

Truancy

The Board acknowledges that student absences from school for any reason, whether excused or unexcused, take away from instructional time and have an adverse effect on student learning. The District consults with the county juvenile court, parents, guardians and other persons having care of a student attending school in the District in developing this policy.

A student cannot be suspended, expelled or removed from school solely because of unexcused absences.

The Board endeavors to reduce truancy through cooperation with parents, diligence in investigating the causes of absence and use of strict guidelines in regard to tardiness and unexcused absence.

When the Board determines that a student has been truant and that the parent, guardian or other person having care of a child has failed to ensure the child's attendance at school, State law authorizes the Board to require the parent to attend a specified educational program.

This program has been established according to the rules adopted by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce for the purpose of encouraging parental involvement in compelling the child's attendance at school.

On the request of the Superintendent, or when it comes to the attention of the school attendance officer or other appropriate officer of the District, the designated officer must investigate any case of supposed truancy within the District and must warn the child, if found truant, and notify the child's parent in writing of the legal consequences of being a "habitual" truant. The written notice may be delivered by regular mail with a certificate of mailing, or other form of delivery with proof of delivery, including electronic delivery and electronic proof of delivery.

A "habitual truant" is any child of compulsory school age who is absent without a legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one month or 72 or more hours in a school year.

The parent is required to have the child attend school immediately after notification. If the parent fails to get the child to attend school, the attendance officer or other appropriate officer, if directed by the Superintendent or the Board, must send notice requiring the child's parent to attend a parental education program.

Regarding "habitual truants," the Board will take as an intervention strategy any appropriate action contained in Board policy.

The Board directs the administration, in consultation with the county juvenile court to:

1. identify strategies to prevent students from becoming chronically absent;
2. establish procedures for notifying a student's parent, guardian or custodian when the student has been absent from school for a number of hours determined by the Board, not to exceed 5% of minimum required hours under Ohio Revised Code (RC) 3313.48;
3. establish a tiered system that provides more intensive interventions and supports for students with greater numbers of absences and includes resources to help students and their families address the root causes of the absences;
4. provide for one or more absence intervention teams to work with students at risk of becoming chronically absent and their families to improve attendance at school.

The Board may consult or partner with private, public and nonprofit agencies to assist students and families in reducing absences.

This policy and any procedures developed must align with the District or school improvement plan developed pursuant to State or Federal Law.

Filing a Complaint With Juvenile Court

The attendance officer must file a complaint against the student in juvenile court alleging a child is an unruly child for being a habitual truant and that the parent, guardian or other person having care of the child has violated RC 3321.38 when any of the following apply:

5. the student was absent without legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours;
6. the student was absent without legitimate excuse for 42 or more hours in a school month;
7. the student was absent without legitimate excuse for 72 hours or more in a school year.

If the District determines that the student and the student's family are making satisfactory progress in improving the student's attendance at school, the attendance officer will not file a complaint.

If no determination of satisfactory progress is made by the District, or the student and the student's family cease to continue making progress in improving the student's attendance, the attendance officer must file a complaint in juvenile court against the student.

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Legal References

ORC 3313.663, ORC 3313.668, ORC 3320.04, ORC 3321.03 through 3321.04
ORC 3321.07 through 3321.09, ORC 3321.16, ORC 3321.19, ORC 3321.191
ORC 3321.22, ORC 3321.38
OAC 3301-47-01

Cross References

JED - Student Absences and Excuses
JEG - Exclusions and Exemptions From School Attendance
JK - Employment of Students