

Students

Attendance and Truancy

Compulsory School Attendance

This policy applies to individuals that have custody or control of a child: (a) between the ages of six (on or before September 1) and 17 years (unless the child has graduated from high school), or (b) who is enrolled in any of grades, kindergarten through 12, in the public school regardless of age.

Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

The parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled must authorize all absences from school and notify the school in advance or at the time of the student's absence. A valid cause for absence includes illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the Board, voting pursuant to policy 7:90, *Release During School Hours* (10 ILCS 5/7-42 and 5/17-15), other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, or other reason as approved by the Superintendent or designee. Students absent for a valid cause may make up missed homework and classwork assignments in a reasonable timeframe.

Absenteeism and Truancy Program

The Superintendent or designee shall manage an absenteeism and truancy program in accordance with The School Code and Board policy. The program shall include but not be limited to:

1. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance who is necessarily and lawfully employed. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to determine when the student's absence is justified.
2. A protocol for excusing a student in grades 6 through 12 from attendance to sound *Taps* at a military honors funeral held in Illinois for a deceased veteran.
3. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance on a particular day(s) or at a particular time of day when his/her parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings.
4. A process to telephone, within two hours after the first class, the parents/guardians of students in grade 8 or below who are absent without prior parent/guardian notification.
5. A process to identify and track students who are truant, chronic or habitual truant, or truant minors as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26-2a.
6. A description of diagnostic procedures for identifying the cause(s) of a student's unexcused absenteeism, including interviews with the student, his or her

- parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff members or other people who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem.
7. The identification of supportive services that may be offered to truant, chronically truant, or chronically absent students, including parent-teacher conferences, student and/or family counseling, or information about community agency services. See Board policy 6:110, *Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program*.
 8. A process for the collection and review of chronic absence data and to:
 - a. Determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families; and
 - b. Encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success.
 9. Reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to teachers, administrators, Board members, school resource officers, and staff on the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement.
 10. A process to request the assistance and resources of outside agencies, such as, the juvenile officer of the local police department or the truant office of the appropriate Regional Office of Education, if truancy continues after supportive services have been offered.
 11. A protocol for cooperating with non-District agencies including County or municipal authorities, the Regional Superintendent, truant officers, the Community Truancy Review Board, and a comprehensive community based youth service agency. Any disclosure of school student records must be consistent with Board policy 7:340, *Student Records*, as well as State and federal law concerning school student records.
 12. An acknowledgement that no punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action, shall be taken against a truant minor for his or her truancy unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student.
 13. The criteria to determine whether a student's non-attendance is due to extraordinary circumstances shall include economic or medical necessity or family hardship and such other criteria that the Superintendent believes qualifies.
 14. A process for a 17-year-old resident to participate in the District's various programs and resources for truants. The student must provide documentation of his/her dropout status for the previous six months. A request from an individual 19 years of age or older to re-enroll after having dropped out of school is handled according to provisions in 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*.
 15. A process for the temporary exclusion of a student 17 years of age or older for failing to meet minimum attendance standards according to provisions in State law. A parent/guardian has the right to appeal a decision to exclude a student.

LEGAL REFERENCE: 105 ILCS 5/26-1 through 18.
705 ILCS 405/3-33.5, Juvenile Court Act of 1987.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.242 and 1.290.

CROSS REFERENCE: 5:100 (Staff Development Program)
6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or
Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program)
6:150 (Home and Hospital Instruction)
7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities)
7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-
District Schools)
7:60 (Residence)
7:80 (Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance)
7:90 (Release During School Hours)
7:190 (Student Behavior)
7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: **June 12, 2006 (Effective July 1, 2006)**

AMENDED: **August 13, 2007 (Effective September 1, 2007)**

AMENDED: **February 11, 2008 (Effective March 1, 2008)**

AMENDED: **August 11, 2014**

AMENDED: **February 13, 2017**

AMENDED: **February 12, 2018**

AMENDED: **February 11, 2019**

AMENDED: **August 10, 2020**

AMENDED: **February 14, 2022**

A student may transfer into or out of the District according to State law and procedures developed by the Superintendent or designee. A student seeking to transfer into the District must serve the entire term of any suspension or expulsion, imposed for any reason by any public or private school, in this or any other state, before being admitted into the School District.

