

Book Policy Manual
Section 5000 Students
Title STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY PREVENTION POLICY
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5200 - STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY PREVENTION POLICY

The Board of Trustees believes that presence in the classroom enables the student to participate in instruction, class discussions, and other related activities. As such, regular attendance and classroom participation are integral to instilling incentives for the student to excel. Students are bound by the requirements of Indiana's compulsory attendance law.

Attendance shall mean to be physically present in a school or at another location where the school's educational program is being conducted during regular school hours on a day in which the educational program in which the student is enrolled is being offered (including a mandatory video conference, phone conference, or other virtual environment during e-learning days or as part of a continuous learning program). Academic engagement is the quality of students' participation or connection with the schooling endeavor and hence with activities, values, people, goals, and places that comprise it, and encompasses the academic, behavioral, and emotional enrichment of each student.

Attendance need not always be within the school facilities, but a student will be considered to be in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the Board. An unexcused absence is any absence not covered under the definition of excused absence or an exception to compulsory attendance. An out-of-school suspension shall not be considered an unexcused absence.

Attendance shall be required of all Corporation students, except those exempted under other provisions of State law, during the days and hours that the school is in session. Daily attendance will be appropriately recorded, and reports will be submitted to the IDOE in accordance with IDOE guidance and formatting/submission requirements. The State of Indiana defines a student as chronically absent if a student misses more than ten percent of the school year for any reason.

Exceptions to Compulsory Attendance/Excused Absences

Exceptions to compulsory attendance are established in IC20-33-2 and shall be recognized by the Corporation. For any of these exceptions a student shall be recorded as excused absent from school. At a minimum, in accordance with Indiana law, the Board considers the following as exceptions to compulsory attendance, and may not be recorded as absences or penalized by the school in any manner:

- A. Service as a page for or as an honoree of the general assembly (not recorded as absence) (I.C. 20-33-2-14)
- B. Service on a precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or to a political party on the date of each general, city, or town, special, and primary election at which the student works. (I.C. 20-33-2-15)
- C. Subpoena to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding (I.C. 20- 33-2-16)
- D. Ordered to active duty with the armed forces of the United States, including their reserve components, or Indiana National Guard for not more than ten (10) days (I.C. 20-33-2-17)for at least fifteen (15) days in a school ^[JB1]year.
- E. Participating as a member of the Indiana wing of the Civil Air Patrol for not more than five (5) days in a school year. (I.C. 20-33-2-17.2)
- F. Participation in an “educationally related non-classroom activity” as defined in I.C. 20- 33-2-17.5.
- ~~G.~~ Student or member of student’s household participates or exhibits in the Indiana State Fair for educational purposes, for not more than five (5) days in a school year, if student is in good academic standing, as determined by the school corporation. (I.C. 20-33-2- 17.7)
- ~~G.H.~~ Student participates in a scheduled competition, exhibition, or event offered by the National FFA Organization, Indiana FFA Association, or 4-H Club ^{[M2][JB3]}. If a student is in good academic standing as determined by the school corporation, up to six (6) instructional days in a school year for student participation in a scheduled competition, exhibition, or event offered by the National or Indiana FFA or a 4-H club for educational purposes as evidenced in writing by the student's parent and as approved in writing by the student's school principal. ^[A4]

Additionally, the principal shall allow a student to attend a school for religious instruction that is conducted by a church, an association of churches, or an association that is organized for religious instruction and incorporation under Indiana law for not more than 120 minutes per week for the students to receive religious instruction if the student’s parent makes a written request for such absence. A student who is receiving religious instruction as indicated herein shall not be recorded as absent from school. (I.C. 20.33.2-19)

The Superintendent shall require, from the parent of each student, or from an adult or emancipated student, who has been absent for any reason, a written statement of the cause for such absence. The Superintendent reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each:

- A. prolonged absence;
- B. absence of more than three (3) days duration;
- C. repeated unexplained absence and tardiness.

