



SPONSOR: Rep. Matthews & Sen. McDowell
Reps. Hudson, Keeley, Lynn, Mitchell, Osienski,
B. Short, K. Williams; Sens. Ennis, Poore, Walsh

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
149th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 24

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend § 2702, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strikethrough and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 2702. Compulsory attendance requirements; evaluation of readiness.

(d) The following provisions shall be applicable in regard to statewide minimum mandatory attendance requirements in each school year for children in grades K through 12.

(1) Following the fifth day of unexcused absence by a student, the school shall immediately contact the parent or parents or guardian and schedule a conference at the school or at the student's home where an informal needs assessment for both the student and the parent or parents or guardian shall be completed to determine what available services would improve the student's attendance;

~~(1)(2)~~ Following the tenth day of unexcused absence by a student, the school shall immediately notify the parent or parents or guardian and a visiting teacher for the district shall visit the student's home;

~~(2)(3)~~ Following the fifteenth day of unexcused absence by a student, the student's parent or parents or guardian shall be notified by certified mail to appear at the school within 10 days of notification for a conference and counseling;

~~(3)(4)~~ Following the twentieth day of unexcused absence by a student, the school shall refer the case for prosecution;

~~(4)(5)~~ Following the completion of prosecution of the case and the subsequent failure of the student to return to school within 5 school days thereof, the school shall immediately notify the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families requesting intervention services by the Department. The Department shall contact the family within 10 business days.

(e) Following the tenth unexcused day of attendance by a student in grades 6 through 12 inclusive, the building principal shall notify a visiting teacher of such unexcused days.

23 (f) If contacted by the school pursuant to paragraph ~~(d)(2)~~(d)(3) of this section, each parent or guardian of a
24 student shall sign a contract with the district agreeing they will make every reasonable effort to:
25 (1) Have their child or children abide by the school code of conduct;
26 (2) Make certain their child attends school regularly; and
27 (3) Provide written documentation for the reasons for any absence.

SYNOPSIS

This bill requires a conference with the parent or guardian of a student who has been absent without excuse for 5 days from school. A needs assessment will be performed to determine what supports or services will help the student and family improve school attendance. Moving the intervention forward to the fifth unexcused absence rather than the 10th may help to improve outcomes for Delaware's students and help prevent students from disengaging from the school community and dropping out of school.