

Compulsory Attendance Ages/Truancy

Under South Dakota Law, children between the ages of five years old by the first day of September and who have not exceeded the age of eighteen years old are of compulsory school age. Children who are of compulsory school age shall attend school regularly and annually in either a public school, private school, or home school for the entire school term as defined by state statute, unless excused as provided in state statute. Children who are four years of age by the first day of September may attend the district preschool program.

It is the responsibility of every person having under their control a child of compulsory school age to see to the child's attendance at school until the child has reached the age of 18, unless excused. Any person who does not see to the school attendance of a child in their care will be guilty of a misdemeanor and if convicted, will be subject to a fine as established by Law.

The Bon Homme School Board shall annually appoint one or more Truancy Officers to enforce, under the School Board's direction, the compulsory attendance Laws within the district. If the Bon Homme School Board fails to appoint a Truancy Officer, the President of the Bon Homme School Board shall be the Truancy Officer and is responsible for the enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws within the school district.

Students who have missed more than 6 days of school each semester or 12 days of school for an entire year may be subject to Truancy. An accurate record of attendance will be maintained by the appropriate administrators at each site. The appropriate administrators will notify the parents/guardians either in writing or in person of the student's attendance record prior to the 6 days absence allowed each semester and/or the 12 days absence allowed per year. The Truancy Officer will also receive an attendance record from the appropriate administrator. The Truancy Officer will carefully check the attendance and nonattendance record of the student and shall inform the School Board of the student's attendance and nonattendance record at the appropriate time.

When the student has been absent 6 days per semester or 12 days per year, the Truancy Officer will be notified by the appropriate administrator and a letter will be sent to the parents/guardians of the student by the Bon Homme building principal warning persons in control of a compulsory school age student that the child must enter school and attend regularly. Any continued violations of this policy will be reported to the Bon Homme School District Truancy Officer(s) who in turn may report the violation to the Bon Homme County State's Attorney for proper disposition.

Addition to JEA:

Purpose: To have School Board authorization for the Superintendent to suspend and/or reinstate the illness documentation requirement of the student absence policy.

Explanation: Because of the potential spread of H1N1, it may be necessary to suspend the illness documentation requirement. The SD Department of Health advised that most people with seasonal or H1N1 recover without a visit to a healthcare provider. However, a note from an authorized medical professional is required to be considered for this exemption. Under current policy, students may accumulate up to 6 days per semester or 12 days of absence in one school year before being declared as truant and/or lose credit for classes missed in excess of the 6 or 12.

On a case by case basis, the building principals will advise the Superintendent of their recommendation and the Superintendent may suspend the illness absence documentation requirement so as the absence will not be counted against the number of days permitted.

Legal References: SDCL 13-27-1; 13-27-2; 13-27-11; 13-27-12; 13-27-16; 13-32-4.1

Adopted: February 1999

Revised: October 12, 2009; July 14, 2014