri Brandies, CEO

2310 N.E. 24th Street

Ocala, FL 34470

Phone: 352-622-4432

Fax: 352-622-2830

kpriest@arnettehouse.org

Shelter: 6. Arnette House

Ralph Rivers, Program Director

Sherry Brandies, Program Director

2310 N.E. 24th Street

Ocala, FL 34470

Phone: 352-622-6135

Fax: 352-622-2830

Serving Counties: Lake, Marion

Youth and Family Alternatives, Inc.
George Magrill, President/CEO
Andy Coble, CINS contact
7524 Plathe Road
New Port Richey, FL 34653
Phone: 727-835.4184
Fax: 727-835-4196
gmagrill@yfainc.org
mphillips@yfainc.org

Parents and Children
Phone: 800-539-4228

Shelter: **7. New Beginnings Youth Shelter**
Danielle Husband, Program Director
18377 Clinton Blvd.
Brooksville, FL 34601
Phone: 352-797-7566
Fax: 352-799-8058
husband@yfainc.org
Serving Counties: Citrus, Hernando, Sumter

Non-Residential Services
Phone: 352-797-6199
Fax: 352-797-6142

6th Circuit: Pasco, Pinellas

Bethel Community Foundation
James Myles, CEO
Non residential Services
2901 54th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33712
Phone: 727-866-2747
Fax: 727-866-2787
james.myles@verizon.net
Serving County: Pinellas

Family Resources, Inc.
Jane Harper, President/CEO
5180 62nd Avenue North
Pinellas Park, FL 33781
Phone: 727-521-5202
Fax: 727-521-5210
Jane@family-resources.org

Shelters: **8. Safe Place 2B - St. Pete Shelter**
Nicole MacKnew, Director
3821 5th Ave., North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33713
Phone: 727-384-8336
Fax: 727-298-1695

Serving County: Pinellas
9. SafePlace2B - Clearwater
Kelly Carter-Feller, Residential Supervisor
1615 Union Street
Clearwater, FL. 33755
Phone: 727-298-1606
Fax: 727-518-3322
Kcarter-feller@family-resources.org
Serving County: Pinellas

Thaise Educational & Exposure Tours
Teresa Clove, ED
1111 18th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33712
Phone: 727-482-9414
Thaise65@gmail.com
Serving County: Pinellas

Non-Residential Services Only
Mailing Address:
PO Box 35187
St. Petersburg, FL 33712

Youth and Family Alternatives, Inc.
George Magrill, President/CEO
Andy Coble, CINS Contact
7524 Plathe Road
New Port Richey, FL 34653
Phone: 727-835-4184
Fax: 727-835-4196
gmagrill@yfainc.org
mphillips@yfainc.org

Shelter: **10. Runaway Alternatives Project (RAP House)**
Carolyn Kehr, Program Director
7522 Plathe Road
New Port Richey, FL 34653
Phone: 727-835-1777
Fax: 727-835-1773
ckehr@fainc.org
Serving County: Pasco

Non-Residential Services
727-835-4166
727-835-3942

7th Circuit: Flagler, Putnam, St. Johns, Volusia

Stewart-Marchman Act Behavioral Healthcare
Heather Prince, Program Director
1004 Big Tree Road
Daytona Beach, Florida 32114
Phone: 386-236-3249
Fax: 386-236-3155

hprince@smabehavioral.org

Shelter: **11. BEACH House**
1004 Big Tree Road
South Daytona, FL 32119
Phone: 386-236-3111
Fax: 386-236-3155
Serving Counties: Flagler, Volusia

CDS Family and Behavioral Health Services, Inc.

Jim Pearce, CEO
3615 SW 13th Street
Gainesville, FL 32608
Phone: 352-244-0628
Fax: 352-244-0668
Jim_pearce@cdfsfl.org

Shelter: **12. Interface-East** (this shelter serves counties in other circuits)
Cindy Starling, Program Coordinator
2919 Kennedy Street
Palatka, FL 32177
Phone: 386-385-0405
Fax: 386-385-0410
Cindy_starling@cdfsfl.org
Serving County: Putnam

Youth Crisis Center, Inc.

Greg Steele, President
Butch Sims, VP
3015 Parental Home Road
Jacksonville, FL 32216
Phone: 904-720-0002
Fax: 904-724-8513
greg@ycc.org

Shelters: **(5.) YCC** (this shelter serves counties in other circuits)
Kim Sirdevan, Director of Programs
3015 Parental Home Road
Jacksonville, FL 32216
Phone: 904-725-6662
Fax: 904-724-8513
kim@ycc.org
Serving County: St. Johns

8th Circuit: Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, Union

CDS Family and Behavioral Health Services, Inc.

