

## **ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY POLICY (effective 9/16/2022)**

This policy applies to students and individuals who have custody or guardianship of a student enrolled in the I-KAN Schools Programs.

- If a student is going to be absent from school, parents must report their student's absence every day the student will be absent. Valid causes for an absence include:
  - illness
  - observance of a religious holiday
  - death in the immediate family
  - family emergency
  - other situations beyond the control of the student
  - other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's safety or health (physical or mental)
  - or any other reason as approved by the I-KAN Schools Principal.
- Students will be allowed up to four days of explained or excused absences per semester. (Explained absences are pre-arranged at least 24 hours prior to the absence. Examples of explained absences include: court appearance, family vacations, scheduled religious activities.)
- Unexcused absences will be investigated by I-KAN Schools personnel. These investigations may include, but are not limited to:
  - interviews with the student and family
  - interviews with other school personnel
  - home visits
- A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant may be convicted of a Class C misdemeanor, which carries a maximum penalty of thirty days in jail and/or a fine of up to \$1500.00 (The School Code, Section 26-2a).
- An accumulation of unexcused absences will result in the Kankakee County Attendance Assistance Program (Truancy) being notified with the possibility of students being referred to Truancy Review Board (TRB) and/or truancy tickets being issued to the custodial adult if student attendance does not improve. (I-KAN School Programs must report truancy information to the Regional Office of Education (ROE) and the ROE may file a truancy petition for students who accumulate several unexcused absences within any one nine week grading period.)
- In order to re engage a student who is truant or chronically absent, I-KAN schools might use any of the following interventions:
  - parent conferences
  - student counseling
  - family counseling
  - provide information about community resources available to truant students and families of truant students
- Parents/guardians are urged to use our 24-hour answering machine 815.935.7282 to report the absence. This call should be made no later than 9:00 a.m. for morning and full day students and 11:45 a.m. for afternoon students. At 12:00pm, a robocall will go out to all contacts listed for any student marked Absent/Unexcused in TeacherEase for the day. Parents who call in to excuse their student DO NOT have to send an absence note upon the return to school of their child. If we have not received a call, the child must bring an absence note (name, date of absence, reason for absence, and parent's signature, along with a working telephone number for the parent) to the office upon his/her return to school. The Principal, Director of Student Services or Truant Officer does reserve the right to question an excuse.
- A student must produce a doctor's note after three consecutive days of absence.
- After the 8<sup>th</sup> accumulative day of absence, a physician's note is required to receive an excused absence. If a student presents a court subpoena, that absence will not be counted against the allotted 8 days.

- Beginning in 2022, according to Illinois law, students have an additional 5 Mental Health Days that they can use as needed. These absences do not require a doctor's note, and can be used by the student at any point during the school year. Assignments and assessments missed as a result of using a Mental Health Day are still the responsibility of the student to complete.

### **Tiered Truancy interventions**

I-KAN Schools acknowledge that many SALT students struggle with consistent attendance - not all of which are their own fault. The following tiered approach will be used to offer support to students in an effort to establish routine attendance on campus.

Tier 1 strategies are universal strategies that should be available to every student in the building. Tier 2 strategies are aimed at early intervention and designed to help students who need slightly more support to avoid chronic truancy. Tier 3 strategies are intensive supports offered to the students facing the greatest challenges to getting to school.

#### **Tier 1** (0-3) unverified absences:

- Clarify attendance expectations
- Ascertain with student as to reason why they have been absent and where appropriate direct student to appropriate staff member (social worker, principal, secretary)
- Provide a list of appropriate resources to the student based on their significant needs, when necessary
- Staff and teachers greet students as they enter classroom
- Reward students who have demonstrated consistent attendance practices
- Monitor daily attendance (we will need to determine the best way/ways to achieve this)
- Phone calls to parents/guardians

#### **Tier 2** (4-6) unverified absences:

- Continue with Tier 1 supports
- Send out warning letter to parents/guardians
- Student meets with truancy to develop attendance plan

#### **Tier 3** (7+) unverified absences

- Continue with Tier 1 and 2 supports
- Develop an attendance contract with student
- Conduct a home visit
- Possible referral to Truancy Review Board
- Possible truancy petition will be referred to the States Attorney office
- Possible placement back to their home school and dropped from the SALT roster