

MEMO



DEC 14 2010

Senate of Pennsylvania

December 13, 2010

TO: ALL SENATORS

FROM: Stewart J. Greenleaf

Stewart

SUBJECT: Cosponsorship -- **“Educational reason” valid excuse for school absence**

I am reintroducing **Senate Bill 356**, clarifying the section of the Public School Code of 1949 (Act 14), that lists the legitimate excuses for being absent from school. I am adding “educational” as a reason.

Section 1329 of the Public School Code provides that a principal or teacher in any public or private school may excuse a child from attending school on a temporary basis for any “mental, physical, or other urgent reasons.” Many schools allow a child to be absent for educational reasons -- perhaps a family trip that is educational for the child. However, the school code does not list “educational” as one of the legitimate reasons for being excused from school.

My legislation amends section 1329 to include an educational reason among the valid excuses for being absent. The school district may provide guidelines for the interpretation of this section.

This bill codifies what is the practice in many school districts and will address the concerns of some parents who have been caught unaware by the current law.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Pat Snively of my office by e-mailing her at psnively@pasen.gov.