

TRUANCY

The Board endeavors to reduce truancy through cooperation with parents, diligence in investigating the causes of absence and use of strict guidelines in regard to tardiness and unexcused absence.

When the Board determines that a student has been truant and that the parent, guardian or other person having care of a child has failed to ensure the child's attendance at school, State law authorizes the Board to require the parent to attend a specified educational program.

This program has been established according to the rules adopted by the State Board of Education for the purpose of encouraging parental involvement in compelling the child's attendance at school.

On the request of the Superintendent, or when it comes to the attention of the school attendance officer or other appropriate officer of the District, the designated officer must investigate any case of supposed truancy within the District and must warn the child, if found truant, and the child's parent in writing of the legal consequences of being a "habitual" ~~or a "chronic"~~ truant.

A "habitual truant" is any child of compulsory school age who is absent without a legitimate excuse for ~~five~~ **30** or more consecutive school days ~~hours~~, ~~seven~~ **42** or more school days ~~hours~~ in one month or ~~12~~ **72** or more school days ~~hours~~ in a school year.

~~A "chronic truant" is any child of compulsory school age who is absent without legitimate excuse for seven or more consecutive school days, 10 or more school days in one month or 15 or more school days in a school year.~~

The parent is required to have the child attend school immediately after notification. If the parent fails to get the child to attend school, the attendance officer or other appropriate officer, if directed by the Superintendent or the Board, must send notice requiring the child's parent to attend a parental education program.

~~For the correction of the "habitually truant" unruly child, the courts may now order the Board to require the child to attend an alternative school if one has been established.~~

~~The courts may order the "habitually truant" child not to be absent without legitimate excuse from school for five or more consecutive days, seven or more school days in one school month or 12 or more school days in a school year.~~

Regarding "habitual truants," the Board must take as an intervention strategy any appropriate action contained in Board policy, ~~or the Board may file a complaint in juvenile court jointly against the child and the parent. The complaint must state that the child is an "unruly child" by virtue of being a "habitual truant," and that the child's parent violated the School Attendance Law.~~

Regarding “chronic truants,” if the parent fails to get the child to attend school and the child is considered a “chronic truant,” the Board must file a complaint in the juvenile court jointly against the child and the parent. The complaint must state that the child is a “delinquent child” by virtue of being a “chronic truant,” and that the parent has violated the School Attendance Law.

The Board directs the administration to develop intervention strategies that ~~may include~~ **the all of the following actions if applicable:**

1. providing a truancy intervention **plan meeting State law requirements** ~~program for a habitual truant~~ **for any student who is excessively absent from school;**
2. providing counseling for a habitual truant;
3. requesting or requiring a parent having control of a habitual truant to attend parental involvement programs;
4. requesting or requiring a parent of a habitual truant to attend truancy prevention mediation programs;
5. notification to the registrar of motor vehicles or
6. taking appropriate legal action.

The attendance officer provides notice to the parent of a student who is absent without excuse for 38 or more hours in one school month or 65 or more hours in a school year within seven days after the date of the absence triggering the notice. At the time of notice, the District may take any appropriate action as outlined in this policy as an intervention strategy.

Absence Intervention Plan

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, when a student’s absences surpass the threshold for a habitual truant, the principal or the Superintendent assigns the student to an absence intervention team within 10 days of the triggering event. The absence intervention team must be must be developed within seven school days of the triggering event and is based on the needs of the individual student. The team must include a representative from the student’s school or District, a representative from the student’s school or District who knows the student and the student’s parent or their designee, and also may include a school psychologist, counselor, social worker or representative of an agency designed to assist students and their families in reducing absences. During the seven days while developing the team, the Superintendent or principal makes at least three meaningful, good faith attempts to secure participation of the student’s parent. If the student’s parent is unresponsive the District investigates whether the failure to respond triggers mandatory reporting to the appropriate children’s services agency and instructs the absence team to develop the intervention plan without the parent.

Within 14 school days after a student is assigned to a team, the team develops a student specific intervention plan to work to reduce or eliminate further absences. The plan includes, at minimum a statement the District will file a complaint in juvenile court not later than 61 days after the date the plan is implemented if the student refuses to participate or fails to make satisfactory progress. The District makes reasonable efforts to provide the student's parent with written notice of the plan within seven days of development.

The absence intervention plan for a student may include contacting the juvenile court to have a student informally enrolled in an alternative to adjudication. The Board directs the Superintendent to develop written procedures regarding the use of and selection process for offering these alternatives to ensure fairness.

If the student becomes habitually truant within 21 school days prior to the last day of instruction of a school year, the District may either assign a school official to work with the student's parent to develop an intervention plan during the summer and implement the plan no later than seven days prior to the first day of instruction of the next school year, or reconvene the absence intervention process on the first day of instruction of the next school year.

Filing a Complaint with Juvenile Court

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the attendance officer must file a complaint against the student in juvenile court on the 61st day after implementation of the absence intervention plan when:

1. the student's absences have surpassed the threshold for a habitual truant;
2. the District has made meaningful attempts to re-engage the student through the absence intervention plan, other intervention strategies and any offered alternatives to adjudication and
3. the student has refused to participate in or failed to make satisfactory progress on the plan or any offered intervention strategies or alternatives to adjudication as determined by the absence intervention team.

If the 61st day after intervention falls on a day during the summer months, the District may extend the implementation of the plan and delay the filing of the complaint for an additional 30 days after the first day of instruction of the next school year.

Unless the absence intervention team determines the student has made substantial progress on their absence intervention plan, the attendance officer must file a complaint against the student in juvenile court if the student is absent without legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours or 42 or more hours during a school month at any time during the implementation phase of the intervention plan or other intervention strategy.

[Adoption date:]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3313.663; **3313.668**
3321.03 through 3321.04; 3321.07 through 3321.09; 3321.19; 3321.191;
3321.22; 3321.38

CROSS REFS.: JED, Student Absences and Excuses
JEG, Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance
JK, Employment of Students

NOTE: House Bill 410 (2016) made significant changes to district requirements for managing truancy effective with the 2017-2018 school year. When developing truancy policies, districts are required to consult with the judge of the juvenile court of the county or counties in which the district is located, parents, guardians, or other persons having care of the students attending school in the district and appropriate state and local agencies.

Districts with a chronic absenteeism rate of less than 5% as reflected on the most recent state report card are exempt from the requirement to assign students to an absence intervention team and instead must take any appropriate action as an intervention strategy outlined in board policy.

THIS IS A REQUIRED POLICY