



## SISKIYOU COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

### CHARLIE'S PLACE YOUTH CAMP AND DETENTION FACILITY

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#### **Press Release: 5/18/2018**

Through a cooperative effort between the Siskiyou County District Attorney, Siskiyou County Probation Department, Siskiyou County District Attorney's Office, Yreka Elementary School District and Yreka Police Department 2 parents were arrested on warrants charging them with failing to send their children to school this morning. These charges stem from the children of those arrested not attending school. The Siskiyou County Probation Department has several other cases filed with the court and anticipates additional arrests in the future.

There is a lengthy process which takes place prior to these arrests. These are cases where the parents of these young students have been served three separate SARB letters by the school. The first is effectively a Notice that a pattern of truancy has been established, sent usually after three unexcused absences. This first letter more often than not solves the problem. The second letter, usually sent out after 5 unexcused absences, sets up a meeting between the school and the parent(s) in an effort to resolve the problem. The Probation Department has a probation officer assigned to the Truancy Abatement Program and she also attends these meetings whenever possible. This stage also resolves many of the cases. During this stage we also offer services and assistance to the families as needed to help them be successful. The third letter is sent out after 7 unexcused absences. This letter is to Notice and calendar a hearing before the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), where the child and parent are compelled to attend. At this hearing the SARB board, in conjunction with the parent(s) come up with a plan to ensure that the student is going to be successful in their school attendance from there on out. A contractual agreement is signed by all parties. These particular cases that resulted in arrests are cases where the parent has signed the contractual agreement, and yet the student continues to be truant. Only after all of these stages and opportunities to resolve the problem does the District Attorney's Office consider charging the parent(s) with contributing to the delinquency of a minor or other charges.

These cases involve students that attend the elementary school. With older, rebellious youth typically the process is aimed at the minor, not the parents. These cases are much different as the children had no control over their attendance, they were not 16 year old students "skipping" school, they are young children that rely on their parents, in these cases the child is not culpable by any means, they are the victims of negligent parenting.

Chief Probation Officer Allison Giannini stated “Over the past year we have spent a significant amount of time revamping our truancy program and creating partnerships with local school districts. We have two officers that have been dedicated to working with the schools, students and parents to help ensure that every child is attending school and afforded the education they deserve. While today, we had to arrest two parents for not complying with the law, we have had great success in helping other families and students get on track and have a positive school attendance record. The mission of this program is not to simply hold individuals accountable, but also to provide services and help to families that are in need. Overall, this department is fortunate to have Probation Officers that are passionate about helping our youth become educated successful adults. I would also like to thank District Attorney Kirk Andrus and his office for their support and assistance in holding the non-compliant parents accountable.”

Sheriff Jon Lopey stated ““This is an excellent opportunity, in partnership with the Department of Probation, District Attorney’s Office, and our local law enforcement partners to enforce truancy laws and hold students but more importantly, parents or guardians, accountable for school attendance. Kids who do not attend school, especially habitual truants, are more prone to become involved in crime-related activity and are more inclined to engage in substance abuse and other unsavory activities. Siskiyou County schools provide a variety of superior learning and life enrichment activities and kids benefit by attending scheduled classes and engaging in lawful, mandated, and important school-related activities. I applaud this renewed effort to enforce truancy laws, which will ultimately hold those responsible accountable, will help our kids attend school and maximize their potential for success, and ultimately, this program will help reduce crime and victimization.”

Arrested today were:

Bessie Grant, 28 of Yreka, charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor and 3 counts of failure to supervise pupil’s school attendance

David Goodwin, 31 of Yreka, charged with failure to send child to school and failure to supervise pupil’s school attendance.