

ATTENDANCE (P4040)

The Diocesan schools consider the development of good attendance habits as a vital and desirable undertaking for two essential reasons. First, it is difficult for young people to learn if they are not in class: the teaching-learning process builds upon itself. Secondly, research shows that educational achievement is directly related to attendance. A student who misses a day of school misses a day of education that cannot be retrieved in its entirety. An effective attendance requires the cooperation of parents, students and faculty.

I. Parent/Legal Guardian Responsibility

Parent/legal guardians are responsible for having their children in school. Indiana law prescribes that parents must have their children in public or private school from the age of seven (7) until the date on which the child:

- A. Graduates;
- B. Reaches at least sixteen (16) years of age or less than eighteen (18) years of age and:
 1. The student and the student's parent or guardian and the principal agree to the withdrawal; and
 2. At the exit interview the student provides written acknowledgment of the withdrawal and the student's parent or guardian and the school principal each provide written consent of the student to withdraw from school.
 3. Reaches the age of eighteen (18) years.

II. Absences from School

Absences from school shall fall into one of the three following categories:

A. Absences which are counted as present:

1. Serving as a page in the Indiana General Assembly;
2. For students in grades 7 through 12, serving on a precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or political party on election day with prior approval of the principal;
3. Court appearances pursuant to a subpoena;
4. Active duty with the Indiana National Guard for not more than ten (10) days in a school year;
5. Placement in a short term inpatient treatment program which provides an instructional program;
6. Homebound instruction;
7. Religious observances; and/or
8. For high school students, serving on the state standards task force. The student must provide a written verification from the chairman of the task force indicating the date and times the student was to be in attendance at the meeting and verifying the student's attendance.

B. Excused Absences

1. Illness of the student (with written statement by parent/guardian or doctor)
2. Funerals
 - a. for death in the immediate family
 - b. for persons outside of the immediate family with parental permission.
3. Out-of-school suspension (make-up work is NOT accepted)
4. Medical and legal appointments - Such appointments should be scheduled after school hours when possible.
5. School/college visits (2) - parents need to check with the individual school's policy for arranging such visits;
6. All work should be made up in a reasonable amount of time. Generally, one day of make-up time will be given for each day absent. Extended absences due to illness should be worked out with individual teachers.

C. Unexcused Absences (make-up work not permitted unless otherwise noted)

1. No parent contact with the school giving an explanation for the absence on the day of the absence.
2. No physician's note to excuse an absence once more than 5 days of absence have occurred (see Frequent or Prolonged Illness below).
3. Family Vacations - (students may make up work)

If a student is going to miss two or more days, or extend Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Spring Break, parents must notify the Attendance Office at least one week in advance prior to the first day of the absence and request an Extended Absence form. **If the one week advance notice is not followed then the absence will be marked as unexcused. A grade of zero will be given for any missed work.** Should the request be granted, the student is expected to be up to date in all classes upon his/her return, including all homework. Tests, quizzes, and other missed work is due at the discretion of the teacher.

4. Absences other than those defined as excused or absences counted as present.

III Truancy

A student is truant when she/he is absent from school or class without the permission of his/her parent or guardian and the school. Students who are habitually truant shall be reported to the juvenile authorities in accordance with applicable state law and following diocesan procedures.

Habitual Truancy may be evidenced by the following:

- A. Refusal to attend school in defiance of parental authority.
- B. Accumulating a number of absences from school without justification over a period of time, such as a grading period. Habitual truancy is not evidenced by a single isolated incident of unexcused absence.
- C. Three (3) or more judicial findings of truancy.
- D. Penalties for truancy will consist of the following:
 1. A grade of zero is given for any missed work.
 2. Thirty minutes detention for each class missed.
 3. Saturday detention

IV. Reporting an Absence

A parent/guardian shall contact the school to report a student's absence. Each school has established procedures for reporting absences. Absences will not be excused and the student may be considered truant if the procedure for reporting an absence is not followed.

A written explanation for any absence and signed by a custodial parent/guardian is required upon the return of the student to school. The school is not required to provide credit for makeup of assigned work missed because the student's absence is unexcused or the student is truant.

V. Frequent or Prolonged Illness

If a student is absent for five consecutive days due to illness, or has contracted a contagious disease, a physician's statement may be required in order for the student to return to school.

