

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

The Metropolitan School District of Washington Township Board of Education believes that presence in the classroom enables the student to participate in instruction, class discussions, and other related activities. As such, regular attendance and classroom participation are integral to ensuring the student has an opportunity to excel. Students are bound by the requirements of Indiana's compulsory attendance law. 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 continuous/virtual environment during e-learning days or as part of a continuous/virtual program). Academic engagement is the quality of students' participation or connection with the schooling endeavor and hence with activities, values, people, goals, and places that comprise it, and encompasses the academic, behavioral, and emotional enrichment of each student.

Attendance shall be required of all District students, except those exempted under other provisions of State law, during the days and hours that the school is in session. Daily attendance will be appropriately recorded, and reports will be submitted to the IDOE in accordance with IDOE guidance and formatting/submission requirements.

Content may be delivered onsite in person or off-site during instructional days in the academic school year. If the District conducts more than three (3) virtual days when at least 50% of the District's in-person enrolled students attend virtually or online, at least 50% of instructional time on any subsequent virtual days will consist of teacher directed synchronous instruction. Where instruction is less than 100% teacher directed synchronous instruction, the remainder of instruction will be asynchronous.

Exceptions to compulsory attendance are established in IC 20-33-2 and shall be recognized by the District. For any of these exceptions a student shall be recorded as excused absent from school.

The Superintendent shall require, from the parent of each student or from an adult student who has been absent for any reason, a written statement of the cause for such absence. The Board reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each:

- A. prolonged absence;
- B. absence of more than three (3) days duration;
- C. repeated unexplained absence and tardiness.

At a minimum, in accordance with Indiana law, the Board considers the following as exceptions to compulsory attendance, and may not be recorded as absences or penalized by the school in any manner:

- A. Service as a page for or as an honoree of the general assembly (not recorded as absence)

- B. Serve on a precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or to a political party on the date of each general, city, or town, special, and primary election at which the student works
- C. Subpoena to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding
- D. Ordered to active duty with the Indiana National Guard for not more than ten (10) days in a school year
- E. Member of the Indiana wing of the civil air patrol who is participating in a civil air patrol for not more than five (5) days in a school year
- F. “educationally related nonclassroom activity” as defined in I.C. 20-33-2-17.5
- G. Student or member of student’s household participates or exhibits in the Indiana State Fair for educational purposes, for not more than five (5) days in a school year, if student is in good academic standing, as determined by the school corporation

The following absences shall be considered excused:

- A. Illness verified by a note from the parent
- B. Illness verified by a note from a physician
- C. Recovery from accident
- D. Professional appointments – Parents are encouraged to schedule medical, dental, legal, and other necessary appointments other than during school hours. When appointments are necessary during the school day, the student shall report back to school immediately after the appointment with a signed statement from the doctor, dentist, lawyer, counselor, etc.
- E. Death in the immediate family or of a relative
- H. Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
- I. Maternity
- J. Military connected families’ absences related to deployment and return
- K. Own college visitation
- L. Such other good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent or his or her designee or permitted by law

An unexcused absence is any absence not covered under the definition of excused absence or an exception to compulsory attendance. An out-of-school suspension shall not be considered an unexcused absence.

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.

The Board shall consider each student assigned to a program of other guided/virtual learning experiences, to be in regular attendance for the program provided that they report to such staff member they are assigned for guidance at the place or in the manner in which they are conducting study, and regularly demonstrate progress toward the objectives of the course of study.

The Superintendent is authorized to develop administrative guidelines for student attendance, e-learning, and truancy.

The Superintendent also shall ensure that the Board's policy on attendance and the District's administrative guidelines are made available to all parents and adult students.

I.C. 9-24-2-1, -4
I.C. 20-33-2-3.2
I.C. 20-33-2-17.7
I.C. 20-33-2-4 et seq.
I.C. 20-33-2-14
511 IAC 1-3-1

MSD of Washington Township

Adopted: 2/28/24
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