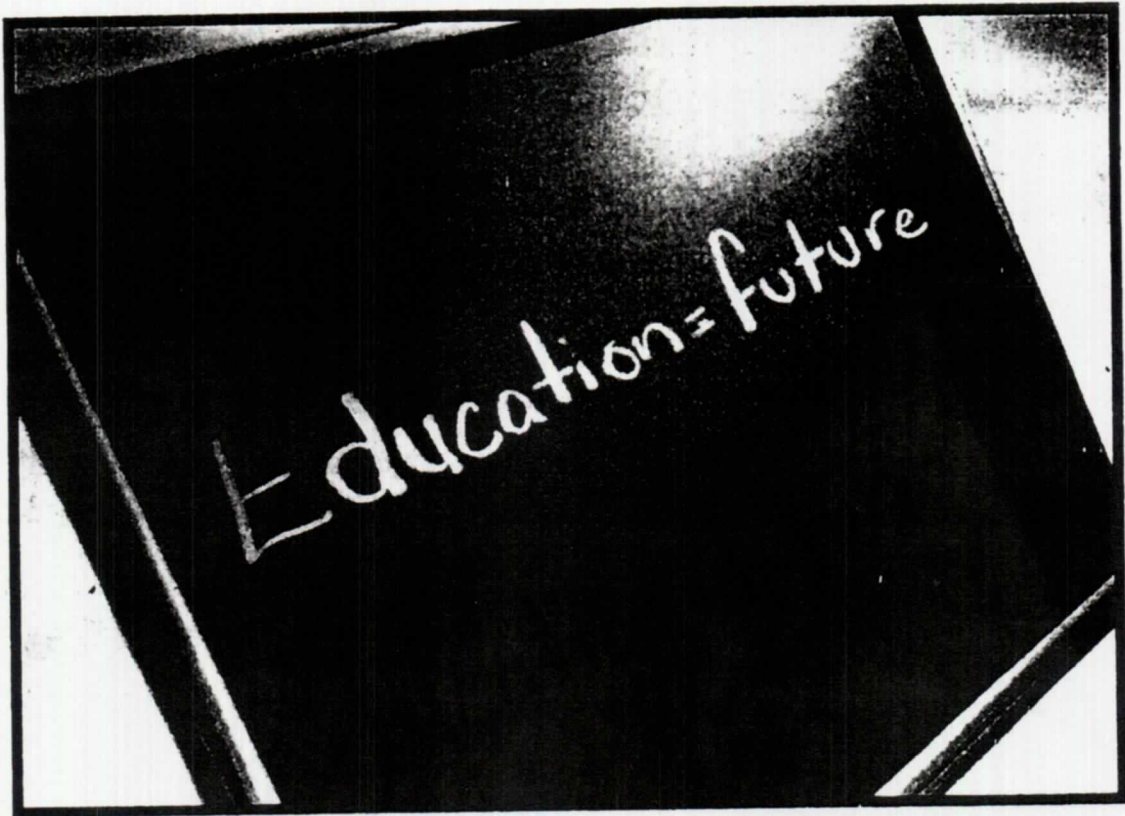


CASS COUNTY EDUCATION COURT

PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS FOR THE CHILDREN OF CASS COUNTY



WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF MISSOURI

**Cass County Justice Center
2501 W. Mechanic
Harrisonville, Missouri 64701**



What are the requirements of parents as to compulsory school attendance in Missouri?

Any person who has the charge, control or custody of a child from the age of five (5) until the child turns seventeen (17) years of age (or other compulsory attendance age set by the district) is required to ensure the child attends school under §167.031 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri.

What are the potential legal consequences for failing to ensure my child attends school as required?

Failure to comply with this compulsory school attendance law after conviction is a class C misdemeanor, punishable by up to fifteen (15) days in jail and up to a fine of \$300.00 for each day the child does not attend school. If you fail to ensure that your child maintains regular attendance at school, a report will be made to law enforcement for your failure to comply with Missouri's compulsory school attendance law and the prosecutor's office may file charges based on that report.

A petition may also be filed in the Juvenile Court by the Juvenile Officer alleging Educational Neglect pursuant to §211.031 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri and the Judge of the Juvenile Court may find that you neglected your child and order you to participate in services or may order that the child be removed from your home under certain serious circumstances where the attendance issues are not resolved and are shown to be detrimental to the child.