In addition to the excused absences listed in State statutes, the Board considers the following for excused absences as outlined in guidance provided by the Indiana Department of Education:

- A. Medical
- B. Family Choice- Planned
- C. Family Choice- Unplanned
- D. Funeral/Bereavement
- E. Religious
- F. Administrator Approved

- ~~A. illness verified by a note from the parent~~
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- ~~B. illness verified by a note from a physician~~
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- ~~C. recovery from accident verified by a note from a physician or documented by medical records~~
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- ~~D. required court attendance by subpoena or court order~~
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- ~~E. professional appointments — Parents are encouraged to schedule medical, dental, legal, and other necessary appointments other than during school hours. When appointments are necessary during the school day, the student shall report back to school immediately after the appointment with a signed statement from the doctor, dentist, lawyer, counselor, etc.~~
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- ~~F. death in the immediate family or of a relative~~
 -
- ~~G. observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday in accordance with Policy 5223~~
 -
- ~~H. maternity~~
 -
- ~~I. military connected families' absences related to deployment and return~~

~~such other good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent or permitted by law.~~
Providing Education for Students with Long-Term Medical Conditions

A long-term provider note is necessary when a student has been injured or suffers from an illness and is anticipated to be absent for a minimum of 20 instructional days over the course of the school year. 511 Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) 4-1.5-9 requires a school to provide instruction to students under these circumstances if the parent provides documentation from a licensed healthcare provider with prescriptive authority indicating the student will meet the 20-day criteria due to a medical condition. This long-term medical documentation provides the information necessary for a school to create a plan for meeting the student's educational needs during these absences. Further consultation with the licensed healthcare provider may be necessary to determine the student's ability to engage in educational activities and instruction during these absences. If the student has a Section 504 Plan relating to the absences or the condition causing the absences, the plan under this policy must be consistent with the 504 Plan. [A5] If the student is also a student with a disability, the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) case conference committee will determine services during these absences [MI6].

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absence shall mean any absence not covered under either the definition of excused absence or listed as an exception to compulsory attendance. An out of school suspension shall not be considered an unexcused absence.

~~Repeated [MI7] instances of unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action up to suspension or expulsion of a student.~~

Truancy and Habitual Truants

Truancy is defined as a student absence from the school campus without knowledge of the parent and school.

Or

Truancy shall mean an absence from school that is not an excused absence as stated above or that is not an absence under a parent request that has been filed with the school.

Habitual truant are students absent ten (10) days or more from school within a school year without being excused or without being absent under a parental request filed with the school.

A habitually truant student may not participate in extracurricular or co-curricular activities, unless:

- A. at the Corporation's discretion, in accordance with a plan that meets the requirements for a Student Attendance Plan as described below (even if the student is beyond grade 6) and signed by the student and a parent, provided such participation is permitted by the association governing the activity (if applicable);
- B. after one month of attendance without any unexcused absences and provided such participation is permitted by the association governing the activity (if applicable); or
- C. in accordance with an IEP, Section 504 Plan, or other comparable plan created to meet legal duty to a student with a disability under federal or state law.

The Superintendent or an attendance officer having jurisdiction shall report a child who is habitually absent from school to an intake officer of the juvenile court or the Department of Child Services.

The Superintendent shall ensure that the guidelines on attendance properly address the matter of truancy by including a process which:

- A. identifies the habitual truant;
- B. investigates the cause(s) of his/her truant behavior;
- C. considers, when appropriate, modification of his/her educational program to meet particular needs which may be causing the truancy;
- D. ensures that truant students are disciplined in accordance with the Corporation's policies and administrative guidelines on student discipline;
- E. provides for the reporting to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles those students who have been suspended for the second time during a school year, expelled, or excluded for misconduct;
- F. The superintendent or designee shall report a student who is habitually absent from school in violation of the compulsory school attendance law to the juvenile court or the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS).

Truancy Prevention Policy: ~~Grades K-6 Only~~

Repeated instances of unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action up to suspension or expulsion of a student, except that for the 2025-2026 school year, except in the case of a virtual education program, a student will not be expelled or suspended solely because the student is chronically absent or a habitual truant.^[A8]

The Board shall consider each student assigned to a program of other guided learning experiences, to be in regular attendance for the program provided that they report to such staff member they are assigned for guidance at the place or in the manner in which they are conducting study, and regularly demonstrate progress toward the objectives of the course of study.