Upon the Superintendent or designee's recommendation, the Board may allow a student who was suspended or expelled from any public or private school to be placed in an alternative school program established under Article 13A of The School Code for the remainder of the suspension or expulsion.

Foreign Students

The District accepts foreign exchange students with a J-1 visa and who reside within the District as participants in an exchange program sponsored by organizations screened by administration.

Exchange students on a J-1 visa are not required to pay tuition.

Privately sponsored exchange students on an F-1 visa may be enrolled if an adult resident of the District has temporary guardianship and the student lives in the home of that guardian. Exchange students on an F-1 visa are required to pay tuition at the established District rate. F-1 visa student admission is limited to high schools and attendance may not exceed 12 months.

The Board may limit the number of exchange students admitted in any given year. Exchange students must comply with District immunization requirements. Once admitted, exchange students become subject to all District policies and regulations governing students.

Re-enrollment

Re-enrollment shall be denied to any individual 19 years of age or above who has dropped out of school and who could not earn sufficient credits during the normal school year(s) to graduate before his or her 21st birthday. However, at the Superintendent's or designee's discretion and depending on program availability, the individual may be enrolled in a graduation incentives program established under 105 ILCS 5/26-16 or an alternative learning opportunities program established under 105 ILCS 5/13B-1 (see 6:110, *Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program*). Before being denied re-enrollment, the District will offer the individual due process as required in cases of expulsion under policy 7:210, *Expulsion Procedures*. A person denied re-enrollment will be offered counseling and be directed to alternative educational programs, including adult education programs, that lead to graduation or receipt of a GED diploma. This section does not apply to students eligible for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act or accommodation plans under the Rehabilitation Act, Section 504.

ATTENDANCE

Absences

The policy of Sesser-Valier High School shall be to promote regular attendance by all students who are enrolled. The absent student misses the learning process that goes on in the classroom, and much of that can never be made up or replaced. There is a high correlation between good attendance and good grades. Students should not miss school for unimportant reasons.

In each nine-week period, a student will be allowed **3 days of medical absence** which may be verified by parental notification to the school office. Any additional days absent during that nine week period will require a doctor's verification of illness or injury and the inability to attend school. **Failure to secure a doctor's note for any medical absence after 3 will result in an unexcused absence.**

A. Absence from school will be excused for (1) illness, (2) death in the family, (3) dental and/or medical appointment, when appointment at another time is not possible, (4) court appearances, if required, (5) an absence that requires an extended amount of time, such as travel out of the city or religious observances, when arrangements have been made in advance with the administration. All excused absences must be verified by a telephone call or a note from the parents. If a student is 16-18 years old and does not reside with his or her parent/guardian, all absences must still be reported by his or her parent/guardian, unless the student has been declared emancipated by court order. If a student is 19 years old and does not reside with his or her parent/guardian, he or she will be treated as an adult and will be responsible for reporting his or her own absences. An excused absence will permit a student the privilege of making up his/her missed work without penalty. It will be the STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to check with each teacher for this opportunity. *A student will be allowed **up to three school days to make up missed class assignments**.*

B. Absences from school for any reason other than the above mentioned will not be excused by the school unless it is cleared in advance by the school.

C. Unexcused absences: Absence from school without proper authorization from school authorities or with no notification to school by either phone or note from parent/guardian is an unexcused absence. Administrative personnel will determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. All students with an unexcused absence will be allowed to make-up all work missed. *Any student who fails to clear up an unexcused absence within 3 school days shall be considered truant, and the penalty for truancy shall be applied.*

D. Funeral absence: A student will be excused and will not lose semester exam exemption if he/she attends an immediate family member funeral that is approved by the administration. Any such decision is final.

E. General: (1) For safety and security reasons, a prior written or oral consent of a student's custodial parent/guardian is required before a student is released from school: (a) at any time other than the regular dismissal times, and/or (b) to any person other than the custodial parent/guardian; (2) Students participating in regularly sanctioned school activities under the supervision of a school staff member shall not be considered absent from school on their permanent records.

NOTE: High School Students shall be exempt from 2nd semester comprehensive exams if they have not been removed from class for disciplinary reasons and have met one of the following criteria by course:

1. Have perfect attendance or only one (1) absence
2. Have two (2) absences and have a grade of B+, B, or B-
3. Have three (3) absences and have a grade of A or A-

This exemption rule applies to each course on a student's schedule that administers a semester exam. All students will take 1st semester comprehensive exams unless they have earned an approved semester exam exemption.

