

STUDENT PERSONNEL

Series 500

Policy Title: Truancy – Unexcused Absences

Code Number: AR501.10

Absences:

According to Section 299.1 of the Iowa Code, the parent guardian, or legal or actual custodian of a child who is of compulsory attendance age is accountable for the child's attendance at school. Section 299.1A of the Iowa Code mandates that children who have reached the age of six and are under sixteen years of age by September 15 are of compulsory attendance age for that school year.

1. Parents will be expected to notify the school regarding a student's absence by the first hour of the school day.
2. Acceptable reasons for a student's absence from school may include the following:
 - a. Religious observances
 - b. Extended illness, hospitalization or doctor's care
 - c. Death in the family or family emergency
 - d. Court appearance or other legal situation beyond the control of the family.
 - e. Family obligation or educational opportunity that could not be scheduled outside of school time. It will be mandatory for all school work to be completed.
3. Classes missed because of attendance at a school-sponsored trip or activity will not be considered an absence. However, the student will be required to make up all missed work.
4. Suspensions from class, either in-school suspensions or out-of-school suspension, will be treated as school-initiated student absences and will not count toward the days absent. However, the student will be required to make up all missed work.
5. The time allowed for make-up work will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

First Adoption: December 12, 1995

Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010

Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Tardiness:

1. A student will be considered tardy when the student appears in the assigned area any time after the designated starting time.
2. Teachers will emphasize the importance of being on time and explain the classroom rules and procedures for tardiest. Tardy sanctions may include, but are not limited to, warning, assigned detention, parent contact and referral to the Principal.

Truancy:

1. For purposes of this policy a student will be considered truant when the student is absent from school or an assigned class or classes without school permission. **Unexcused** absences will include, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Skipped classes
 - b. Falsely informing the school about the reason(s) for the absence
 - c. Absences that have not been pre-arranged and pre-approved as excused
 - d. Excessive requested parental absences
2. Work missed because of truancy must be made up the same as work for all other absences in order to be counted for credit.
3. Incidents of truancy will be recorded as part of a student's attendance record and will count toward the absences per semester. The number of truant days will determine what, if any, disciplinary action is appropriate including, but not limited to, warning, detention, in-school suspension or administrative referral.
4. Disciplinary Actions for Truancies:

Level I hearing: A Level I fact-finding hearing among the parent, student, and school official shall be conducted when there are approximately 1-3 unexcused absences and ~~or~~ when the building administrator believes that chronic absenteeism (although excused) is evident. The Level I hearing should be viewed as an opportunity to learn how the school and the home can work together to improve school attendance. A copy of the Level I hearing summary, which includes possible interventions, will be maintained in the student's cumulative folder and a copy provided to the parent. The building administrator will make two attempts to schedule a Level I hearing. If the parent/guardian does not show at the second attempt to schedule a Level I hearing, a Level II hearing will be held.

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Level II hearing: A Level II hearing will be held when a student has 3-6 days of unexcused absence and when the building administrator determines the student has chronic absenteeism, although excused. A Level I hearing should have been held or attempted prior to a Level II hearing. Appropriate documentation will be filed in the student's cumulative folder. The building administrator will contact the family to arrange a Level II hearing and will conduct the Level II hearing. If a family needs an interpreter, the administrator will arrange for an interpreter from the ESL office to attend the hearing as well as send a letter to the home in the language spoken in the home to confirm the hearing date and time. During a Level II hearing, a written agreement outlining the responsibilities of all parties will be developed. A copy will be given to the parent and student, and a copy will be held in the student's cumulative folder. If the parent/guardian does not attend the Level II hearing as scheduled, the building administrator will refer the student to Level III.

Level III hearing (Mediation): If attendance problems continue to persist after a Level II hearing has been held, the building administrator will contact the Director of Elementary or Secondary Education to refer the case to mediation. The mediator, appointed by the County Attorney, will decide what action to take and determine whether there is a truancy problem. The mediator will work with the parent/guardian to develop another intervention plan in order to prevent legal action from occurring. A mediation agreement will be signed and a copy will be given to the parent as well as put into the student's cumulative folder. Upon completion of the mediation agreement, the building administrator and the attendance team will continue to monitor student attendance. The building administrator will be responsible for monitoring and notifying the Director of Elementary or Secondary Education if a Level IV Hearing is needed.

Level IV hearing: Legal prosecution will occur at Level IV, and the parent may be charged with a misdemeanor offense. The County Attorney may choose to have the parents arrested. A court date will be set and the building administrator or other staff members may be asked to testify. Information and attendance data may be requested by the judge prior to the trial date. It is important that the attendance data is accurate and that the attendance process is followed with complete documentation.

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Level II Attendance Hearing Summary

Student Name _____ Birth Date _____

Student ID _____ Grade _____ School _____

Phone _____

Meeting Information

Date _____ Interpreter: _____ Yes _____ No

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Address (include zip code) _____

Persons Present at Hearing:

Attendance Information: _____ Excused _____ Unexcused _____ Tardies

Reasons for non-attendance:

_____ Health _____ Transportation _____ Child Care _____ Housing

_____ Emergencies _____ Other

Subjects Reviewed:

- _____ 1. Mandatory Attendance Law
- _____ 2. Academic Progress
- _____ 3. Future Consequences
- _____ 4. Hearing Process
- _____ 5. Parental Comments

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Intervention Plan:

Student Responsibilities	Parent/Guardian Responsibilities	School Responsibilities
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.

