



Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Truancy/Mandatory Attendance Enforcement
Policy	204.2
Status	Active
Adopted Last	July 26, 2017
Revised	April 23, 2024

The Board recognizes that regular attendance is an important part of student success and that chronic absenteeism can have devastating effects on a student's academic progress and can also negatively affect a student socially and can cause stress and anxiety for the absent student and his/her family. The Board also recognizes that families dealing with chronic attendance issues may benefit from additional support to help them address the problem.

Purpose

The Board intends for the processes and procedures used to combat truancy and comply with applicable mandatory attendance laws to be as supportive of the families as possible, utilizing referrals to the magistrate only as a last resort when other more collaborative, non-punitive options have not been successful.

Applicability

This policy applies to all students of compulsory school age, which is the period of a child's life from the time the child's parents/guardians elect to have the child enter school age until the child reaches eighteen (18) years of age. This Policy does not apply to individuals who hold a certificate of graduation from a regularly accredited, licensed, registered or approved high school.

Delegation of Authority

The Director or designee shall develop administrative regulations that set forth specific truancy procedures that are consistent with the law and with this Policy. The principal shall be responsible for addressing truancy issues at Evergreen through consistent implementation of this Policy and the administrative regulations promulgated pursuant to it.

Definitions

- **"Person in parental relation"** shall mean a:
 - (1) Custodial biological or adoptive parent.
 - (2) Noncustodial biological or adoptive parent.

(3) Guardian of the person of a child.

(4) Person with whom a child lives and who is acting in a parental role of a child.

- **"Attendance improvement program"** shall mean a program designed to improve school attendance by seeking to identify and address the underlying reasons for a child's absences.

"Truant/Truancy" occurs where a student has accrued three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.

- **"Habitually Truant/Habitual Truancy"** occurs where a student has accrued six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.
- **"Unexcused absence"** shall mean an absence for which an approved explanation has not been submitted within the time period and in the manner prescribed by Board and/or by the Director or designee through administrative regulations.
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Procedures

Pursuant to law, the Evergreen shall provide written notification to the "person in parental relation to the student," as defined, above, in cases where a student has accrued three (3) unexcused absences.

Once the notice has been issued, where a student continues to accrue unexcused absences, a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) will be held. This is a conference to discuss where the child's absences and reasons for the absences are examined in an effort to improve attendance, with or without additional services. The following individuals shall be invited to the conference:

1. The child.
2. The child's "person in parental relation," as defined, above.
3. Other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource.
4. Appropriate school personnel.
5. Recommended service providers.

The outcome of this conference will be documented in a School Attendance Improvement Plan.

Students who accrue six (6) or more unexcused absences are considered "habitually truant" under the law. Once the SAIC has been held, if a student reaches six (6) or more unexcused absences, the student is considered "habitually truant" pursuant to the law, and the school shall take further action which will include one or more of the following, as permitted by law:

- Referral to an attendance improvement program,
- Referral to the county children and youth agency (CYS) for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act,
Formal filing of a truancy action with the magisterial district court.

Formal filing of truancy charges with the magisterial district court shall only be utilized only where the School Attendance Improvement Conference/School Attendance Improvement Plan have been unsuccessful and, for students under the age of fifteen (15), where at least one other alternative option has been attempted and has been unsuccessful in resolving the truancy issue.

Legal References

24 P.S. § 1327 (Compulsory School Attendance)

24 P.S. § 1333 (Procedure when a Child is Truant)

24 P.S. § 1333.1 (Procedure when a Child is Habitually Truant)