Jim Pearce, CEO

3615 SW 13th Street
Gainesville, FL 32608
Phone: 352-244-0628
Fax: 352-244-0668
Jim_pearce@cdfsfl.org

Shelters: 13. Interface-Central
Cassandra Evans, Program Coordinator
1400 Northwest 29th Road
Gainesville, FL 32605
Phone: 352-244-0618
Fax: 352-244-0699
Serving Counties: Alachua, Gilchrest, Levy

(12.) Interface-East (this shelter serves counties in other circuits)
Cindy Starling, Program Coordinator
2919 Kennedy Street
Palatka, FL 32177
Phone: 386-385-0405
Fax: 386-385-0410
Cindy_starling@cdfsfl.org
Serving Counties: Bradford, Union

Shelter: (5). Youth Crisis Center—The Safe Place (this shelter serves counties in other circuits)
Kim Sirdevan, Director of Programs
3015 Parental Home Road
Jacksonville, FL 32216
Phone: 904-725-6662
Fax: 904-724-8513
Serving County: Baker

9th Circuit: Orange, Osceola

Apostolic Worship Child Development/Youth Central

Non-Residential Services

Frank E. Thompson, President
8001 Silver Star Road
Orlando, FL 32818
Phone: 407-522-6511
Worship2@bellsouth.net
Serving County: Orange

Children's Home Society Osceola County

Non-Residential Services Only

Stacy Dano, Director of Program Operations

2653 Michigan Avenue

Kissimmee, FL 34744

Phone: 407-488-8778

Stacey.Dano@chsfl.org

Serving County: Osceola

Orange County Youth and Family Services Division

Paulette Hinton, Director of Program Operations

3657 Maguire Blvd., Suite 150

Orlando, FL 32803

Phone: 407-897-6370, ext. 226

Fax: 407-893-3604

Annemarie.sheffield@ocfl.net

Shelter: 14. Orange County Youth Shelter

Tracy Salem, Program Manager

1800 East Michigan Street

Orlando, FL 32806

Phone: 407-836-7626

Fax: 407-836-7469

Tracy.salem@ocfl.net

Orange County Family Counseling

Non-Residential Services Only

Rodney Hrobar, Sr., Program Manager

3657 Maguire Blvd., Suite 150

Orlando, FL 32803

Phone: 407-897-6370, ext. 224

Fax: 407-228-1422

Rodney.Hrobar@ocfl.net

Thaise Educational & Exposure Tours

Non-Residential Services Only

Teresa Clove, ED

101 Parramore Avenue

Orlando, FL 32805

Phone: 407-490-6401

teresaclove2@gmail.com

Serving County: Orange

10th Circuit: Hardee, Highlands, Polk

Youth and Family Alternatives, Inc.

George Magrill, President/CEO

Mark Phillips Case Manager

7524 Plathe Road

New Port Richey, FL 34653

Phone: 727-835-4184

Fax: 727-835-4196

gmagrill@yfainc.org

mphillips@yfainc.org

Shelter: 15. George W. Harris Jr. Runaway and Youth Crisis Shelter

Glenn Parkinson, Program Director

1060 US Hwy 17 South

Bartow, FL 33830

Phone: 863-595-0220

Fax: 863-595-0225

gparkinson@yfainc.org

Non-Residential Services

863-499-2430

863-499-2434

11th Circuit: Dade

Center for Family & Child Enrichment

Non-Residential Services Only

T. Delores Dunn, Executive Director

Mary Williams, Program Director CINS/FINS

1825 NW 167th Street, Suite 102

Miami, FL 33056

Phone: 305-624-7450

Fax: 305-623-7893

ddunn@cfceinc.org

Miami Bridge Youth and Family Services

Mary Andrews, Interim Executive Director

2810 N. W. South River Drive

Miami, FL 33125

Phone: 305-636-3510

Fax: 305-636-3521

mandrews@miamibridge.org

Shelters: **16. Miami Bridge – Central**
Ashely Kupperman, Shelter Director
2810 N.W. South River Drive
Miami, FL 33125
Phone: 305-635-8953
Fax: 305-636-3521
akupperman@miamibridge.org

17. Miami Bridge-Homestead/South Dade
Taurean Robinson, Residential Coordinator
326 N. W. 3rd Avenue
Homestead, FL 33030
Phone: 305-246.8956
Fax: 305-242-8222
troberson@miamibridge.org

12th Circuit: DeSoto, Manatee, Sarasota

Family Resources

Jane Harper, President/CEO
Lisa Davis, Executive Director, Manatee County
5180 62nd Avenue North
Pinellas Park, FL 33781
Phone: 727-521-5202
Fax: 727-521-5210
jan@family-resources.org

