

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is absolutely essential for children to be successful in their educational endeavors. **Students are expected to attend school and be on time for classes in order to derive maximum benefit from instructional programs and to develop habits of self-discipline and responsibility.** Moreover, students who miss a day of class will never be able to retrieve completely that learning experience. The interaction with the teacher and fellow students can never be effectively duplicated.

Parents or guardians are responsible for student attendance. The Attendance Committee and/or school corporation will enforce the State of Indiana Compulsory Attendance Laws.

Procedures:

A parent/guardian must contact the school by 8:30 a.m. every day their child is absent from school. A doctor's note should be sent in when the child returns to school specifying the reason for the student's absence if they were seen by a doctor. If a parent fails to call, the secretary will call the parent/guardian asking for the reason of the child's absence. If no phone call is made or the secretary is unable to contact the parent/guardian the absence will remain unexcused. An answering machine is available for parents to leave messages prior to 7:30 a.m. when office staff is not available to take phone calls.

More than seven (7) days of absences a semester is considered excessive, except in cases of extended illness or extremely unusual circumstances. In order for an absence to be *exempt or excused* it must meet the following criteria:

Exempt Absences

The following absences are considered **exempt** per Indiana code (with proper documentation) and students will be considered in attendance:

- Service as a page or as an honoree of the general assembly
- Service on a precinct election board or for political candidates on an election day
- Subpoenaed witness in judicial proceeding
- Duty with Indiana National Guard
- Participating in a civil air patrol
- School sponsored field trips

Excused Absences (with proper documentation)

- Illness verified in writing by a parent or guardian or parent called the school to report the student ill
- Death in the immediate family
- Medical/Dental appointment (make every effort to schedule after school)
- Court Appointments
- Religious Observances (request verification)
- Medical Absence requiring a physician's statement
- (If absent more than 5 days in a row, a doctor's excuse is required.)

Unexcused Absences

- All other absences not specifically exempt or excused.
- Working during school hours. This is a violation of child labor laws. Staying home to baby-sit or farm is considered working and is unexcused.
- Absence without a written note or verification from parent/guardian.

Vacation Days/Family Trips:

Family vacations or other family trips taken during school time are **STRONGLY DISCOURAGED**. Absences due to vacations must be prearranged with school officials at least one week prior to the start of the vacation. Failure to do so will result in a student marked truant. Students returning from vacation are expected to turn in assignments in the timeline indicated by the teacher(s). Students will receive a zero for any work not finished within that timeline. The classroom teacher may be able to provide a few of the assignments that will be missed in advance to the student, however it is the student's and/or parent's responsibility to check Harmony for any missed homework that needs to be completed while they were absent from school.

EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM

- After the 4th Absence in a semester, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will receive a conference phone call and/or email from the Attendance Officer.
- After the 7th Absence in a semester, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be mailed and emailed a Letter and will need to attend a Meeting with the Attendance Committee. Parents may also be asked to have a Certificate of Incapacity completed by their child's doctor/primary care professional.
 - If parent(s)/guardian(s) do not attend the scheduled meeting, the student/parents will be formally referred to Juvenile Probation.
- If Absences continue, the student/parent(s)-guardian(s) will be formally referred to Juvenile Probation. A Documented, Formalized Attendance Plan will be required.
 - If Absences continue after a formal hearing and plan from Project Attend and/or Juvenile Probation, the Department of Child Services will be contacted regarding Educational Neglect.

PREARRANGED ABSENCE

A student may know in advance that he/she will need to miss school. These absences should be prearranged with the office at least one week in advance of anticipated absence. Students/parents should fill out a prearranged absence form. These absences will count towards the student's seven absences each semester.

SIGN-IN PROCEDURES

After returning from any absence, full-day, partial-day, or vocational a student must check in at the office, sign in, and be issued a pass before going to any class. At that time the student should bring the following:

- 1) Note from doctor, dentist, etc. if the absence was for a medical appointment.
- 2) Note from parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence if no contact concerning the absence was made with the office.

No note is required if contact was made with a parent or guardian.

SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES

Any student leaving the school grounds during the school day must have permission from their teacher or administration and must sign out in the office. Any student returning to school before the end of the day must also come to the office to sign in.

Should it become necessary to leave school for reasons of illness, the student will report to the office. The following procedures will occur:

1. Exam by school nurse or other designated school personnel.
2. Notification of parents/guardians by the office.

TARDIES

Students arriving tardy to first hour class must report to the office and sign in for an admit slip before going to class. Tardies during other times of the day will be recorded by the individual teacher and reported to the office on a daily basis. A tardy will be excused if the student has a pass signed by a teacher, principal, or guidance counselor or has a valid excuse acceptable to the teacher. If the student signs in before 8:20 a.m. it counts as a tardy against them, if they sign in at 8:20 a.m. or later it will be an absence for the first hour and the student will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities in accordance with the Athletics/Extra-Curricular policies.

TARDY CONSEQUENCES

Students will be given two tardies per nine weeks.

3rd Tardy per Nine Weeks	Written Warning, Parent Contact
4th Tardy per Nine Weeks	After School Detention, Parent Contact
5th Tardy per Nine Weeks	After School Detention, Parent Contact
6th Tardy per Nine Weeks	In-School Suspension, Parent Meeting
7th or more Tardy Nine Weeks	To Be Determined by Principal

TRUANCY POLICY

Truancy is being absent from school or class without the consent or knowledge of the parent or guardian and the school. Students will not be allowed to participate in or attend after-school activities when truant from any classes throughout the school day. All truanancies will be documented as an Unexcused Absence.

- 1st offense Notification of parents and a one-day in school suspension.
Student will make up missed work without credit when truant.
- 2nd offense Three-day out-of-school suspension
- 3rd offense Five-day out-of-school suspension

DRIVER'S LICENSE-PERMIT INVALIDATION POLICY

1. Indiana code 9-24-2 provides that a driver's license or learner's permit may not be issued to any individual less than eighteen (18) years of age who meets any of the following

conditions:

- Is chronically absent, by having unexcused absences from school for more than ten (10) days of school in one (1) school year.
- Is under at least a second suspension from school for the school year under IC 20-33-8-14 or IC 20-33-8-15.
- Is under an expulsion from school due to misconduct under IC 20-33-8-14, or IC 20-33-8-15 or IC 20-33-8-16;
- Is considered a dropout under IC 20-33-2-28.5.
- Is a habitual truant under IC 20-33-2-11.

2. Definition Of Truancy: The term “truancy” is hereby defined as a student who is absent without parental or school knowledge; leaves school without obtaining prior approval from the principal or his designee; is absent from school without parental permission or in defiance of parental authority.

A student may be designated as a “habitual truant” if they are chronically absent, by having unexcused absences from school for more than ten (10) days of school in one (1) school year.

All students who are at least thirteen (13) years of age but less than the age of fifteen (15) years, and who are determined to be a habitual truant per the definition above, are subject to Indiana Code 20-33-2-11, which provides that any person who is determined to be a habitual truant as defined by school board policy cannot be issued an operator's license or learner's permit until the age of 18 years, or until the student's attendance record has improved as determined by the principal upon review of the student's record of at least once per school year. The student's principal is required to report to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles of the student's status as a habitual truant. The student upon initial designation of being a habitual truant is entitled to the same statutory procedures as a student who is being expelled.