

J-11 STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

The statutes of the State of Indiana require regular school attendance of all residents from the earlier of a child's official enrollment in school or attainment of when he or she reaches the age of seven (7) until the date on which the student graduates, reaches the age of eighteen (18) years, or is eligible for withdrawal under IC 20-33-2-9. Regular school attendance is expected in accordance with this statute.

Attendance shall mean to be physically present in a school or at another location where the school's educational program is being conducted during regular school hours on a day in which the educational program in which the student is enrolled is being offered (including a mandatory videoconference, phone conference, or other virtual environment during e-learning days or virtual programming).

If a parent does not send his or her child to school because of the child's illness or mental or physical incapacity, it is unlawful for the parent to fail or refuse to produce a certificate of the incapacity, if it is demanded.

It is unlawful for a parent to fail, neglect, or refuse to send his or her child to a public school unless the child is being provided with instruction equivalent to that given in the public school.

Other Student Absences

In the elementary schools it is the policy of the Board of School Trustees that the Assistant Superintendent, or his or her designee, shall develop written rules for the granting of excused or unexcused absences and these rules shall be distributed to each student. The rules shall include, among other items, a section outlining the proper procedure to use for returning to school, obtaining an admit slip indicating whether the absence was excused or unexcused, and the consequences of an unexcused absence.

The Board has approved the following attendance policies in regard to absences from the Plainfield Community Schools.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Unexcused absences are not considered eligible for special makeup assignments to keep the student up to date with class work other than in the case of pre-arranged absences.

Parents are expected to report absences to the principal or his or her designee. The absence will be regarded as unexcused until the parent contact (written note or phone call) the school stating the reason for the absence.

Absences due to a contagious disease require a doctor's written approval for readmission.

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Indiana law requires regular school attendance. Students who are absent more than eight (8) days at the high school or middle or truant more than five (5) days of school in any single

semester may be expelled from school, and may not apply for readmission until the beginning of the next semester. Parents will be notified when the student has accumulated his or her eighth absence. A high school student absent more than eight (8) days in a semester class or six (6) days in a quarter length class may be withdrawn from that class. Expulsion proceedings will be conducted in accordance with state law. Absences are divided into the following categories: **EXCUSED, UNEXCUSED, AND EXEMPT ABSENCES**

Excused Absences

Excused absences are defined as absences that the school corporation regards as legitimate reasons for being out of school, as included in the school policy. Indiana Code allows five causes for an absence to be excused. These include:

- Illness verified by note from parent/guardian
- Illness verified by note from physician
- Family funeral
- Maternity
- Military Connected Families (e.g. absences related to deployment and return)

Exempt Absences

Indiana Law prescribes which absences are exceptions and are not included as absences on a student's attendance. As per (IC 20-33-2) these include: (1) service as a page for the Indiana General Assembly, (2) serving on the Precinct Election Board or the helper to a political candidate, (3) a student who is issued a subpoena to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding, (4) ordered to active duty with the Indiana National Guard for not more than ten days, (5) Serving with the Civil Air Patrol for up to five (5) days, (6) exhibiting at the State Fair, and (7) educationally related non-classroom activity.

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is any absence not covered under the definition of excused or exempt.

Repeated instances of unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action up to suspension or expulsion of a student.

Truancy is defined as willful refusal to attend school as required by the compulsory attendance law.

The Superintendent or an attendance officer having jurisdiction shall report a child who is habitually absent from school to an intake officer of the juvenile court or the Department of Child Services.

FAMILY EMERGENCY

A student may be allowed make-up work for an absence caused by a family emergency, even if it falls in the “unexcused” category. This absence may not exceed one (1) day per incident and will count toward the eight (8) days at the high school and eight (8) days at the middle school. The parent should call the attendance office on the day of the emergency and send a note of explanation with the student the following day; final determination will be at the building principal’s discretion.

REPORTING ABSENCES

Students should be advised to have their parents call the school attendance office on the day of their absence; parents must state the reason for the student’s absence. Parents will be contacted by telephone to check on absences not so reported. Parents will be informed promptly of any irregularity in attendance. The absence will be regarded as unexcused until the parent contacts (written note or phone call) the school stating the reason for the absence.

PREARRANGED ABSENCES

Vacations: Families should plan their vacation at times when school is not in session to avoid student absences. The granting of pre-arranged absences is not intended for adding additional vacation days to the school year, but rather for unavoidable absences or once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

College Visits: A parent must make arrangements in advance for a college visitation, by filling out the College Visit Request Form. This is a separate form from the Prearranged Absence form.

The following applies to prearranged absences:

1. Parents must sign a form for prearranged absence and submit that form to the principal or assistant principal’s office.
2. The form must be submitted ahead of time, allowing ample time for needed signatures to be obtained and all stakeholders to be notified; recommended submission five (5) days prior to absence.
3. If a student has previously been absent for several days, a conference may be required by the administration to discuss the ramifications of additional absences.
4. A prearranged absence form must be presented by the student to each of his teachers for signatures.
5. **SECONDARY:** Make-up work should be arranged in advance. Class work missed must be made up promptly upon the student’s return. **ELEMENTARY:** Class work missed must be made up promptly upon the student’s return. Students need to check

with teachers regarding an agreeable time frame for make-up work to be completed; teacher may provide work ahead of time at his/her discretion.

6. The prearranged absence will be reported as excused or unexcused according to the Indiana Compulsory Attendance Law (IC-20-33-2) and make-up work will be allowed for credit. Students and parents are reminded that even though make-up work will be allowed for credit, some classroom activities simply cannot be replicated. The instruction missed during class time may adversely affect their grades (especially in participation type classes) and understanding of material.
7. Any prearranged absence(s) will count towards the eight (8) day attendance policy.
8. No prearranged absence will be approved if a student is scheduled to take the state required achievements test and/or locally administered achievement tests.
9. MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL- prearranged absences will not be allowed during final semester exams or the last fifteen days of the school year for any reason, other than those exceptions outlined by Indiana Law.

LEGAL REF: Indiana Code 20-33-2-11

SOURCE: Plainfield Community School Corporation
Plainfield, IN

ADOPTED: Prior to 08/10/66

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