Shelter: **18. SafePlace2B**
Jessica Lott, Residential Supervisor
1001 9th Avenue West
Bradenton, FL 34205
Phone: 941-708-5850
Fax: 941-708-5857
jlott@familyresources.org
Serving County: Manatee

Sarasota Family YMCA, Inc.
John Halcomb, Executive Director
1 South School Avenue
Sarasota, FL 34237
Phone: 941-366-9221
Fax: 941-366-5658
jhalcomb@sarasota-ymca.org

Shelter: **19. Sarasota YMCA Youth Shelter**
Nicole Hartsock, Program Director
1106 South Briggs
Sarasota, FL 34237
Phone: 941-365-7279
Fax: 941-955-7195
nhartstock@sarasota-ymca.org.
Serving Counties: DeSoto, Sarasota

Non-Residential Services
Sonia Santiago
stsantiago@ymcasarasota.org

13th Circuit: Hillsborough

Hillsborough County Children’s Services
JoAnn R. Pressey, M.A., Interim Executive Director
3110 Clay Mangum Lane
Tampa, FL 33618
Phone: 813-264-3821 ext. 101
Fax: 813-264-3874
PresseyJ@hillsboroughcounty.org

Shelter: **20. Haven W. Poe Runaway Shelter**
Julie Edison, Program Manager
3110 Clay Mangum Lane
Tampa, FL 33618
Phone: 813-272-6606
Fax: 813-272-7160
edisonj@hillsboroughcounty.org

Tampa Housing Authority
Non-Residential Services Only
Stephanie Gilmore
Suzan McIntyre
5103 West Cypress Street
Tampa, FL 33607
Phone: 813-341-9101 ext. 2120
813-254-7568
stephanieb@thafl.com
suzanm@thafl.com

Youth Advocate Program
Non-Residential Services Only
Felicia Wells, CINS contact
2631 E. Lake Ave. Suite Z
Tampa, FL 33610
Phone: 813-248-3980
813-254-7568
fwells@yapinc.org

14th Circuit: Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Washington

Anchorage Children's Home of Bay County, Inc.

Steve Blumenthal, Executive Director

2121 Lisenby Avenue

Panama City, FL 32405

Phone: 850-763-7102, ext. 204

Fax: 850-769-0855

sblumenthal@anchoragechildrenshome.org

Shelter: 21. Hidle House

Jennessa Hart, Shelter Director

2121 Lisenby Avenue

Panama City, FL 32405

Phone: 850-784-1020

Fax: 850-784-4890

jhart@anchoragechildrenshome.org

15th Circuit: Palm Beach

Children's Home Society of Florida

Julie DeMar, Interim Executive Director

3333 Forest Hill Boulevard

West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Phone: 561-868-4384

Fax: 561-868-4499

Julie.DeMar@chsfl.org

Shelter: 22. Safe Harbor Runaway Center

Michelle Galloway, Director

3335 Forest Hill Boulevard

West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Phone: 561-868-4444

Fax: 561-833-4855

Urban League of Palm Beach County

Non-Residential Services Only

Patrick J. Franklin

1700 Australian Avenue

West Palm Beach, FL 33407

Phone: 561-833-1461

Fax: 561-833-6050

frankln@ulpbc.org

16th Circuit: Monroe

Florida Keys Children's Shelter, Inc.

Greg Brown, President/CEO

73 High Point Road

Tavernier, FL 33070

Phone: 305-852-4246, ext. 235

Fax: 305-852-6902

gbrown@fkcs.org

Shelter: 23. Florida Keys Children's Shelter

Bill Mann, Clinical Coordinator

73 High Point Road

Tavernier, FL 33070

Phone: 305-852-4246

Fax: 305-852-6902

bmann@fkcs.org

17th Circuit: Broward

Lutheran Services Florida/Southeast

Broward Family Center

Diane Bates, Regional Director

4185 North State Road 7

Lauderdale Lakes, FL 33319

Phone: 954-486-4222

Fax: 954-486-9942

dbates@lsfnet.org

Shelter: 24. Lippman Youth Shelter

Derrick Myers, Shelter Director

221 N. W. 43rd Court

Oakland Park, FL 33309

Phone: 954-568-2801

Fax: 954-568-2729

Mt. Bethel Human Services

Non-Residential Services Only

Rosby Glover, Executive Director

1021 NW 6th Street

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

Phone: 954-766-6058

rglover@mtbbc.org

Community Based Connections
Non-Residential Services Only
Brian C. Johnson, President CEO
1033 Sistrunk Blvd., Suite 201
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311
Phone: 954-763-5010
bcjohnson@communitybasedconnections.com

