STUDENTS

ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

Compulsory School Attendance
This policy applies to individuals who have custody or control of a child between the ages of six (on or before September 1) and 17 years, unless the child has graduated from high school, and to students enrolled in the school as otherwise provided by State law.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school in accordance with the Illinois School Code. Exceptions to compulsory attendance shall be recognized as provided by State law, including attendance at a qualifying private or parochial school, circumstances in which a student is unable to attend school as provided by law, and other statutory exemptions.

Valid Cause for Absence
The parent/guardian of an enrolled student shall notify the school of the student's absence in accordance with school attendance procedures.

A valid cause for absence includes, as provided by State law:

- Illness, including the mental or behavioral health of the student;
- Attendance at a verified medical or therapeutic appointment;
- Appointment with a victim-services provider;
- Observance of a religious holiday;
- Death in the immediate family or family emergency;
- Attendance at a qualifying civic event;
- Other situations beyond the control of the student, as determined by the Board or its designee;
- Circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety;
- Qualifying parenting responsibilities of an expectant or parenting student;
- Circumstances associated with domestic or sexual violence as provided by State law; and
- Other reasons authorized by State law or approved by the CEO or designee.

Students absent for a valid cause shall be provided a reasonable opportunity to make up missed school work as required by law and school procedures.

Definitions
For the purposes of this policy:
Truant means a student subject to compulsory school attendance who is absent without valid cause for a school day or portion thereof, consistent with the requirements applicable to Illinois charter schools.
Chronic or Habitual Truant means a student subject to compulsory school attendance who is absent without valid cause for 5% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days.
Truant Minor means a chronic truant for whom supportive services, including prevention, diagnostic, intervention and remedial services, alternative programs, and other school and community resources have been provided and have failed to result in the cessation of chronic truancy, or have been offered and refused.
Chronic Absence means absences totaling 10% or more school days during the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause and out-of-school suspensions.

The definition does not include absences during which an eligible student has a documented homebound or hospital record on file as provided by law.

Absenteeism and Truancy Program
The designated administrator shall administer an absenteeism and truancy program consistent with the Illinois School Code., applicable administrative rules, and this policy.

This program shall include:

1. **Attendance Notification.** A process to contact the parent/guardian within two hours after the first class when a student in grade 8 or below is absent without prior parent/guardian notification.
2. **Identification and Monitoring.** A process to identify and monitor students who are truant, chronic or habitual truants, truant minors, chronically absent, or at risk of chronic absenteeism.
3. **Diagnostic Procedures.** When patterns of unexcused absenteeism occur, school personnel shall seek to identify the causes or contributing factors. Procedures shall include, at minimum, interviews with the student, parent/guardian, and school personnel who may have relevant information regarding the student's attendance.
4. **Supportive Services and Interventions.** Supportive services shall be individualized based on identified student and family needs and may include:
    - Parent/guardian conferences;
    - Student counseling;
    - Family counseling;
    - School-based academic, behavioral, social-emotional, or MTSS interventions;
    - Attendance plans and progress monitoring;
    - Connection to appropriate community resources or agencies; and
    - Other appropriate school or community-based resources.
5. **Chronic Absence Review**. CLCS shall collect and regularly review chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families, encourage daily attendance, and promote student success. The review shall include analysis of chronic absence data from each applicable attendance center or campus. CLCS will also seek to identify and support students who are at risk of reaching chronic absence levels through appropriate school-based supports, including MTSS and family engagement strategies.
6. **Professional Development.** Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide appropriate staff with information and professional development concerning attendance, student engagement, available supportive services, and procedures for responding to absenteeism and truancy.
7. **Outside Agency Support.** If truancy continues after appropriate supportive services and school resources have been offered, the school may seek assistance from the appropriate Regional Office of Education, truant officer, community-based agencies, or other resources authorized by law.
8. **Cooperation with Outside Agencies.** CLCS shall cooperate, as appropriate and permitted by law, with the Regional Office of Education, truant officers, community-based youth service agencies, and other governmental or community entities supporting student attendance.
9. **Extraordinary Circumstances** Criteria used to determine whether a student's nonattendance is due to extraordinary circumstances may include economic or medical necessity, family hardship, or other circumstances determined appropriate by the CEO or designee consistent with State law.

Supportive Services Before Punitive Action
No punitive action, including out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or court action, shall be taken against a truant minor for truancy unless appropriate and available supportive services and other school resources have first been provided to the student.

A student shall not be administratively withdrawn for nonattendance except as authorized by State law. Any administrative withdrawal based upon nonattendance shall comply with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/26-12, including applicable requirements concerning consecutive absences, supportive services, attempts to locate or re-engage the student, and parent/guardian notification.

Students shall not be referred to law enforcement, a school resource officer, or another local public entity for the purpose of imposing a fine or fee upon the student as punishment for truancy. Any referral involving a parent/guardian or person having custody or control of a student shall comply with the supportive-service, documentation, and other requirements of State law.

Students Age 17 and Older
A 17-year-old who meets the statutory definition of a dropout may apply to participate in available truancy programs and resources in accordance with State law. CLCS may request documentation of the student's dropout status for the previous six months as permitted by law.

Annual Communication
CLCS shall communicate this Attendance and Truancy Policy to students and parents/guardians annually. The policy shall be incorporated into the student handbook and posted on the school's website.

Biennial Review and Submission
This policy shall be reviewed and updated at least once every two years. CLCS shall submit the policy to the Illinois State Board of Education through the required submission system no later than September 30 of the applicable submission year and shall comply with applicable ISBE procedures for submission to the Regional Superintendent of Schools.

Legal References:
105 ILCS 5/22-92
105 ILCS 5/26-1 et seq.
105 ILCS 5/26-2a
105 ILCS 5/26-12
105 ILCS 5/26-18
105 ILCS 5/27A-5.5
705 ILCS 405/3-33.5
23 Ill. Admin. Code §1.242
23 Ill. Admin. Code Part 207

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