

ATTENDANCE

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.

For students who are required to attend school there are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences include: illness (including up to 5 days per school year for mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday or event, death in the immediate family, family emergency, situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the school board, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, attending a military honors funeral to sound TAPS¹, attend a civic event², or other reason as approved by the building principal. Students eligible to vote are also excused for up to two hours to vote in a primary, special, or general election.

Additionally, a student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's 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 Board of Education, in its discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment. A student and the student's parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

Students who are excused from school will be given a reasonable timeframe to make up missed homework and classwork assignments.

All other absences are considered unexcused. Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the building principal.

The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.

In the event of any absence, the student's parent/guardian is required to call the school at 815-937-3707 before 8:00 a.m. to explain the reason for the absence. If a call has not been made to the school by 10:00 a.m. on the day of a student's absence, a school official will call the home to inquire why the student is not at school. Failure to provide rationale by the guardian shall result in an unexcused absence. Upon request of the parent/guardian, the reason for an absence will be kept confidential.

Diagnostic Procedures for Identifying Student Absences and Support Services to Truant or Chronically Truant Students

State law requires every school district to collect and review its chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success. This review must include an analysis of chronic absence data from each attendance center.

Furthermore, State law provides that school districts are encouraged to provide a system of support to students who are at risk of reaching or exceeding chronic absence levels with strategies and are also encouraged to make resources available to families such as those available through the State Board of Education's Family Engagement Framework to support and engage students and their families to encourage heightened school engagement and improved daily school attendance.

"Chronic absence" means absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause, and out-of-school suspensions.

The School and District use the following diagnostic procedures for identifying the causes of unexcused student absences: Interviews with the student, his or her parent/guardian and any school officials who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problems.

Supportive services to truant or chronically truant students include: parent conferences, student counseling, family counseling, and information about existing community services.

Intervention Services offered by the district may include the following:

1. Students may be referred for social work services when a pattern of non-attendance continues. Utilizing the Multi-Tiered System Support (MTSS) model, school social workers partner with students, families and educators to help identify needs and reduce barriers to school attendance. School officials will monitor the progress to determine the next steps of intervention.

2. The I-KAN Attendance Assistance Program helps students stay in and graduate from school by providing prevention and intervention services to students and their families.
 - a. A caseworker within IKAN's Attendance Assistance Program will be assigned to a student under the age of 17 for the purpose of giving aid and support to the student and family. If truancy continues after services have been provided, students and their families are referred to the Truancy Review Board (TRB) where they are presented with a contract explaining what must be done to avoid going to court. If attendance does not improve after all efforts have been exhausted, a truancy petition will be referred to the States Attorney office.
 - b. Students under the age of 17 are referred to an alternative education program (SALT) as a secondary intervention step and to gain credits toward graduation.
 - c. Students at the age of 17 and older may not be candidates for SALT. An attendance contract will be created as the intervention strategy. If truancy continues after the contract is established and the student's attendance is at or above the 20% absenteeism rate, the student may be dropped from school and may not be enrolled until the next semester.