I agree to follow through on the attendance intervention plan to improve my child's attendance. If I do not follow through, I understand that my student will be referred to a Level II Attendance Hearing.

Level I meeting conducted by _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Level II Attendance Hearing Summary

Student Name _____ Birth Date _____

Student ID _____ Grade _____ School _____

Phone _____ Date of Level I Attendance Hearing: _____

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
 Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
 Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Meeting Information

Date _____ Interpreter: _____ Yes _____ No

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Address (include zip code) _____

Persons Present at Hearing:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Attendance Information: _____ Excused _____ Unexcused _____ Tardies

Reasons for non-attendance:

_____ Health _____ Transportation _____ Child Care _____ Housing

_____ Emergencies _____ Other _____

Subjects Reviewed:

- _____ 1. Mandatory Attendance Law
- _____ 2. Academic Progress
- _____ 3. Future Consequences
- _____ 4. Hearing Process
- _____ 5. Parental Comments

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Intervention Plan:

Student Responsibilities	Parent/Guardian Responsibilities	School Responsibilities
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.

I agree to follow through on the attendance intervention plan to improve my child's attendance. If I do not follow through, I understand that my student will be referred to a Level III/Mediation Attendance Hearing.

Level II meeting conducted by _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
 Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
 Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Woodbury County Truancy Mediation Agreement
(Iowa Code Chapter 299)

Mediation Contract for Parent or Legal Actual Custodian: _____

Child or children: _____

Grade: _____

DOB: _____

Days Absent Total: _____

Tardies: _____

Excused Absences: _____

Unexcused Absences: _____

Names of Those Attending:

Relationship to the Case:

History of Child's or Children's school attendance:

Grade	Absences	Tardies	Grade	Absences	Tardies
Kindergarten			Grade 7		
Grade 1			Grade 8		
Grade 2			Grade 9		
Grade 3			Grade 10		
Grade 4					
Grade 5					
Grade 6					

Present Problems:

At School:

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

At Home:

What steps have been taken in each of the above instances?

Areas of Agreement

Student Responsibilities:

1. I will get myself up and be in school daily and on time.
2. I will stay after school or come early to school when necessary or required. I will serve any assigned detention.
3. I will not leave class without the teacher's permission. I realize that if I do so, it is considered truancy.
4. I will leave school only with the school official's permission.
5. I will bring all necessary materials to class (i.e. pens, pencils, books, requested equipment, gym clothes, etc.)
6. I will focus on the tasks in class and refrain from disruptive behavior in the school building and in classes.
7. I will be in the assigned designated areas only while at school.
8. Additional specific responsibilities:
9. _____

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Parent (or Legal or Actual Custodian) Responsibilities:

1. I will take responsibility to do whatever is necessary to insure my child attends all scheduled classes each day. This may include awakening the child, providing transportation to school daily and possibly attending classes with my child.
2. I accept the responsibility of knowing where my child is at all times.
3. I will take my child to school even if he/she is ill, see the school nurse or office staff for medical attention, and follow their recommendations.
4. I will call the school prior to the first thirty minutes of classes to notify the school if my child is too ill and that I am taking him/her to the doctor.
5. I will take the child to the doctor and provide a note for those days missed if the child is too ill to report to the school nurse.
6. Documentation of any medical condition that affects my child's attendance will be provided to the school and an appropriate response plan will be developed.
7. I will sign all releases including medical psychological, and substance abuse reports.
8. I will pursue family counseling at a local agency or with the school counselor and follow his/her recommendations. I will provide verification or releases for counseling sessions.
9. I will provide the current physical address and phone number where my child and I live and additional contact phone numbers. Notification of change of address or phone numbers will be provided.
10. I will communicate regularly with the school staff about other educational concerns or needs in a constructive manner.
11. Additional responsibilities:

School Responsibilities:

1. Staff members to include teachers, counselors, and others assigned will meet regularly with the child to discuss the student's attendance, progress, and needs.
2. The school will communicate any attendance issues with the parent and the student in a timely fashion.
3. The school will report to the district attendance officer if the above guidelines are not followed and the agreement is not effective.
4. The district attendance officer will refer the situation to the county attorney as a Level IV truancy request under Iowa Law 299.

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)

Sioux City Community Schools
627 4th Street • Sioux City, Iowa • 51101 • 712-279-6643
Board Policy Document

5. Additional responsibilities:

I agree to follow through on the attendance intervention plan to improve my child's attendance. If I do not follow through, I understand that my student will be referred to the County Attorney.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mediator Signature: _____ Date: _____

First Adoption: December 12, 1995
Revision Adoption: September 22, 1998/March 25, 2003/January 25, 2010
Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 808A; 281 IAC 12.3 (8)