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2. A protocol for excusing a student in grades 6 through 12 from attendance to sound *Taps* at a military honors funeral held in Illinois for a deceased veteran.
3. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance on a particular day(s) or at a particular time of day when his/her parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings.
4. A process to telephone, within two hours after the first class, the parents/guardians of students in grade 8 or below who are absent without prior parent/guardian notification.
5. A process to identify and track students who are truants, chronic or habitual truants, or truant minors as defined in 105 ILCS5/26-2a.
6. A description of diagnostic procedures for identifying the cause(s) of a student's unexcused absenteeism, including interviews with the student, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff members or other people who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem.
7. The identification of supportive services that may be offered to truant, chronically truant, or chronically absent students, including parent-teacher conferences, student and/or family counseling, or information about community agency services. See Board policy 6:110, *Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program*.
8. A process for the collection and review of chronic absence data and to:
 - a. Determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families; and
 - b. Encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success.
9. Reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to teachers, administrators, Board members, school resource officers, and staff on the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement.
10. A process to request the assistance and resources of outside agencies, such as, the juvenile officer of the local police department or the truant office of the appropriate Regional Office of Education, if truancy continues after supportive services have been offered.
11. A protocol for cooperating with non-District agencies including County or municipal authorities, the Regional Superintendent, truant officers, the Community Truancy Review Board, and a comprehensive community based youth service agency. Any disclosure of school student records must be consistent with Board policy 7:340, *Student Records*, as well as State and federal law concerning school student records.
12. An acknowledgement that no punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action, shall be taken against a truant minor for his or her truancy unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student.
13. The criteria to determine whether a student's non-attendance is due to extraordinary circumstances shall include economic or medical necessity or family hardship and such other criteria that the Superintendent believes qualifies.
14. A process for a 17-year-old resident to participate in the District's various programs and resources for truants. The student must provide documentation of his/her dropout status for the previous six months. A request from an individual 19 years of age or older to re-enroll after having dropped out of school is handled according to provisions in 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*.
15. A process for the temporary exclusion of a student 17 years of age or older for failing to meet minimum attendance standards according to provisions in State law. A parent/guardian has the right to appeal a decision to exclude a student.

Admit Slips

After being absent, students must get an admit slip from the office before school and turn it in to the office at the end of the day. Any student not getting an admit slip before the first hour begins will be sent to the office by the first hour teacher or be called out of class by the office to get the admit slip. This will result in a tardy for the first hour period.

Categories of Absence

Excused Absence

Absence from school will be excused for (1) Personal illness; (2) Death in family; (3) Home emergency; (4) Dental / medical / court appointment (only excused for the duration of the appointment, and when an appointment at another time is not possible); (5) Religious holiday; (6) College

visitation; and (7) Absences pre-arranged through the office. An EXCUSED ABSENCE falls into two categories: (1) Those that are pre-arranged and (2) Those that are subsequently excused. An excused absence will permit a student the privilege of making up his/her missed work without a penalty. It will be the **STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY** to check with each teacher for this opportunity. A student will be allowed up to 3 school days to make up missed class assignments.

Unexcused Absence

Absence from school without proper authorization from school authorities or with no notification to school by either phone or note from parent/guardian is an unexcused absence. A STUDENT WHO RECEIVES AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE HAS 3 SCHOOL DAYS TO CLEAR UP THE UNEXCUSED ABSENCE. ANY STUDENT THAT FAILS TO CLEAR UP AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE WITHIN 3 SCHOOL DAYS SHALL BE CONSIDERED TRUANT AND THE PENALTY FOR TRUANCY SHALL BE APPLIED. Administrative Personnel will determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. All students with an unexcused absence will be allowed to make-up all work missed.

Official Absence

This occurs only when a student is representing the school. Examples include field trips, Scholastic Bowl matches, chorus trips, etc.

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Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

The parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled must authorize all absences from school and notify the school in advance or at the time of the student's absence. A valid cause for absence includes illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the Board, voting pursuant to policy 7:90, *Release During School Hours* (10 ILCS 5/7-42 and 5/17-15, other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, or other reason as approved by the Superintendent or designee. Students absent for a valid cause may make up missed homework and classwork assignments in a reasonable timeframe.

