

## **Students**

### **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

Whoever has custody or control of a child between the ages of 7 and 17 years of age (unless the child has graduated from high school) must cause the child to attend the District school wherein the child is assigned, except as provided herein or by State law. 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 his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

#### Truancy

The Superintendent 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 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 6 months, participate in the District’s various programs and resources for truants.

The Superintendent or designee will determine if a student is a truant, chronic or habitual truant, or a truant minor. If truancy continues after supportive services have been offered, the Superintendent 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 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 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 2 hours after the first class by telephoning the numbers provided.

#### Student Employment

The Superintendent shall develop procedures for excusing from attendance those students necessarily and lawfully employed.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/26-1, 5/26-2a, 5/26-3b, 5/26-9, 5/26-12, 5/26-13, and 5/26-15.  
Hamer v. Board of Education, 383 N.E.2d 231 (2nd Dist. 1978).

CROSS REF.: 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), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:60 (Residence), 7:80 (Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance), 7:190 (Student Discipline)

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