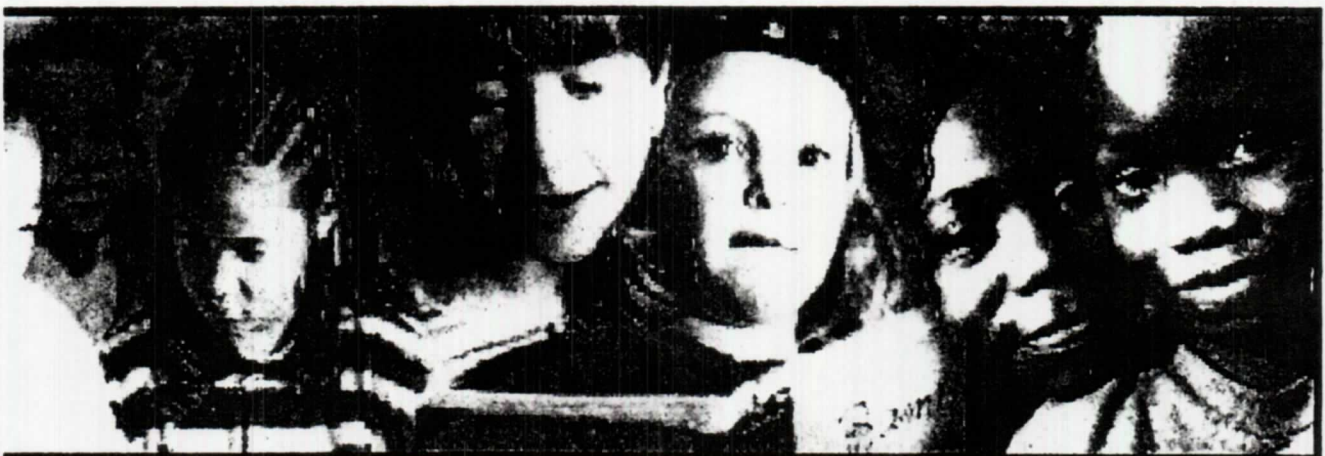


What is the "Cass County Education Court"?

The Cass County Education Court will serve as a specialized court designed to facilitate and promote regular school attendance for children in the first through the fourth grades by holding parents accountable for ensuring their child attends school as required while also assisting the parents in resolving barriers and challenges to the regular school attendance of their child.

The Cass County Education Court is a multi-faceted program involving numerous community stakeholders and agencies committed to promoting the best interests of children in Cass County, Missouri including local school districts, Cass County Prosecutor, Cass County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies, Juvenile Office, social service agencies, community health and mental health providers, members of the Cass County Bar Association and legal community, and members of the judiciary of the Seventeen Judicial Circuit – Juvenile Division.

Cases will be referred to the Cass County Education Court by school personnel after the efforts of the school district have failed to resolve the attendance issue. All cases will be heard by a Judge in the Cass County Education Court and the court process will be much like other judicial proceedings except the focus will center on promoting the educational success of the child by resolving the attendance issue through coordination of appropriate services to the family and accountability through all legal processes and resources available to the court to ensure the child attends school as required by law.



What are the benefits of an alternative such as the Cass County Education Court?

Children that regularly attend school are less likely to be involved in the juvenile justice or adult court systems. Early educational success promotes the best opportunity for future academic achievement and social competencies for children and young adults and employment opportunities into adulthood. All children benefit from and deserve the quality education needed to succeed in today's world and that can only occur when the child regularly attends school. The Cass County Education Court will ensure those opportunities exist for the children of Cass County, Missouri.

What can I do to avoid a referral to the Cass County Education Court and further contact with the legal system due to school attendance issues?

- ✓ Ensure your child attends school each day that school is in session absent an appropriate reason to miss school such as illness or a family emergency.
- ✓ Cooperate with the school and keep the school informed of any difficulties you may be experiencing.
- ✓ Don't ignore letters or telephone calls from the school about your child's school attendance – respond and take appropriate action to address the concerns of the school.
- ✓ Make education a priority in your household and be an active participant in your child's education.
- ✓ If you need help – ask for help and seek out the available services in the community or request information or referrals from social service or other agencies to assist you.

Where can I obtain further information?

Additional information may be obtained from your local school district or the Cass County Juvenile Office at (816) 380-8475.