Emergency School Closing

For school closing, please listen to local radio stations or watch local television stations in the morning. Please do not call the radio or TV stations, the teachers, or the administration. You may call the school, for the school closing will be on the voicemail as soon as possible if school is canceled.

Procedures for Reporting Absences

If a student is absent from school for any reason or cause, it is important that the following procedures be followed: (1) A phone call from a parent/guardian is required each day a student is absent. Calls must be made to 625-5105 between 8:00a.m. and 10:00a.m. The school must be notified of all absences DAILY. If the call is not received, the school will attempt to contact the parent/guardian. If contact is not made, a written excuse must be presented when the student returns to school. (2) Upon returning to school following an absence, the student will report to the office for an admission slip before reporting to first period class. A student who receives an unexcused absence because of no phone call or note has three school days to clear the unexcused absence. (3) No student is to leave school during the day without prior permission from the attendance office or Principal's office. In case of illness at school, the student should contact the Health Care Provider so that necessary calls can be made to his/her family. (4) A student returning to school during the school day must report to the office. This is not an automatic excuse, for a note or phone call is still necessary to excuse the absence. (5) Medical appointments should be made either before or after school or on days that school is not in session. Medical appointments that will involve school time must be presented to the office between 8:00a.m. and 8:30a.m. on the day of the appointment. (6) Students should not request to be dismissed from class to take care of personal business that may be taken care of either before or after school or on days that school is not in session.

Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance

A student shall be released from school, as an excused absence, because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because the student's religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day. The student's parent/guardian must give written notice to the Building Principal at least five calendar days before the student's anticipated absence(s).

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and distribute to teachers appropriate procedures regarding student absences for religious reasons, including how teachers are notified of a student's impending absence, and the State law requirement that teachers provide the student with an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirement.

Tardiness

Students arriving late disrupt the entire classroom. Therefore, a student who is tardy a total of three times in one quarter will be assigned to a detention period. Additional penalties for excessive tardies may be determined as needed.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Animals on School Property

In order to assure student health and safety, animals are not allowed on school property, except in the case of a service animal accompanying a student or other individual with a documented disability. This rule may be temporarily waived by the building principals in the case of an educational opportunity for students, provided that (a) the animal is appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled, and (b) students will not be exposed to a dangerous animal or an unhealthy environment.

Classroom Visitations

All classroom visitations by parents or students must be approved by the administration.

Complaints about Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum pursuant to School Board policy 7:15, *Student and Family Privacy Rights*.

Persons who believe that curriculum, instructional materials, or programs violate rights guaranteed by any law or Board policy should file a complaint using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. Persons with all other suggestions or complaints about curriculum, instructional materials, or programs should complete a Curriculum Objection form. A parent/guardian may request that his/her child be exempt from using a particular instructional material or program by completing a Curriculum Objection form.

Identification Request

Any school employee under Illinois Law 105ILCS5/24-25 may require the identification of any person entering the school building or being present on school property.

Insufficient Fund Checks

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for collecting the maximum fee authorized by State law for returned checks written to the District which are not honored upon presentation to the respective bank or other depository institution for any reason. The Superintendent is authorized to contact the District's attorney whenever necessary to collect the returned check amount, fee, the collection costs and expenses, and the interest.

Parental Involvement

In order to assure collaborative relationships between students' families and the District, and to enable parent(s)/guardian(s) to become active partners in their children's education, the Superintendent shall:

1. Keep parent(s)/guardian(s) thoroughly informed about their child's school and education.
2. Encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to be involved in their child's school and education.
3. Establish effective two-way communication between parent(s)/guardian(s) and the District.
4. Seek input from parent(s)/guardian(s) on significant school-related issues.
5. Inform parents/guardians on how they can assist their children's learning.

The Superintendent shall periodically report to the Board on the implementation of this policy.

Public Asbestos Notice

Sesser-Valier School District #196 has an on-going periodic surveillance of asbestos.

Public Suggestions and Concerns

The School Board is interested in receiving suggestions and concerns from members of the community. Any individual may make a suggestion or express a concern at any District or school office. Community members who e-mail the District or any District employee or board member are expected to abide by the standards in Board Policy 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*, and should, to the extent possible, limit their communications to relevant individuals. All suggestions and/or concerns will be referred to the appropriate level staff member or District administrator who is most able to respond in a timely manner. Each concern or suggestion shall be considered on its merit.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ABSENCES

The policy of Sesser-Valier CUSD #196 shall be to promote regular attendance by all students who are enrolled. The absent student misses the learning process that goes on in the classroom, and much of that can never be made up or replaced.

