

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY PREVENTION

[ISBA Code: 4320]

It is the policy of the Board that each student enrolled in the Lafayette School Corporation shall attend school on all days scheduled, and that good attendance by students is necessary in order to ensure that a student receives the maximum benefits to be realized from his/her education.

The Board believes that parents or guardians are ultimately responsible for the attendance of their children in school. While correction of absenteeism and/or tardiness problems is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians, the school shall assist in the solution of these problems by taking steps as outlined in the student handbook.

Promptness and dependability are important values in our society, and it is appropriate that they be stressed in school. All students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes in order to receive maximum benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility.

Some Truths about School Attendance

1. Regular school attendance is a valuable characteristic.
2. There are legitimate reasons for students to miss school.
3. When a student is not in attendance, school does go on.
4. It is legitimate and proper for the school to set time limits of controllable absences from school beyond which students and their parents will be referred to an Attendance Review Committee.

Attendance Limits:

If a student accumulates ten unexcused absences from school during a semester, the student and a parent will be referred to the Attendance Officer or designee for appropriate action. Absences due to a disciplinary suspension will **not** count toward the ten-day limit.

Absences are classified into two classes: Excused and Unexcused.

Excused Absences:

The following absences are excused and do not count toward the ten-day limit:

Exempt – Student is counted as present and not penalized:

1. Serve as a page in the Indiana Legislature
2. Serving as a poll worker on election day or as a helper to a political party or candidate

3. Active duty with the Indiana National Guard, the United States Armed Forces, or their reserve components
4. Civil Air Patrol participation
5. Exhibiting at or participating in the Indiana State Fair or member of the student's household (up to five days, and if the student is in good academic standing)
6. Participating in a scheduled competition, exhibition, or event for educational purposes offered by the national or Indiana FFA organization or a 4-H club approved in writing by the principal (up to six days, and if the student is in good academic standing)
7. Court appearances with a subpoena

Medical – Student is counted as absent but excused

1. Personal illness with note from doctor
2. Absences due to medical or dental appointment with the doctor's office note or documentation

Administrator Approved – Student is counted as absent but excused unless otherwise noted

1. School-sponsored field trips (student will be considered in attendance)
2. Sent home by the school nurse
3. College visits (no more than 2 per school year)

Family Bereavement – Student is counted as absent but excused

1. Death in the immediate family (with documentation)
2. Funeral for a member of the family – grandparents, parents, guardians, siblings, first cousins (with documentation)

Religious Observation/Event – Student is counted as absent but excused

1. Observation of a recognized religious holiday
2. Attendance at a required religious event

Family Choice Planned – Student is counted as absent but excused

1. Pre-arranged and approved by principal attendance at special family event (no more than 5 days in the school year, must be in good academic standing)

Family Choice Unplanned – Student is counted as absent but excused

1. Parent choice to keep child home due to weather - school in session (limited to 3 days per school year)

Unexcused Absences:

All absences not designated as excused shall be considered unexcused absences. All Unexcused absences will count toward the ten-day limit.

Truant:

- A student will be considered truant when the absence from school is without the knowledge and approval of a school official or parent.
- Administration will define what is considered truant in each school handbook.

Excused Absences and Written Verification

Written verification must be presented for all excused absences. The written excuses must be turned in to the main office upon the student's return to school. In the case of an absence due to a doctor's appointment or illness, for which the student is under the care of a physician, the student must present a signed and dated note from the physician's office to verify this absence.

Make-up Work

Students must make up all work missed due to an absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for making up the work. As a rule, the student will have the same number of days to make up the work missed as the length of the absence. In the case of a planned absence, the arrangements to determine when the work will be due should be made before the absence.

Vacations and Other Planned Absences (Including College Visits)

The parent or guardian should contact the school personally to arrange for such absences. Contact must be made **BEFORE** the absence.

Intervention Procedure

When a student has accumulated five (5) absences, the Attendance Officer or designee will send a letter to the parent or guardian. When the student has accumulated seven (7) absences, a parent conference will be requested. After a student has reached the ten-day limit, a violation will occur upon the next unexcused absence. This violation will result in a mandatory meeting of the parent and student with the Attendance Officer or designee. The Attendance Officer or designee may recommend the following:

1. Written contract as an individual intervention plan.

The recommendation of the Attendance Officer or designee will be presented to the principal for final determination.

Truancy Prevention Procedures:

The following procedures apply to students enrolled in Kindergarten through Twelfth Grades who have five (5) unexcused absences in a 10-week period:

1. The school shall, upon the student's fifth unexcused absence in the 10-week period, immediately provide a written notice to the parents. Such written notice shall include:
 - A) the student is an absent student based upon having five unexcused absences within a 10-week period;
 - B) the parent is responsible for monitoring the school attendance of the student and ensuring the student attends school;
 - C) the school will be initiating truancy prevention measures regarding the absent student;

- D) the parent is required to attend an attendance conference concerning the truancy measures the school will be implementing, and such conference will be held not more than ten instructional days after the fifth unexcused absence occurred; and
 - E) the Superintendent or the Attendance Officer is required to report if the student is a habitual truant to juvenile court or the Department of Child Services, wherein the juvenile court may determine the student is committing a delinquent act under state law, and the parent may be prosecuted for educational neglect.
2. The school shall hold an attendance conference to discuss the student's absences and establish an attendance plan. The conference will be with the following people:
- A) Principal or designee
 - B) A teacher of the student
 - C) The parent of the student
 - D) Parent's Representative if the parent gives 48 hours' notice of the representative's attendance and the name of the representative
3. The school shall establish an attendance plan that includes
- A) Wraparound services to ensure school attendance for the student.
 - B) A description of the behavior required and/or prohibited for the student.
 - C) The effective time period for the plan is not to exceed 45 instructional days.
 - D) Disciplinary actions the school will take if the student does not comply with the plan.
 - E) A referral to counseling, mentoring, or other services for the student as appropriate.
 - F) Whether the parent is required or expected to attend the services assigned to the student.
 - G) The signature of the student and the parent agreeing to the plan.

Legal Reference: I.C. 20-33-2.5-4
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