



Book	POLICIES
Section	Section C - Students
Title	C175 - Student Attendance and Academic Engagement
Code	
Status	Active
Adopted	January 8, 2024

C175

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

The Board of School 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 videoconference, phone conference, or other virtual environment during e-learning or virtual learning days). 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 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.

Content may be delivered onsite in person or off-site during instructional days in the academic school year.

If the Corporation conducts more than three (3) virtual days when at least 50% of the Corporation's in-person enrolled students attend virtually or online, at least 50% of instructional time on any subsequent virtual days will consist of teacher directed synchronous instruction. Where instruction is less than 100% teacher directed synchronous instruction, the remainder of instruction will be asynchronous.

Exceptions to compulsory attendance are established in IC 20-33-2 and shall be recognized by the Corporation. For any of these exceptions a student shall be recorded as excused absent from school.

The Superintendent shall require, from the parent of each student or from an adult student who has been absent for any reason, a written statement of the cause for such absence. The Board 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.

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)
- B. Serve 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
- C. Subpoena to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding
- D. Ordered to active duty with the armed forces of the United States, including their reserve components, or the Indiana National Guard for at least **fifteen** (15) days in a school year if the student is not a habitual truant (**although the corporation may authorize additional excused absences in this circumstance**)
- E. **Participation as a member of the Indiana wing of the civil air patrol who is participating in a civil air patrol international air cadet exchange program for the length of the program or emergency service operation** for not more than five (5) days in a school year
- F. **Participation in an** “educationally related nonclassroom 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.
- H. 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.

These absences shall be considered excused and categorized as follows

- A. Medical- This includes:
 - a. Illness verified by a note from the parent/guardian (limited to 5 days per semester)
 - b. Illness verified by a note from a physician or similarly licensed medical professional
 - c. Recovery from accident as verified by a licensed medical professional
 - d. 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.
- B. Funeral/Bereavement - Death in the immediate family or of a relative
- C. Religious - Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday, practice, or event that is significant to a student’s faith.
- D. Family Choice Planned – Planned absences due to maternity, military connected families’ absences related to deployment and return, or other reasons pre-arranged by the student’s family and approved by the **building principal**, Superintendent or designee
- E. Family Choice Unplanned – Unplanned absences due to maternity, military connected families’ absences related to deployment and return, or other reasons that occur unexpectedly due to unforeseen family circumstances or decisions and approved by the **building principal**, Superintendent or designee

- F. Administrator Approved - Such other good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent or his or her designee or permitted by law, except family choice absences will be categorized pursuant to D. and E. above (pre-approval is required; student's academic progress will be considered)

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. The school will 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. If the student is also an eligible student with a disability, the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) case conference committee will determine services during these absences in accordance with the law.

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. 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.

Truancy is defined as willful refusal to attend school as required by the compulsory attendance law.

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

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.

The Superintendent is authorized to develop administrative guidelines for student attendance, e- learning, and truancy.

The Superintendent also shall ensure that the Board's policy on attendance and the Corporation's administrative guidelines are made available to all parents and adult students.

I.C. 9-24-2-1, -4

I.C. 20-33-2-3.2

I.C. 20-33-2-17.7

I.C. 20-33-2-17.8

I.C. 20-33-2-4 et seq.

I.C. 20-33-2-14

I.C. 20-33-2-15

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