



---

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 16, 2008

**CONTACT: Assistant District Attorney, Wes Keat**

**PHONE: (707)268-2554**

### **BRISSETTE, CYNTHIA, ARRESTED BY D.A. INVESTIGATORS ON CHILD NEGLECT CHARGES**

All Humboldt County schools utilize a School Attendance Review Board (SARB) to address problems with students who are habitually truant. The intent of SARB is to address problems early on, when attendance issues are first identified, and to work closely with the student and his/her family to find solutions to the problem.

SARB is usually successful with intervention efforts and most attendance issues are resolved after the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> intervention. In severe cases, when regular compliance cannot be attained through intervention efforts, the case is referred to the Humboldt County District Attorney's Office for review. When appropriate, the HCDA's Office files charges against the student's parents for violations of Education Code 48293 (Failure to send a child to compulsory school). Letters are sent to the parents (defendants), advising them of a court date to resolve the charges against them. In extreme cases, warrants are issued – commanding that the defendant be brought before a magistrate to address the charges against them.

One such case (DA08-0008) involved Cynthia Eunice Brissette, 35, of Eureka. Brissette, the mother of five children, came to the attention of the HCDA's Office because her school age children were habitually absent from school. Additionally, one or more of the children had severe medical issues that Brissette failed to address properly. Brissette made no apparent attempt to resolve the issues, failed to respond to letters from the HCDA's Office, and failed to appear in court on 05-13-08. Due to her flagrant lack of parental control and care, coupled with the health concerns for her children, HCDA Investigators obtained a warrant for her arrest, charging one count each of PC270 – Child Neglect, PC272a(b) – Endangering the health of a child, and EC48293 – Failing to send a child to compulsory school. The warrant was issued by Humboldt County Superior Court Judge J. Michael Brown on 05-14-08 with a bail amount of \$15,000.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

825 5th Street  
Eureka, CA 95501  
(707) 445-7411  
(707) 445-7416 Fax

VICTIM WITNESS ASSISTANCE

714 4th Street  
Eureka, CA 95501  
(707) 445-7417  
(707) 445-7490 Fax

On 05-14-08 at approximately 1100 hours, HCDA Investigators received confidential information regarding the possible location of Brissette. A fugitive investigation was initiated and she was located at 1834 'F' Street in Eureka. At approximately 1120 hours, HCDA Investigators, assisted by members of the Eureka Police Department, arrested Brissette without incident. She was transported to the Humboldt County Correctional Facility where she remains pending arraignment. After her arrest, HCDA Investigators took three of her children into protective custody per W&I300 and released them to Humboldt County Child Welfare Services for placement.

District Attorney Paul Gallegos stated, "My office has no tolerance for parents that completely neglect the educational and medical well being of their children. In extreme cases such as this, my investigators go above and beyond the normal course and scope of their duties to ensure that the children are removed from the harmful environment and placed in an environment where they have the chance to thrive, be successful, and most importantly, be safe, healthy, and happy. We do not take lightly the challenges facing our school systems and will do everything in our power to ensure compliance with SARB guidelines".