



ABOUT
**Sherry
Boston**

AS SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR DEKALB County, Sherry Boston oversees the prosecution of more than 12,000 criminal misdemeanor offenses filed in the State Court of DeKalb County. She is recognized for her office's professional and impartial prosecution of crimes. She remains committed to upholding the law while working closely with our police and communities to develop strategies to prevent crimes before they occur.

Prior to her appointment as Solicitor-General in January 2011, Ms. Boston was in private practice and served as a Municipal Court Judge for the City of Dunwoody, Judge pro hac vice on the DeKalb County Records Court and Associate Magistrate Judge for DeKalb County.

She has been recognized locally and nationally for her legal expertise, and, regularly speaks locally and nationally on a number of issues related to law enforcement. Further, she has taught classes to teens about decision-making regarding drug and alcohol use and abuse prevention.



RESOURCES

Sometimes parents keep kids home from school because they don't realize that there are resources available to help solve problems whether it's bullying, transportation issues due to homelessness or a learning disability. Here are some resources that might be helpful to many families.

→ **DeKalb County School System** 678.676.1200

→ **Incidents of bullying** may be reported to your particular school's principal or designee, who will launch an investigation. If a parent feels no action has been taken, they may then notify the appropriate area assistant superintendent for their particular school.

→ Bullying, weapons, drugs or other concerns may also be reported via the DeKalb School System website at <http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us> or to the GADOE's **1-877 SAY STOP** hotline.

→ Homeless parents and students may contact the Department of School Social Work and Homeless Program at 678.676.1806. In most cases, it would be prudent for the parent, student or stakeholder to first contact the school principal or area assistant superintendent.

→ **Parent to Parent**
Not-for-profit that supports Georgia families of children with disabilities. www.p2pga.org
770.451.5484

→ **Families First**
Non-profit family service agency in Georgia.
www.familiesfirst.org
404.853.2800

→ **Everybody Wins!**

Local affiliate of a national non-profit organization that pairs elementary school students at risk for academic failure with caring mentors who spend one-on-one time reading with them each week.
www.everybodywinsatlanta.org
404.943.0404

→ **The Frazer Center**
Provides services to children and adults with disabilities.
www.thefraziercenter.org
404.377.3836

→ **Learning Disabilities Association of Georgia**
Support, resources and advocacy for children and adults, individuals and families. <http://www.ldag.org>
404.303.7774

→ **The Amit Program**
Provides support for families that have children with learning differences or developmental needs.
www.amitalanta.org
404.961.9966

**KEEPING
DEKALB
SAFE
FOR ALL**

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SHERRY BOSTON

YOUR SOLICITOR-GENERAL

**ENCOURAGING PERFECT
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE TO
BUILD DEKALB'S FUTURE**



DEKALB COUNTY SOLICITOR-GENERAL
www.dekalbsolicitorgeneral.org



ABOUT the DeKalb County Solicitor-General's Office

AS SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR DEKALB COUNTY,

Sherry Boston oversees the prosecution of more than 12,000 criminal misdemeanor offenses filed in the State Court of DeKalb County. Most of these crimes carry a maximum of 12 months in jail and a \$1,000 fine. Ms. Boston is committed to smart, professional and impartial prosecution that upholds the laws and statutes of Georgia and DeKalb County while working closely with our police and communities to develop strategies to prevent crimes before they occur so that the 700,000 citizens living in DeKalb can enjoy the quality of life they deserve and want despite these trying economic times.

Making DeKalb better is a multi-pronged effort that involves the entire staff of the Solicitor-General's office—prosecutors, investigators, victim and witness advocates, community liaisons, and legal secretaries.

Please don't hesitate to call or email the Office with questions or concerns: 404.371.2201 or solicitorinfo@dekalbcountyga.gov.

Why Education Matters

ONE OF SOLICITOR-GENERAL BOSTON'S KEY GOALS

is to encourage DeKalb's families to strive to have children attend school every day so that we can build a better future for everyone. The statistics regarding educational neglect can be alarming.

→ For example, nearly one-half of all high school dropouts ages 16-24 are unemployed.

→ High school dropouts earn an average of \$270,000 less than graduates over the course of their lives. For Georgians, this represents a \$7.3 billion loss in earning potential.

→ Many social issues can be linked to educational neglect: Dropouts are six times more likely to be unwed parents and they are 7.5 times more likely to be dependent on welfare.

→ Truancy is the number one predictor among boys and the number two predictor among girls for future criminal activities.

→ In Georgia, 88% of all prison inmates are high school dropouts. And, 90% of the inmates in the DeKalb County Jail never obtained their high school diploma.

Helping Kids Stay in School

The State of Georgia requires that all children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school. Any parent or guardian violating the compulsory attendance law shall be guilty of educational neglect, a misdemeanor offense, and can face penalties for each day that a child is absent after 5 unexcused absences. Unexcused absences can include: over-sleeping, not feeling like going to school, staying home to work or babysit, or keeping a lonely parent company. Individuals convicted of violating the state law can be fined, sentenced to 30 days in jail and ordered to perform community service.

Solicitor-General Boston and her staff investigate and prosecute parents and guardians who fail to ensure their children are enrolled in and continuously attend school, and provides programs

and resources to help prevent truancy. A team of trained professionals partnering with the Solicitor's Office work to identify and counsel chronically absent children and their parents before the absenteeism escalates to criminal prosecution.

The Solicitor-General offers parents and guardians whose children are chronically absent an opportunity to complete a diversion program called the Attendance Review Team (ART), which requires parents and guardians to sign an attendance contract agreeing that their child will have no unexcused absences and that they will meet with the child's teacher, counselor, or social worker at least once a month for a specified period of time. Failure to complete those conditions will result in criminal prosecution.