There is a high correlation between good attendance and good grades. Students should not miss school for unimportant reasons. Acceptable reasons for absence are personal illness and a death in the family. When unusual circumstances necessitate an extended period of unavoidable absence, please contact the school to seek prior administrative approval and make arrangements for the student to keep up-to-date in class work.

If an absence for dental, medical, or judicial appointments is necessary, a student must give the school a signed, dated note stating (1) the reason for being excused; (2) the time the student will be picked up; (3) the time the student will return to class; (4) proof of the visit.

EXCESSIVE EXCUSED ABSENCES

In each nine week period, a student will be allowed **3 days of medical absence** which may be verified by parental notification to the school office. Any additional days absent during that nine week period will require a doctor's verification of illness or injury and the inability to attend school. **Failure to secure a doctor's note for any medical absence after three (3) will result in an unexcused absence.**

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ABSENCES

If a student is absent from school for any reason or cause, it is important that the following procedures be followed:

1. A phone call from a parent/guardian is required each day a student is absent. Calls must be made to 625-5105 (ext. 118 or 133) between 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM. The school must be notified of all absences DAILY. If the call is not received, the school will attempt to contact the parent/guardian. If contact is not made, a written excuse must be presented when the student returns to school.
2. A student who receives an unexcused absence because of no phone call or note has three school days to clear the unexcused absence.
3. No student is to leave school during the day without prior permission from the attendance office or Principal's office. In case of illness at school, the student should contact the Health Care Provider, and necessary calls will be made to his/her family.
4. A student returning to school during the school day must report to the office. This is not an automatic excuse, for a note or phone call is still necessary to excuse the absence.
5. Medical appointments should be made either before or after school or on days that school is not in session. Medical appointments that will involve school time must be presented to the office between 8:00 AM and 8:30 AM on the day of the appointment.
6. Students should not request to be dismissed from class to take care of personal business that may be taken care of either before or after school or on days that school is not in session.
7. Students will be excused for dental/doctor/court appointments for only the duration of the appointment and travel time unless extenuating circumstances are approved by the principal.

CATEGORIES OF ABSENCE

EXCUSED ABSENCE - It is the responsibility of the student to make up all class work missed because of absence for the following: (1) personal illness; (2) family illness; (3) death in family; (4) home emergency; (5) medical appointments; (6) court appearances; (7) religious holidays; (8) other special absences or absences with unusual circumstances that are pre-arranged through the office.

An EXCUSED ABSENCE falls into two categories: (1) those which are pre-arranged and (2) those which are subsequently excused. Each quarter, students will be allowed 3 days of absences for medical reasons which may be certified by parental notification only. Any additional medical absence in that

quarter will require a doctor's excuse or it will be unexcused. An excused absence will permit a student the privilege of making up his/her missed work without a penalty. It will be the STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to check with each teacher for this opportunity. A student will be allowed up to three school days to make up missed class assignments. For students with an extended absence, the amount of time to make up missed work will be worked out with the teacher(s) on a case by case basis.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE - Absence from school without prior authorization from the school principal (or his/her designee) or with no notification to school by either phone or note from parent/guardian is an unexcused absence. All students with an unexcused absence will be allowed to make-up all work missed. A STUDENT WHO RECEIVES AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE HAS THREE (3) SCHOOL DAYS TO CLEAR UP THE UNEXCUSED ABSENCE. ANY STUDENT THAT FAILS TO CLEAR UP AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE WITHIN 3 SCHOOL DAYS SHALL BE CONSIDERED TRUANT AND THE PENALTY FOR TRUANCY SHALL BE APPLIED. Administrative Personnel will determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.

TRUANT - A "truant" is a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion thereof. Any student that is truant will be allowed to make-up all work missed.

OFFICIAL ABSENCE - This occurs only when a student is representing the school.

ADMIT SLIPS

After being absent, students in grades 6 through 8 must get an admit slip from the office before school and turn it in to the office at the end of the day. Any student not getting an admit slip before the first hour begins will be sent to the office by the first hour teacher or be called out of class by the office to get the admit slip. This will result in a tardy for the first hour period.

