



Changes to Compulsory Attendance and Truancy Statutes  
as of September 19, 2019

The 129th Legislature passed two bills, LD 150 and 151, that changed Maine's compulsory school attendance and truancy statutes for younger students. Those changes are summarized below:

- As of Sept. 19, 2019, compulsory attendance extends to all 6 year olds. Children must now be enrolled and attending school from their 6th birthday until their 17th birthday.
- Any 6 year old who is not enrolled in public school must now be participating in an alternative to public instruction – either a private school or a home school program.
- A 5 year old who has been enrolled in public school must attend throughout the regular school session unless and until the parent or guardian withdraws the child from school.
- 5 year olds who are not enrolled in or who have been withdrawn from public school are not required to participate in an alternative form of instruction.
- 6 year olds and enrolled 5 year olds are considered truant if they accrue 5 consecutive or 7 cumulative unexcused absences. Truancy incidents for 5 and 6 year olds should be reported and responded to using the process outlined in 20-A MRSA Section 5051-A(2).

*Within their local attendance policies, schools may assert an expectation that enrolled children under the age of 5 will maintain regular attendance. But the statutory changes only address attendance for children aged 5 and 6.*