D-113

P-CDOP

# ABSENTEEISM AND TRUANCY

Guidelines delineating both school and parental responsibilities in regard to student absences and truancy shall be defined and published in school handbooks.

Reviewed 7/2018, 6/2020, 7/2021, 7/2022, 9/2024

D-113

AR-OCS

**ABSENTEEISM AND TRUANCY**

According to the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/22-92), all schools, including nonpublic schools receiving public funds because of their participation in the federal/state milk, breakfast, or lunch programs, are required to submit their Absenteeism and Truancy Policy to the Illinois State Board of Education. Each school is required to review and reevaluate its Absenteeism and Truancy Policy every two years by the school administration. If after reviewing the policy and determining that no updates are necessary, the administration is required to submit a letter to ISBE indicating that the policy was reevaluated and no changes were deemed to be necessary. This statement must be submitted electronically in IWAS system no later September 30 of the year it is due.

“Truant” shall be defined as a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion of the school day.

“Chronic or habitual truant” shall be defined as a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 5% or more of the school’s regular attendance days. When all efforts to persuade the student to regular attendance fails, and the student’s absences without valid cause exceeds more than five percent (5%) of the total student attendance days in the school year, written notice shall be sent to the parent/guardian stating that the matter is being turned over to the truancy department of the Regional Office of Education. Additionally, the school may drop the student from enrollment.

“Truant minor” shall be defined as a chronic truant 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.

School attendance is compulsory in the State of Illinois. The responsibility of compliance with the law belongs to the parents, but the school is obliged to keep an accurate record of daily attendance. The record is placed in the student’s permanent file at the end of each school year.

The principal will investigate and involve the parent/guardian when:

* There is a suspicion that a student is truant,
* The student returns to school with no excuse or one that might not be valid, or
* The student continues to be absent for no apparent reason.

In accordance with the Illinois State Board of Education, “valid cause” for absence shall be:

* Illness, including the 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 school’s administration
* Circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the mental, emotional, or physical health or safety of the student.

All diocesan schools are required to post this policy on their school’s website and include it in the school’s Parent/Student Handbook. School administrators are also required to notify parents where this policy can be accessed online by providing them with the URL address.

The following diagnostic procedures will be used to identify the causes of unexcused student absenteeism:

* Interviews with the student, parent/guardian, and any school officials who may have information about the reason for the student’s attendance problem.
* The school may choose additional methods as deemed appropriate.

The school’s policy must identify the interventions, strategies, and supportive services that the school will make available to truant or chronically truant students to improve their attendance. Interventions and strategies may include, but are not be limited to:

1. Parent conferences
2. Student counseling
3. Family counseling
4. Providing parents with information about existing community services that are available to truant and chronically truant students relative to their needs.

The following interventions/strategies shall be implemented when students are absent, truant or become chronically truant:

1. If the family has not phoned in an absence, the school will contact the parents.
2. The school shall contact all parties listed as emergency contacts in the student’s file if the parents cannot be reached.
3. If the administration is unsuccessful in reaching the parents/guardians or the emergency contacts, the police will be notified and asked to conduct a wellness check on the student/family.
4. Parents of students who are chronically truant or absent will be provided with information on all available supportive services.

All diocesan schools are required to collect and review their chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage and encourage the habit of daily attendance for chronically absent students and their families to promote academic success.

# RECORDING ABSENCES

Absences from school shall be noted on the student’s permanent record even though the absence has been excused. Parents shall be notified in the event a student is sent home during the day or if classes are dismissed at other than the regularly scheduled time.

If a student is given an out-of-school suspension it is considered unexcused. If they are serving an in-school suspension they are marked as present but excused, and are responsible for completing school work while in the suspension.

The school shall develop a medical service/accommodations’ plan for any student that has a chronic illness or medical condition that interferes with regular school attendance.

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