

As we begin the school year, we want to help families clearly understand attendance policies, state law updates, and how we at Edgewood Schools are here to support every student and family. We know these new rules can be confusing and complicated, but we will work through these changes together.

Excused, Certified, & Exempt Absences

Certified Absence - Doctor's note, funeral, court subpoena, or the school nurse sends your child home. These do NOT count against attendance limits and DO allow makeup work for full credit.

Excused Absence - Parent call-ins, prearranged family events (get that form from your child's school office), or illness without a doctor's note. These DO count toward your student's total yearly absences.

Exempt Absence - Approved state activities, such as 4H, FFA, Election Day work, legislative page duty; These do NOT count against attendance limits and are fully excused under Indiana law.

Unexcused Absences

These occur when:

- No contact from a parent/guardian when a student is not in attendance
- More than 5 non-certified absences without a doctor's note
- Absences exceed policy limits or required forms aren't submitted

Under Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 482 and Indiana IC 20-33-2-26

- 10 unexcused absences result in automatic habitual truancy designation, which Indiana schools are required to report.
- The school is required to file an affidavit with the local court at the 10th unexcused absence
- Parents are notified at 4, 7, and 9 unexcused absences and receive clear communication before legal action is taken.
- Chronic absenteeism refers to any student missing 10% of the school year (18 days), regardless of whether absences are excused or not.

Some common questions

1. What if a student is sent home by the nurse?
 - a. If the school nurse sends your child home, it is considered a certified absence - just like seeing a doctor. So be assured; that day will not count against your total absences.
2. Where do I find a pre-arranged absence form if my child will be out of school for a family vacation, sporting event, etc.?

- a. While we encourage parents to plan these types of events around our scheduled school breaks, we understand that sometimes this can't be helped. We encourage parents to keep these things in mind and limit absences as much as possible for other things, aside from illness. A pre-arranged absence form can be found on our website or from your child's school office. This will need to be submitted a week in advance of the pre-arranged absence for approval. As a reminder, pre-arranged absences can not be approved during final exams or state assessment windows.
- 3. What if my child has frequent absences due to a medical reason?
 - a. Please communicate with your child's teacher(s) and administrators. Our school nurse can also be a part of these communications to ensure your child's needs are met.
- 4. Should I send my child to school sick so they can be sent home by the school nurse?
 - a. We kindly ask that you do not send your sick child to school. This exacerbates the challenge of keeping children healthy during cold and flu seasons. Call the office and keep your child home if he/she has any of the following symptoms:
 - i. Fever of 100.4 or higher
 - ii. Vomiting within the past 24 hours
 - iii. Diarrhea within the past 24 hours
 - iv. COVID positive test
 - v. Body rash with itching and fever
 - vi. Head lice without treatment
 - vii. Eye infection with redness, itching, and/or eye drainage
 - b. Students should be fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea-free without fever-reducing medications for 1 entire school day before returning.

We are here to help and work together!

Our office teams at EPS, EIS, EJHS, and EHS are here to support our students and families. We understand that attendance can be a complex issue - especially with illnesses or family circumstances. Please reach out before things get overwhelming and work with us to find a solution. We all want the best for our Edgewood students.