

**Role of a
School Based
Probation Officer**

- Sets limits and expectations for court supervised youth.
- Has responsibilities in both the court and school environments.
- Provides assistance to school personnel who are making decisions about court supervised youth.
- Active member of the Student Assistance Program (SAP) team.
- Provides immediate intervention service for offenders.
- May be physically housed in the school building.
- In collaboration with school officials, works to reduce in and out of school suspensions, tardiness, absenteeism and the dropout rate.
- Provides in-service training for school officials about probation services and the juvenile justice system.
- Along with school officials, promotes a drug free and safe environment.
- Acts in an advocate role for offenders when necessary.
- Encourages parental involvement in school activities.

**McKean County Juvenile Probation
48th Judicial District**

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Juvenile Master: Christa Schott
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School Districts Served:

Bradford Area School District
Smethport Area School District
Otto-Eldred School District
Port Allegany School District
Kane Area School District



**SCHOOL-BASED
PROBATION**



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McKean County Juvenile Court instituted its first School Based Project in 1992. The initial sites were in the Bradford, Kane, Port Allegany and Otto-Eldred School Districts.

The School Based Probation Program continues to run in all school districts in the county and currently is operated by three Probation Officers. The on-site probation officers provide intensive treatment services to all youth on probation who attend these schools. The only exceptions are those youth subjected to any of the Court's specialized programs or who are no longer enrolled in school.

The program was developed as a partnership designed to: (a) **increase communication** between the school district and probation department; (b) **increase coordination** among the family, school, probation departments and appropriate community agencies; (c) **meet the educational and related needs** of mutual clients; and (d) provide schools with **alternatives** for managing students exhibiting behavioral problems.

As a side note, to date, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission has funded forty-one (41) school based probation projects within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The program is operational in forty-two (42) counties providing services to approximately 4,500 offenders per year in 141 of the 501 school districts in the Commonwealth.

The goal of the program is to increase the probability that offenders provided with School Based Probation Services will help them function successfully in the school environment and reduce or eliminate their delinquent behavior.

To that end, program objectives include the following:

- Provide intensive supervision and counseling to youth on Probation status within the targeted school.
- Increase school attendance.
- Decrease the amount of suspensions.
- Increase academic performance of probation students.
- Decrease the number of probation violation allegations.
- Decrease the rate of recidivism (re-offending).
- Decrease the placement rate for probation students attending the targeted schools.
- Provide Intervention Services for all youth charged with committing a delinquent act on school grounds.
- Collect restitution, costs & fine payments.

Definition of a School Based Probation Officer:

Juvenile Probation Officer with a school as his/her primary work site, whose authority is governed by the Pennsylvania Juvenile Act and school policies.

In essence:

The School Based Probation Officer delivers services in accordance with the Balanced and Restorative Justice Model to ensure **community protection**, offender **accountability** and the development of offender **competencies**.

To that end, the School Based Probation Officer provides immediate intervention to students under court jurisdiction, by coordinating services with the school, community and family.

Additionally, in conjunction with school personnel, and for the purpose of improving the academic and/or behavioral performance of supervised youth, the School Based Probation Officer promotes a drug-free, safe environment.