



General Policies and Procedures

Policy Topic: Attendance

Policy Number:

Applicable: K-12

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Revised: August 1, 2016

Irvington Community School, Inc. is required to follow all applicable Indiana public school student attendance laws per the Indiana Code and the Indiana Department of Education. Aside from meeting legal requirements, regular attendance not only helps build a stronger school community but also leads to higher academic achievement. The ICS, Inc. Attendance Policy covers Irvington Community Elementary School (ICES), Irvington Community Middle School (ICMS), and Irvington Preparatory Academy (IPA) regarding the management of absences and tardies.

Absences:

There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused.

Excused: A parent or guardian must call, email, or leave a written note with the school's office secretary or child's teacher within 24 hours of the beginning of the absence. This communication must state the specific reason for the absence. Students are allowed to make up work for an excused absence and are given one day to complete the assignments for each day absent. Absences are excused for the following circumstances:

- Personal illness or injury
- Required court attendance
- Medical or dental appointments (only for the duration of the appointment and travel time)
- Death in the family
- Observance of a bona-fide religious holiday
- Absences excused by state law or ICS, Inc.

Unexcused: This is an absence for which the school does not receive a parent or guardian communication or the reason is not legitimate. **Students will not be given credit for any work due or assigned during an unexcused absence.**

After ten (10) full days of unexcused absences, the school's attendance officer reserves the right to refer the matter to Truancy Court for intervention. (Floating holidays [limit of two per school year] are not included in this count.) Students may then be required to have a physician's statement for any further absences. For chronic or long-term illnesses, a physician's Certificate of Incapacity will be required. (Excessive absences can lead to retention. Please refer to the ICS, Inc. Retention Policy.)

Parent Notification Process Regarding Student Attendance:

After five (5) student absences (excused and/or unexcused), a letter will be sent to parents reminding them of the importance of their child's regular school attendance.

After seven (7) absences, parents will receive a second letter of the same nature, adding notification that an Attendance Referral Board meeting will be called if the student misses two (2) more days.

After nine (9) absences, parents will be asked to attend an Attendance Referral Board meeting to discuss the nature of the absences and possible solutions for improved attendance.

Following the Attendance Referral Board meeting, if the student misses another day of school, legal notice will be sent informing the parent that the child is considered to be truant and the matter may be referred to Truancy Court.

If attendance is not improved after the above steps, once the student reaches fifteen (15) unexcused absences for the year he/she will be automatically recommended for expulsion.

Specific to Irvington Preparatory Academy, following six (6) or more unexcused absences in a semester, IPA students with such chronic absences will not receive credit for their classes. As well, and in accordance with Indiana Code 20-8.1-3-17.2, IPA will notify the Bureau of Motor Vehicles whenever a student is declared a habitual truant (10 or more unexcused absences in the school year). This will result in the student's Indiana Driver's Permit or License becoming invalid for a BMV-mandated period of time.

Tardies:

It is critical for students to be on time to school and on time to every class for two reasons: 1. Lateness disrupts the learning environment; and, 2. being on time is an essential habit for students' future success. Students who arrive after school is in session will report first to the main office to obtain a pass to class. Exceptions will be made based on the judgment of Senior Management for weather and traffic issues. Parents/guardians of students who are habitually tardy will receive a series of warning letters, be invited to participate in Attendance Referral Boards, and, if the family and student fail to comply with the Attendance Officer's coaching and school policy, the student may well be recommended for expulsion. (Of note, students with excellent attendance are recognized for this important achievement.)

Families must notify the school when their students need to leave early or arrive late for excusable reasons such as illness, medical and dental appointments, funeral, or court attendance. Verification from the doctor or dentist's office is required upon return to school in order for an absence to be marked "medical." **Students will be sent home for illness only by the school nurse or by a school administrator.**

ICES, ICMS, and IPA Student Tardy Management Process:

Following is a semester-based tardy management approach (*note*: students start with a clean slate each semester):

1. Students reaching five (5) tardies: a warning letter will be mailed to parents/guardians informing them of their students' accumulation of five tardies.
2. Students reaching ten (10) tardies: an Attendance Referral Board meeting involving the parents/guardians will be held.
3. Students reaching fifteen (15) tardies: a warning letter will be mailed to parents/guardians informing them of their students' accumulation of fifteen tardies.
4. Students reaching twenty (20) tardies: a second Attendance Referral Board meeting will be held and an Attendance Contract will be issued.
5. If a student receives five (5) more tardies (total of twenty-five accumulated within a semester), he/she will be recommended for expulsion.

For ICES and ICMS students specifically:

- Students with 39 (20%) or more tardies over the course of the school year will be recommended for possible retention.

For IPA students specifically:

- Students with 20 or more tardies in the same class will not receive credit for that class.
- First-period tardies at IPA are included in the ICS Tardy Management Process.
- All other IPA tardies will be addressed by the IPA Behavior Points/Levels System.