

## Reasons Other Than Truancy

There are reasons, other than truancy, that juveniles are out of school during the day.

Some students are pushed out by charter school operators because of misbehavior or for other reasons. These students cannot be considered truant because they **don't** have a school from which to be truant.

The police intake form for juveniles does not collect data on the student's status, that is, whether the student is truant or just not enrolled in any school. Knowing the student's status would be helpful in finding solutions.

Prior to charter schools, a school could not just put a student out of school. The school had to make a recommendation to the district for the student to be expelled or otherwise removed. If the district decided to do this, the district had the obligation to place the student into another school.

Then came charter schools and this changed. Charter schools have the same authority as the district to permanently remove students, by expelling them or removing them for whatever other reason. But, unlike the district, charter schools are not required to ensure the student is placed in another school.

To address this problem, the Orleans Parish School Board, when it assumed partial jurisdiction of charter schools, implemented a policy that prohibited charter schools from expelling students, and required charter schools to recommend students for expulsion to the district. If the district decides to expel the student from that school, then the district would place the student in another school. But not all charter schools follow this policy. Also, the policy does not address the other ways charter schools remove students.

Perhaps, it is okay for charter schools to permanently remove students directly from the school. But giving charter schools this authority without a concomitant obligation to place the student into another school is an oversight of charter school law. Even if a charter school cannot directly place a student into another school, it must be obligated to notify some other entity of the student's removal so that this other entity can place the student in another school.

Thus, are juveniles who roam the streets during the day truant – or, are they the fall-out from an egregious charter school law that allows undisciplined and failing students to be discarded?

Some in the community feel that undisciplined and failing students do not deserve to be in school. Such an attitude is destructive. Being in school gives students a better chance to succeed in life and helps keep the community safe.