



# What is the GOAL Advocacy Program?

**GAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING**

## The issue:

- 1 out of 5 high school students (20%) were chronically absent in the 2015-2016 school year.
- Poor attendance can influence whether youth read proficiently by the end of third grade or are held back, a key indicator for future academic success.
- Absenteeism becomes an indicator for student drop out as early as 6th grade.
- Rates of chronic absenteeism is higher for those who are experiencing poverty, are ethnic minorities, are non-English learners, and/or have disabilities.
- Poor school attendance is associated with poor health outcomes including increased mortality and lower life expectancy.
- Chronically absent youth are 3.5 times more likely to be arrested or referred to the juvenile justice system.

## How a Student Success Advocate can help:

- A Student Success Advocate (SSA) is a highly trained volunteer from the community who is assigned to advocate for the needs of students.
- Students are referred by the school or court in some truancy cases to support youth who are struggling with school attendance or participation.
- The SSA will get to know the youth, gather information, connect families to community resources, and make recommendations to the court.
- Students/families are not required to work with an SSA.

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ADVOCATE NAME

PHONE

**For more information about the program, please contact Kristy O'Neal, Lead Educational Advocacy Specialist, at [Kristy@ChildAdvocatesTexas.org](mailto:Kristy@ChildAdvocatesTexas.org) or 281.414.4375.**

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