18th Circuit: Brevard, Seminole

Crosswinds Youth Services, Inc.
Jan Lokay, President/CEO
1407 Dixon Boulevard
Cocoa, FL 32922
Phone: 321-452-0800, ext. 208
Fax: 321-394-0375
JanLokay@aol.com

Shelter: 25. Robert E. Lehton Children's Shelter
Pierre Bando
1407 Dixon Boulevard
Cocoa, FL 32922
Phone: 321-394-0345
Fax: 321-394-0380
pierrebandoo@crosswindseyouthservices.org
Serving County: Brevard

Boys Town of Central Florida, Inc.
Greg Zbylut, Executive Director
37 Alafaya Woods Blvd.
Oviedo, FL 32765
Phone: 407-366-3667
Fax: 407-365-5397
gregory.zbylut@boystown.org

Non-Residential Program
Bethany Lacey, Program Director
bethany.lacey@boystown.org

Shelter: 26. Intervention and Assessment Center
Al McCray, Program Director
1350 Healing Place
Oviedo, FL 32765
Phone: 407-588-2160
Fax: 407-321-8087
Aleundro@boystown.org
Serving County: Seminole

19th Circuit: Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, St. Lucie

Children's Home Society

Sabrina Barnes, Executive Director

590 NW Peacock Blvd. Suite 9

Port St. Lucie, FL 34950

Phone: 772-344-4020

Fax: 772-344-4030

Sabrina.Barnes@chsfl.org

Shelter: **27. Wave C.R.E.S.T.**
Matthew Anderson, Program Director
4520 Selvitz Road
Ft. Pierce, FL 34981
Phone: 772-460-9752
Fax: 772-460-9756
Matthew.Anderson@chsfl.org

20th Circuit: Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee

Lutheran Services Florida/Southwest

Tom Desio, Executive Director

3615 Central Avenue, Suite 3

Ft. Myers, FL 33901

Phone: 239-278-1140

Fax: 239-275-8567

pleonard@lsfnet.org

Shelter: **28. Oasis Youth Shelter**
Jeffery Piles, Shelter Manager
3634 Central Avenue
Fort Myers, FL 33901
Phone: 239-278-1030
Fax: 239-278-7965
jpyles@lsfnet.org

Appendix C: Attendance Recordkeeping Required Codes for PK-12 Students

The following link contains required attendance recordkeeping codes for PK-12 students in Florida public schools: <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7729/urlt/0100415-appenda.xls>.

Appendix D: Home Education Enrollment Contacts

See updates of home education contacts at

https://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/District/district_list.asp?prgmttype=4.

Appendix E: Selected Web-Based Information and Resources

TAP: Education for Homeless Children and Youth

<http://info.fl DOE.org/docshare/dsweb/Get/Document-4702/TAP-2007-150.pdf>

Homeless Education Coordinators

<https://app1.fl DOE.org/flbpso/nclbchoice/bpsDirectory/directory.aspx>

Home Education Contacts

https://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/District/district_list.asp?prgtype=4

Florida Coalition for the Homeless

A Florida organization that provides information to local homeless coalitions and other interested parties. Membership includes homeless advocates, service providers, faith-based providers, former homeless persons, educators, attorneys and mental health professionals.

<http://www.fchonline.org>

Florida Department of Children and Families, Office of Homelessness

The Office of Homelessness was established in 2001 to be a central point of contact within state government on the issue of homelessness. The primary duty of this office is to coordinate state agency programs and services that assist those persons or families who have become homeless, or who are at risk for becoming homeless. An annual report is available on-line.

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/homelessness>

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)

The NAEHCY is a national association that connects educators, parents, advocates, researchers and service providers to ensure school enrollment, attendance and overall success for children and youth whose lives have been disrupted by the lack of safe, permanent and adequate housing.

<http://www.naehcy.org>

National Center for School Engagement (NCSE)

NCSE integrates/promotes the three A's necessary for school success. They are attendance, attachment and achievement. Promoting attendance involves the design and implementation of evidence-based strategies to reduce excused and unexcused absences.

<http://schoolengagement.org/about-us-3/mission>.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)

OJJDP provides an overview of truancy issues, its causes and solutions to the problem. Their "Tool Kit for Creating Your Own Truancy Reduction Program" outlines critical components of truancy programs, such as family involvement, use of incentives and sanctions, developing a support network and program evaluation. The tool kit examines the legal and economic implications of truancy and provides recommendations to courts, schools, state lawmakers and researchers for addressing this issue.

<http://www.ojjdp.gov>