SOUTH COOK INTERMEDIATE SERVICE CENTER

R.I.S.E.

Regional Institute for Scholastic Excellence

Original Adoption date: 12/2/2022

Review Date:

South Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board

Policy 300.31

Absenteeism and Truancy

This policy applies to individuals who have custody or control of a child: (a) between the ages of six (on or before September 1) and 17 years (unless the child graduated from high school), or (b) who is enrolled in any of grades kindergarten through 8 in the public school regardless of age. 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 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 of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentive 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 (including mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the Board, other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, or other reason as approved by the Executive Director or designee. Students absent for a valid cause may make up missed homework and class work assignments in a reasonable time frame.

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

A protocol for excusing a student from attendance who is necessarily and lawfully employed. The Executive Director, Building Principal or designee is authorized to determine when the student's absence is justified.

A protocol for excusing a student in grades 6 through 8 from attendance to sound Taps at a military honors funeral held in Illinois for a deceased veteran.

A protocol for excusing a student from attendance on a particular day(s) or at a particular time of day when his/her parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings.

A process to telephone, within two hours after the first class, the parents/guardians of students in grade 8 or below who are absent without prior parent/guardian notification.
A process to identify and track students who are truants, chronic or habitual truants, or truant minors as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26-2a.

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A description of diagnostic procedures 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 about the reasons for the student's attendance problem.

The identification of supportive services that may be offered to truant, chronically truant, or chronically absent students, including parent-teacher conferences, student and/or family counseling, or information about community agency services.

A process for the collection and review of chronic absence data and to:
Determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families

Encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success.

Reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to teachers, administrators, Board members, school resource officers, and staff on the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement.

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.

An acknowledgement that no punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action, shall be taken against a truant minor for his or her truancy unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student.

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 Superintendent believes qualifies.

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Valid Causes for Absences
- Illness
- Mental/behavioral health
- Family emergency
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Death in immediate family
- Other situation beyond the control of the student

Diagnostic Procedures

When a student misses school for more than 3 days, RISE staff will use the following attendance diagnostic survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/attendance_student

Collect and review student attendance data
- Examine attendance patterns
- Analyze reports from the student's home school on absenteeism

Intervention and Supportive Services

School Social Worker/Behavioral Specialists will identify resources to assist students and caregivers which may include:
- Counseling,
- Family counseling
- Identifying community services

Procedures

- When student reaches three (3) or more unexcused days, administration will reach out to the student/caregiver to determine causal factors; this may occur using text, phone call, email or written communication
- Upon return, administration will work with the student to create a reengagement/attendance plan
- If continued absenteeism, a letter will be sent to student/caregiver and homeschool/district
- Staff will engage the services of the South Cook ISC Truancy program, if necessary
- Home visit may be completed, depending upon the individual case