

Truancy Protocol 22-23 SY
for District Students and Families

Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities • Office of Attendance & Truancy
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Under Pennsylvania law, all students between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) must attend school every day. Once a student is enrolled in school, this includes students in kindergarten, they are subject to compulsory attendance until the student reaches age 18. The student can only be withdrawn if they transfer out of the District. The student will remain on the District's roll and the student/family is subject to truancy court if they do not attend school. A parent/guardian who enrolls their child in kindergarten may formally withdraw their child from school prior to reaching compulsory school age (age six), at which point the child would no longer be subject to compulsory school laws until they turn six (6) years old.

| Absence & Intervention | Response |
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| <p>At Every Absence/Lateness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated Telephone Calls and Outreach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For each absence/lateness recorded, parents/guardians receive an automated notification via phone call, email, or text. ➤ Additionally, school staff may make personalized outreach for students at each absence via phone call, text, parent email, ClassDojo message, etc. |
| <p>3rd Unexcused Absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice of Third Illegal Absence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When a student has been absent for three (3) days during the current school year unexcused, the parent/guardian will receive notice within ten (10) school days of the student's third unexcused absence. ➤ This is the Notice of Third Illegal Absence and is sent in the language preferred by the parent/guardian. |
| <p>By the 6th Unexcused Absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAIC/SAIP Process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If the student has additional unexcused absences after the Notice of Third Illegal Absence was sent to the parent/guardian and a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) was not previously held, District staff shall offer a SAIC. ➤ The purpose of the conference is to review the student's absences, identify barriers to attendance and develop meaningful strategies in an effort to improve attendance. ➤ District staff shall notify, in advance, the parent/guardian and student in writing the date and time of the SAIC. The school must invite any appropriate school personnel, as well as outside service providers (if applicable) to a scheduled SAIC. The invite should be sent in the language preferred by the parent/guardian. ➤ The parent/guardian may bring other people that may be a helpful resource to the SAIC (<i>e.g., relative, family friend, advocate, etc.</i>). ➤ Neither the student nor the parent/guardian shall be required to participate. The SAIC shall occur even if the parent/guardian declines to participate, fails to attend the scheduled conference after advance written notice, and attempts are made to communicate via telephone. However, they are encouraged to attend the conference to address the needs of the student. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The SAIC may be scheduled to include flexible meeting options: in-person, district approved audio/visual conferencing platforms, phone calls, etc. ➤ A School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) will be created as a result of the conference and a copy of the plan shall be provided to the parent/guardian, student, service provider(s), and appropriate District staff who can support the student with this plan. |
| <p>10th Unexcused Absence <i>(Under 18 yrs old)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Truancy Referral Submission | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If, after implementation and progress monitoring of the SAIP, the student's attendance does not improve, and the student has accrued ten (10) or more unexcused absences, they may be referred to Family Court to be scheduled for a hearing in Regional Truancy Court. |
| <p>Regional Truancy Court</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The student/families will be notified of their scheduled hearing via a citation mailed to the home by Family Court. ➤ Regional Truancy Court is held in-person at one of our 4 regional locations. Hearings are held virtually when necessary. Families will be notified of the location and method of their hearing via the mailed citation. ➤ Once cited for Truancy Court, families are required to appear for the hearing and comply with the truancy court order. ➤ In addition, the Department of Human Services (DHS), which is overseen by the Office of Children and Families with the City of Philadelphia, has contracted truancy providers that will contact the family to arrange a meeting. ➤ The truancy provider will attempt to engage with the families and extend services to support students to help alleviate the identified barrier(s) that are contributing to the truancy. The provider will work with the family until the case is discharged from truancy court. Each case is handled individually, with various factors considered. If the student's attendance does not improve at the truancy court level, the case may be referred to Family Court, for more intensive services, where a judge has the authority to adjudicate the student dependent and assign the case to the Department of Human Services for more intensive services. |

If you are facing any challenges that make attendance difficult, reach out to your school for resources and support.