

DRAFT UPDATE

Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative

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Students

Attendance and Truancy

Compulsory School Attendance

This policy applies to individuals who have custody or control of a child: ~~(a) between the ages of 7 and 17 years of age (unless the child has graduated from high school); (a) whose age meets the compulsory attendance age listed in State law, or (b) who is enrolled in any of grades, kindergarten through 12, in the public school regardless of age. These individuals must cause the child to attend the District school wherein the child is assigned, except as provided herein or by State law. Unless a student has already graduated from high school, compulsory attendance ages are as follows:~~

1. ~~Before the 2014-2015 school year, students between the ages of 7 and 17 years.~~
2. ~~Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, students between the ages of 6 (on or before September 1) and 17 years.~~

Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

The parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled must authorize all absences from school and notify the school in advance or at the time of the student's absence. A valid cause for absence includes illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, other situations beyond the control of the student, other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's safety or health, or other reason as approved by the Executive Director or designee.

Absenteeism and Truancy Program

The Executive Director or designee shall manage an absenteeism and truancy program in accordance with the School Code and Board policy. The program shall include but not be limited to:

1. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance who is necessarily and lawfully employed. The Executive Director or designee is authorized to determine when the student's absence is justified.
2. A process to telephone, within 2 hours after the first class, the parents/guardians of students in grade 8 or below who are absent without prior parent/guardian notification.
3. A process to identify and track students who are truants, chronic or habitual truants, or truant minors as defined in the School Code, Section 26-2a.
4. Methods for identifying the cause(s) of a student's unexcused absenteeism, including interviews with the student, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff members or other people who may have information.

Comment [AP1]: The policy is amended in response to new legislation that changes the compulsory attendance ages for students.

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5. The identification of supportive services that may be offered to truant or chronically truant students, including parent-teacher conferences, student and/or family counseling, or information about community agency services.
6. A process to request the assistance and resources of outside agencies, such as, the juvenile officer of the local police department or the truant office of the appropriate Regional Office of Education, if truancy continues after supportive services have been offered.
7. A protocol for cooperating with non-Cooperative agencies including County or municipal authorities, the Regional Superintendent, truant officers, the Community Truancy Review Board, and a comprehensive community based youth service agency. Any disclosure of school student records must be consistent with Board policy 7:340, *Student Records*, as well as State and federal law concerning school student records.
8. An acknowledgement that no punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action, shall be taken against a chronic truant for his or her truancy unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student.
9. The criteria to determine whether a student's non-attendance is due to extraordinary circumstances shall include economic or medical necessity or family hardship and such other criteria that the Executive Director believes qualifies.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/26-1 through 16.
705 ILCS 405/3-33.5.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.242 and 1.290.

CROSS REF.: 6:150 (Home and Hospital Instruction), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities),
7:50 (School Admissions and Eligibility for Services), 7:60 (Residence), 7:80
(Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance), 7:190 (Student Discipline),
7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: May 2, 2012