

STUDENTS

7:70 Attendance and Truancy

Definitions

Truant - A “truant” is a child subject to compulsory school attendance and 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 Building Principal or such other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student’s safety or health.

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 and have failed to result in the cessation of chronic truancy or have been offered and refused.

Compulsory School Attendance

This policy applies to individuals who have custody or control of a child: (a) between the ages of six (on or before September 1) and 17 years (unless the child has graduated from high school), or (b) who is enrolled in any of grades kindergarten through 12 in the public school regardless of age. Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

The parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled must authorize all absences from school and notify the school in advance or at the time of the student’s absence. A valid cause for absence includes illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the Board, voting pursuant to policy 7:90, *Release During School Hours* (10 ILCS 5/7-42 and 5/17-15), other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, or other reason as approved by the Director or designee. Students absent for a valid cause may make up missed homework and classwork assignments in a reasonable timeframe.

Absenteeism and Truancy

The Director or designee shall develop diagnostic procedures for identifying the cause(s) of unexcused student absenteeism. The diagnostic procedures include, but are not 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.

The Director or designee shall develop a protocol for excusing a student from attendance on a particular day(s) or at a particular time of day when his/her parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings.

The following supportive services may be offered to truant or chronically truant students: parent-teacher conferences, student and/or family counseling, or information about community agency services.

Any 17-year-old resident may, upon providing documentation of dropout status for the previous six months, participate in the Cooperative's various programs and resources for truants.

The Director or designee will determine if a student is a truant, chronic or habitual truant, chronically absent, or a truant minor. If truancy continues after supportive services have been offered, the Director or designee may request the resources of outside agencies, such as the juvenile officer of the local police department or the truant office of the appropriate Regional Office of Education.

No punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action, shall be taken against a truant minor 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 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 the Building Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child's absence within two hours after the first class by telephoning the numbers provided.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/26-1 through 18.

705 ILCS 405/3-33.5, Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.242 and 1.290.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:150 (Home and Hospital Instruction), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:60 (Residence), 7:80 (Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance), 7:90 (Release During School Hours), 7:190 (Student Behavior)

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Southern Will Co. Spec. Ed.