VI. Response to Irregular Attendance

If an irregular attendance pattern begins to develop, the school may use the following procedure to encourage the student's return to a pattern of regular school attendance.

- A. Call daily from school (secretary, principal, or attendance clerk), to parent/guardian to verify absence and to determine reason.
- B. After a student is absent in a class 10 times per semester, whether excused or unexcused, the Assistant Principal of Discipline and Attendance will contact the student's parent/guardian via mail and a phone call. The student's attendance, as well as the school Excessive Absence policy, will be reviewed at this time.
- C. After a student is absent in a class over 14 times per semester, a recommendation will be made from the Assistant Principal of Discipline and Attendance to the Principal concerning loss of credit due to excessive absences.
- D. If the Principal is unable to successfully resolve the attendance problem, a referral may be made to the intake officer of the local Juvenile Probation Department.
- E. Medical Compression - A parent/guardian may submit medical documentation to compress excessive absences if a student is experiencing a chronic medical condition or a temporary medical situation (mono, surgery, etc.). The Assistant Principal for Discipline/Attendance will make the final decision regarding compression of excessive absences.
- F. Contagious disease - When a student has been absent due to contagious illness, he/she must present a doctor's certification of fitness to return to school.

VII. Parents or guardians must call the school (239-7665) by 9:00 A.M. of the day of the absence to report the student absent

- A. Upon return from the absence, the student must submit a written note signed by the parent or guardian indicating the date(s) and reason for the absence to the Attendance Office. The student will receive an admit slip which is to be shown to all teachers. **Failure to follow these two policies (phone call and note) may result in the absence being unexcused and no make-up will be allowed.**
- B. It is the student's responsibility to contact his/her teachers and arrange make-up work.
- C. **A student must attend one-half day of school (four classes) in order to participate in any athletic or extra-curricular activity that day. If a student is ill and leaves school he/she may not return that day to participate in athletics or extra-curricular activities.**

VIII. Tardiness

A student is tardy when he/she is not in his/her assigned place when the bell rings to begin the class period. Students are responsible for planning well in advance so as to avoid being late to school. Arranging rides, checking that the car has sufficient gas, and knowing what the weather is are just some examples of being well-prepared. Oversleeping, car problems, or "it's my parent's fault", are not valid excuses. Developing promptness and responsibility are lifelong lessons that will serve our students well in the workplace as well as life in general.

- A. Students who are tardy to school means that the student arrives after the school day begins (7:55 a.m.). These students must report to the Attendance Office for a tardy slip which the student will present to his/her first period teacher. Students who are late due to illness, appointments, etc. should bring a signed note from a parent/guardian explaining the reason for the late arrival to school.
 - B. After a student's third tardy to school (excused or unexcused), parents will be notified with a letter from the Attendance Office. The following penalties will then be assessed:
 - 1. 4th tardy - 45 minutes P.M.
 - 2. 5th tardy - student locked out of Period 1
 - 3. 6th tardy - student locked out of Period 1 and 1 hour detention issued, parent notified
 - 4. 7th tardy - student locked out of Period 1 and Saturday detention issued, parent notified
 - 5. 8th tardy - student locked out of Period 1 and a parent conference is held

