

Students

Attendance and Truancy

Definitions

Truant - A "truant" is a child subject to compulsory school attendance who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion thereof.

Valid cause for absence - A child may be absent from school because of illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, situations beyond the student's control as determined by the Board of Education or such other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the safety or health of the student.

Chronic or habitual truant - A "chronic or habitual truant" is a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 10 percent or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days.

Truant minor - A child to whom supportive services, including prevention, diagnostic, intervention and remedial services, alternative programs, and other school and community resources have been provided but who has failed to cease chronic truancy or who has been offered such services and has refused them.

Truancy

The School District will determine if the student is a truant, chronic or habitual truant, or a truant minor. The Superintendent shall direct the appropriate School District staff to develop diagnostic procedures to be used for identifying the cause(s) of unexcused student absenteeism. The diagnostic procedures shall include, but not be limited to, interviews with the student, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s), and any school official(s) or other people who may have information.

If a high school student has four (4) incidents of truancy from a class, he/she may be dropped from that class and lose credit for the class.

A notification system will exist to inform the students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) of these incidents of truancy. This notification system will provide that due process procedural rights are being accommodated.

The following supportive services may be offered to truant or chronically truant students:

- parent-teacher conferences
- student and/or family counseling
- information about community agency services

If truancy continues after supportive services have been offered, the Building Principal shall refer the matter to the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent may call upon the resources of outside agencies, such as the juvenile officer of the local police department or the truant office of the Educational Service Region of DuPage County. The Board of Education, Superintendent, School District administrators, and teachers shall assist and furnish such information as they may lawfully furnish to aid truant officers.

No punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action shall be taken against a chronic truant for his or her truancy unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student.

Absence Notification

A student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must: (1) upon his/her child's enrollment, provide telephone numbers to the Building Principal and update them as necessary, and (2) authorize all absences and notify the school in advance or at the time of the child's absence.

If a student is absent without prior authorization by the parent(s)/guardian(s), the Building Principal or a designee shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their child's absence within 2 hours after the first class by telephoning the numbers given.

Student Employment

The Superintendent shall develop procedures, and present them to the Board of Education for its approval, for excusing from attendance those students necessarily and lawfully employed.

High School Attendance

Since there is a positive relationship between regular attendance and academic success, it is of the utmost importance that students be present in class. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential if students are to make use of the educational opportunities that school offers. Parent(s)/guardian(s) have the responsibility for the children's regular attendance.

An attendance cap has been created to deal with students who are excessively absent from school during a semester. A student who has accumulated ten days absence will be considered excessively absent. Teachers and administrators are expected to follow, in sequence, the collaborative process outlined below in steps A through H-. These steps are initiated with the first occurrence of truancy or ten days of accumulated absence per semester..

- A. Attempts by the classroom teacher to remedy the situation.
- B. Referral by teacher to the dean's office.
- C. Telephone contact between the dean and the parent.
- D. Parent-teacher-student-dean conference to address the issue.
- E. Development of an attendance contract between teacher, student, parent, dean.
- F. At the student's tenth (10th) absence a meeting will be convened involving the student, parent/guardian, and dean.
- G. At the fifteenth (15th) absence the student will be withdrawn from class and placed in a study hall, no credit will be given and withdrawn pass/fail will be listed on the transcript.
- H. Other

Exceptions to the absence cap must be submitted to the attendance center with accompanying documentation prior to the date of absence. Eligible reasons may include:

Religious holidays

Extended illness verified by doctor's statement addressing the inability of the child to attend school

Death in the immediate family
Field trips
Hospitalizations
Suspensions

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/26-2a, 5/26-9, and 5/26-12.
Hamer v. Board of Education, 383 N.E.2d 231 (2nd Dist. 1978).

CROSS REF.: 6:110, 7:80, 7:190

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