TARDINESS

It is important that parents/guardians make sure their child arrives to school on time. This will ensure that students will arrive to their classes on time. When a student arrives late to a class, it disrupts the learning environment. Any student in grades 6 – 8 who is tardy a total of three times in one quarter will be assigned to an after school detention. An additional tardy will be assigned for each tardy the student receives during that quarter. Additional penalties for excessive tardies may be determined as needed. Students in grades K – 5 that have problems with excessive tardiness will be dealt with on an individual basis.

ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

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Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

The parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled must authorize all absences from school and notify the school in advance or at the time of the student's absence. A valid cause for absence includes illness(including mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, other situations beyond the control of the student as determined

by the Board, voting pursuant to policy 7:90, *Release During School Hours* (10 ILCS 5/7-42 and 5/17-15), other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, or other reason as approved by the Superintendent or designee. Students absent for a valid cause may make up missed homework and classwork assignments in a reasonable timeframe.

Absenteeism and Truancy Program

The Superintendent or designee shall manage an absenteeism and truancy program in accordance with The School Code and Board policy. The program shall include but not be limited to:

1. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance who is necessarily and lawfully employed. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to determine when the student's absence is justified.
2. A protocol for excusing a student in grades 6 through 12 from attendance to sound *Taps* at a military honors funeral held in Illinois for a deceased veteran.
3. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance on a particular day(s) or at a particular time of day when his/her parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings.
4. A process to telephone, within two hours after the first class, the parents/guardians of students in grade 8 or below who are absent without prior parent/guardian notification.
5. A process to identify and track students who are truants, chronic or habitual truants, or truant minors as defined in 105 ILCS 5/-26-2a.
6. A description of diagnostic procedures for identifying the cause(s) of a student's unexcused absenteeism, including interviews with the student, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff members or other people who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem.
7. The identification of supportive services that may be offered to truant, chronically truant, or chronically absent students, including parent-teacher conferences, student and/or family counseling, or information about community agency services. See Board policy 6:110, *Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program*.
8. A process for the collection and review of chronic absence data and to:
 - a. Determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families; and
 - b. Encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success.
9. Reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to teachers, administrators, Board members, school resource officers, and staff on the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement.
10. A process to request the assistance and resources of outside agencies, such as, the juvenile officer of the local police department or the truant office of the appropriate Regional Office of Education, if truancy continues after supportive services have been offered.
11. A protocol for cooperating with non-District agencies including County or municipal authorities, the Regional Superintendent, truant officers, the Community Truancy Review Board, and a comprehensive community based youth service agency. Any disclosure of school student records must be consistent with Board policy 7:340, *Student Records*, as well as State and federal law concerning school student records.
12. An acknowledgement that no punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action, shall be taken against a truant minor for his or her truancy unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student.
13. The criteria to determine whether a student's non-attendance is due to extraordinary circumstances shall include economic or medical necessity or family hardship and such other criteria that the Superintendent believes qualifies.
14. A process for a 17-year-old resident to participate in the District's various programs and resources for truants. The student must provide documentation of his/her dropout status for the previous six months. A request from an individual 19 years of age or older to re-enroll after having dropped out of school is handled according to provisions in 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*.

15. A process for the temporary exclusion of a student 17 years of age or older for failing to meet minimum attendance standards according to provisions in State law. A parent/guardian has the right to appeal a decision to exclude a student.

LEAVING SCHOOL

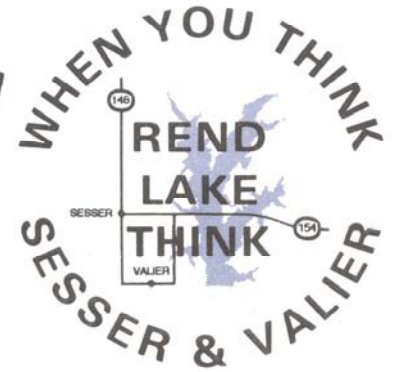
Any student that leaves school without permission of the principal or designated agent shall be considered truant.

Any student that leaves school during the school day must follow the information included with the **RELEASE OF STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS** policy found in this handbook.

Elementary
Ext. 118
High School
Ext. 100
Health Office
Ext. 102
Guidance Office
Ext. 103
Athletic Director
Ext. 116
Administration
Ext. 105

Sesser-Valier Community Unit School

District 196
4626 St. Hwy. 154
SESSER, ILLINOIS 62884
625-5105
FAX (618)625-6696
www.s-v.frnkn.k12.il.us



School Attendance Policy Addendum to Student-Parent Handbooks Effective: August 2, 2022

The following, additional information regarding student attendance policies will be effective for the 2022-2023 school year. Please review student attendance information in the student-parent handbooks in conjunction with the information listed below.