Students who are locked out of their first period class will not be allowed to makeup any work. This unexcused absence will be part of the student's cumulative semester attendance record.
 - C. If a student is tardy to periods 2-10, the classroom teacher will assign appropriate consequences according to individual classroom discipline plans.
- IX. Early Dismissal
- A. Students who must leave school early (before the school day ends) must report to the Attendance Office for permission to leave the building. A school official must have permission from a parent/guardian before releasing any student.
 - B. Illness at School
 - 1. A student who becomes ill must report to the Nurse's Office or the Attendance Office in the event that the Nurse is not available. The Nurse will contact the parent/guardian to determine if the student is leaving school due to a medical problem. Students will not be kept in the nurse's office any longer than 25 minutes. Students are not allowed to come to the nurse's office to catch up on sleep, socialize, or skip class intentionally.
 - 2. Students will receive a pass from the Nurse to leave school and must give this pass to the Attendance Office before leaving school.
 - 3. Upon returning to school, the student must follow the same procedures as indicated for students absent from school.
 - C. Administration of Medication - if your child is in need of medication during the school day, they must have a signed consent form, along with their own bottle of medication. The school will not dispense any medication without a written consent from the parent for over the counter medication and from the doctor for prescription medication.
 - 1. Please leave the medication in the original bottle with the prescription label on it. The OTC medicines must also remain in the original bottle with the original label. We are not allowed to administer medications that are sent to us in Baggies or bottles that are not the original containers.
 - 2. Students may not have any type of medicine, prescription or over-the counter (OTC) medicine, in their possession at any time while on school premises. All medications must be brought to the nurse or left in the attendance office (in the absence of the nurse). Failure to adhere to this policy could result in the student being in violation of the school's Drug and Alcohol Policy (page 10).
 - 3. If your son/daughter is required to use an inhaler to treat his/her condition, consent for "Inhaler Self-Administration" must be on file in the Nurse's Office. Parents/Guardians and the physician must complete this form.
 - 4. Epi Pens also require a form be completed. The form "Epi Pen Consent and Release Form" requires completion by the physician as well as the parents/guardians.
 - D. Medical, Dental or other Appointments should be made outside of the school day if possible. If it becomes necessary to miss school for an appointment, students must submit a signed note from parent/guardian to the Attendance Office requesting an early dismissal. **This should be done before school starts so that students may obtain an early dismissal slip which is to be presented to the teacher from which class the student is leaving early.** Students should also check out in the Attendance Office before leaving school.
- X. FIELD TRIPS
- Field trips offer a variety of educational experiences that supplement the classroom curriculum.
- A. Each student involved in a field trip should produce something (paper, project, worksheet, drawing, etc.) by which learning can be evaluated. Students who cannot attend the field trip for particular reasons should still be expected to produce an equally challenging assignment for the class.
 - B. Field trips for clubs should be limited to the weekends unless permission is granted from the Administration.
 - C. Students should be limited to the number of field trips they may attend within a particular month. A limit of two field trips per student is recommended.
 - D. Students may be denied participation for a field trip for a variety of reasons including poor attendance, discipline problems, etc. The ultimate approval to attend a field trip is up to the individual teachers.
 - E. Students are expected to obey all directives from all chaperones; including faculty, staff, and parents.

XI. Student Supervision

- A. A student may not leave school grounds after their arrival at school, unless a school official grants an early dismissal request or a parent/guardian is notified.
- B. The school building is open on a regular school day from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Any student in the building or on school grounds outside of these times must be under the supervision of a school employee. During the first and fourth quarters, weather permitting, students may go out to the gym steps area on the south side only during their lunch hours. This privilege may be revoked if it is abused.

XII. College Visits

- A. Juniors and seniors are encouraged to have formal campus visits. The school allows two (2) days for this purpose throughout his/her school years.
- B. Students must secure permission from both the Guidance Office and the Attendance Office at least two days in advance.
- C. During the fourth quarter of the senior year, a confirmed appointment at a college must be presented to the counselor and a copy attached to the request form submitted to the Attendance Office.
- D. Verification of all visits in the form of a statement signed by the college official is required. The form used for verification is available in the Attendance Office.

XIII. World of Work

Juniors and seniors may spend a day a year to participate in this program. This day gives the students the opportunity to explore a career with a community professional in an area they may be interested in. All such requests are handled in the Guidance Office.

XIV. Homework During Absences

- A. The Guidance Office will assist in getting homework assignments for students who will be absent for more than THREE days due to illness or injury.
- B. Homework assignments will be available in the Guidance Office after 3:00 P.M. the day following the request. Assignments not picked up should be picked up by the student upon return to school.

XV. Temporary Guardianship

- A. If parents or guardians are to be out of town and the student is in the care of a responsible adult, or responsible for him/herself, we ask that the parents notify the Attendance Office in writing of such an arrangement.
- B. Parents are urged to fill out a medical treatment permission form, available from local hospitals, for all children under the age of 18, should the child require medical attention during the parent's absence.

XVI. Inclement Weather/School Closing

- A. It is always the parents' decision to keep a student home in the event of dangerous road conditions locally, even if school is not closed. Please call the Attendance Office to report such an absence by 9:00 A.M. that day.
- B. The decision to close school or delay the start of school will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Assistant Superintendent for the Diocese.