



## Third Judicial District Attorney State of New Mexico

**MARK D'ANTONIO**  
District Attorney

845 North Motel Blvd.  
Second Floor, Suite D  
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88007

Phone: (575) 524-6370  
Fax: (575) 524-6379

Dear Public School Parent,

Children are a blessing. However, raising children is full of challenges. My administration is taking a proactive and holistic approach in the enforcement of the Compulsory School Attendance Law (CSAL).

This will be a priority of the Third Judicial District Attorney's Office. We take pride in working hand-in-hand with Child Protective Services (CYFD), the Juvenile Probation and Parole Office, your local school district, and our very own Children's Court toward the goal of keeping our kids in school. School Attendance is very important because a fully attended educational program assists in family stability, better jobs, lower gang affiliation, and reduced domestic violence. Working together to create a positive learning environment for our children's benefit must be a primary goal for the entire community.

Please be our partner in education by ensuring that your child or children attend school. Always provide a legitimate written excuse for your child when he or she is absent. The CSAL states that students with excessive absences (meaning 10 or more unexcused absences) within the school year will be brought to the attention of the Juvenile Probation Office and the Third Judicial District Attorney's Office. Such a notice will start the prosecution of the parent(s). All parent(s) or guardian(s) of school age children are responsible for their child's school attendance. **Prosecution is pursued when the parent or guardian fails to address attendance problems or is unwilling to cooperate with the school regarding attendance.** If you are not familiar with your school's attendance policy, please contact the schools' principal.

As parents, we are ultimately responsible for our children's school attendance. I am confident that the majority of parents do not want to jeopardize their child's future by fostering unexcused absences. However, if parents are found to be the cause of the child's unexcused absences, they will be held accountable and will be required to appear at the Truancy Parent Accountability Court (TPAC). A conviction in the TPAC can result in penalties of fines and community service. Repeated offenses can lead to imprisonment of up to six months.

As a parent, law enforcement official, and community member, I understand the crucial role that education plays in the success of a child's life and in the safety of our community. I ask that you please assist me in making our educational system the best it can be. If you have any questions about the Compulsory School Attendance Law, please contact your child's principal or the District Attorneys Truancy Program Coordinator at 575-524-6370.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark D'Antonio".

Mark D'Antonio  
Third Judicial District Attorney