1. Students are expected to attend every class. The school will periodically inform both students and parents/guardians of the student's progress and attendance in all classes.
2. In the case of any absence, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school and provide a reason for the absence(s).
3. Attendance patterns for all students will be monitored. The principal and/or staff will take appropriate action to investigate absences that are not excused.
4. After a student incurs five (5) unexcused absences:
 - a. The school will send a letter and/or e-mail of concern, which will include the attendance policy/regulations and information regarding the student's absences.
 - b. Possible conference call between school administration and the parent/guardian regarding student attendance.
 - c. Referral to appropriate school-based teams may be made.
 - d. The student's attendance patterns will be identified and discussed.
 - e. Develop or revise plans to improve attendance.
 - f. If absences continue, parents will be informed of possible referrals to outside agencies.

The District's inadvertent failure to comply with any procedure set forth in this regulation, including, but not limited to the notice provisions, will not protect the student from the consequences for excessive absence as provided in school policy.

5. If truancy persists after support services and other resources are made available, the school and district will take further action, including:
 - a. Step 1—Referral to the Regional Office of Education #21 Partners Against Chronic Truancy Intervention Team
 - b. Step 2—Meeting with School Personnel and Truancy Interventionist at the School
 - c. Step 3—A Truancy Review Board meeting with School Personnel, Truancy Interventionist, and State's Attorney's Office

- d. Step 4—Petition will be filed with the State’s Attorney’s Office and Parent/Student will have to appear in Court.

A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of state law and may be convicted of a Class C misdemeanor, which carries a maximum penalty of thirty days in jail and/or a monetary fine. Students in grades 7-12 are subject to juvenile action.

- 6. Public Act 102-321 (effective August 6, 2021) permits students to have up to 5 excused absences for the mental or behavioral health of the child for which the child need not provide a medical note. The student shall be given the opportunity to make up any school work missed during the mental or behavioral health absence and, after the second mental health day used, the student may be referred to the appropriate school support personnel.



411 East Main Street
Benton, IL 62812
(618) 439-4316
(618) 435-2349 Fax

ABIGAIL D. DINN

STATE'S ATTORNEY
FRANKLIN COUNTY, ILLINOIS



Jeffery D. Williams, Assistant
Kathryn A. Renik, Assistant
Heather Willis, Victim Services Coordinator
www.franklincountyil.gov

TO: Students, Parents, and Administration
FROM: Franklin County State's Attorney
DATE: 8/1/2022
RE: Truancy, Criminal Activity, and Violence in Franklin County Schools

I am writing this memo regarding two serious issues that need to be addressed in our schools: truancy and criminal activity/violence.

TRUANCY: Truancy is absence from school without permission. Truancy is a serious problem in Franklin County and the nation. Truancy issues affect not only the future of our schools, but also the future of our children. The law is clear; a child must attend school every day that school is in session unless the school has approved a valid excuse.

A parent or legal guardian has the legal responsibility to assure that their child complies with all attendance requirements. If a child is found to be a chronic truant, a juvenile court case could be filed against the student and a criminal case could be filed against the parent/guardian. If criminal charges are filed against the parent/guardian, that parent/guardian could be fined up to \$500.00 plus court costs and be sentenced up to 30 days in the Franklin County Jail.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY/VIOLENCE: Criminal activity and violence, especially amongst juveniles, is an ongoing issue in Franklin County. Our law enforcement officers, school resource officers, and school administrators work together daily to ensure that incidents of criminal activity and violence in Franklin County schools are addressed swiftly and justly in order to keep our kids safe and mentally and emotionally prepared to participate and learn in school. Criminal activity and violence in our schools will not be taken lightly by my office.

As we quickly approach a new school year, I wish you and your children a safe and successful year! Remember that regular attendance is absolutely crucial to a child's ability to learn and comprehend. Also, our schools should provide, above all, a safe and appropriate environment that fosters learning, developing social skills, and a creating a lifetime of great memories for our children to recall and share for years to come. Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abigail Dinn".

Abigail Dinn
Franklin County State's Attorney