Absent student – A student is an “absent student” if the student ~~is enrolled in kindergarten through grade 6 and~~ enrolled in grades K-12 is absent five (5) days within a ten (10) week period without being excused or being absent in conformity with a note on file from the student’s doctor, therapist, or other professional requesting frequent absences be excused under the student’s IEP, Service Plan (developed under 511 IAC 7-34), Choice Scholarship Plan (developed under 511 IAC 7-49), or a plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794.

Parent Notice – The Corporation will immediately provide the following written notifications to the parent of an absent student:

- A. The student is an “absent student” under the definition above.
- B. The parent is responsible for monitoring the absent student’s attendance and ensuring the absent student attends school in accordance with compulsory attendance laws.
- C. The Corporation will be initiating truancy prevention measures regarding the absent student.
- D. The parent is required to attend an attendance conference regarding such truancy prevention measures.
- E. If the absent student meets the requirements of a habitual truant, the Superintendent or attendance officer of the school is required to report the student to an intake officer of the juvenile court or the department of child services in accordance with IC 20-33-2-25. The juvenile court may determine that the student is committing a delinquent act as provided under IC 31-37-2-3. And the parent of the student may be subject to prosecution under IC 35-46-1-4.

Attendance Conference –The Corporation shall hold an attendance conference to discuss the absent student’s absences and establish a plan for the student to prevent future absences. At least the following individuals must be present:

- A. Representative of the school
- B. Teacher of the absent student
- C. Absent student’s parent

- D. Representative chosen by the absent student's parent who may provide insight into the student's absenteeism if the student's parent makes a request to the school that the representative attend and provides notice to the school regarding the identification of the representative at least forty-eight (48) hours before the attendance conference.

This attendance conference shall be held no more than ~~ten (10)~~ ~~five (5)~~ instructional days after the absent student's fifth absence, regardless of whether the absent student's parent or representative in (45) above is able to attend. The Corporation shall make all reasonable efforts to hold such conference on a date and time that works for the schedule of the absent student's parent.

Absent Student Attendance Plan – Such plan may include:

- A. wrap around services that are able to be provided to the absent student to ensure the absent student attends school;
- B. a specific description of the behavior that is required or prohibited for the student;
- C. any additional disciplinary action the school will take if the absent student does not comply with the plan;
- D. if applicable, a referral to counseling, mentoring, or other services for the student;
- E. if applicable, whether a parent is expected to attend the "additional services" described below;
- F. to the extent possible, the signature of the parent of the absent student agreeing to comply with the plan; and
- G. the period for which the plan is effective, not to exceed forty-five (45) instructional days after the plan was established.

Additional Services – The Corporation will offer additional counseling or services to an absent student if the school determines that the absent student's absences are related to any of the following:

- A. the absent student's pregnancy;
- B. that the absent student is in foster care (as defined in IC 31-9-2-46.7);
- C. that the absent student is homeless; or
- D. that the absent student has a severe or life threatening illness or related treatment.

The Superintendent or an attendance officer having jurisdiction shall report a child who is habitually ~~truant~~^{absent} from school to [the prosecuting attorney and to \[A9\]](#) an intake officer of the juvenile court or the Department of Child Services.

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Legal

I.C. 9-24-2-1

I.C. 9-24-2-4

I.C. 20-18-2-6.5

I.C. 20-26-16

I.C. 20-33-2-11

I.C. 20-33-2-14

I.C. 20-33-2-15

I.C. 20-33-2-17

I.C. 20-33-2-17.2

I.C. 20-33-2-17.5

I.C. 20-33-2-17.7

[IC 20-33-2-17.8](#)^[MI10]

I.C. 20-33-2-25

I.C. 20-33-2-26

I.C. 20-33-2-28.5

I.C. 31-9-2-46.7

I.C. 31-37-2-3

I.C. 35-46-1-4

I.C. 36-8-3-7

511 IAC 1-3-1

[511 IAC 4-1.5-9](#)^[A11] [IDOE Guidance: Updates to Indiana Attendance Guidelines \(issued by Indiana Attendance Officer Catherine Danyluk, June 2025\)](#)

511 IAC 6-7.1-8

511 IAC 6-7.1-9

Cross References

[po2370 - EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS](#)

[po5111.01 - HOMELESS STUDENTS](#)

[po5111.03 - CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE](#)

[po5223 - ABSENCES FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION](#)