



## ST. PHILOMENA ABSENTEEISM AND TRUANCY POLICY

Any time a student needs to be out of school, parents can let the school know by calling (309) 685-1208 or emailing [school@stphils.com](mailto:school@stphils.com).

### DEFINITIONS

Truant: a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion of the school day.

Chronic or habitual truant: a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 5% or more of the attendance days for the school year.

Truant minor: a chronic truant to whom supportive services, including prevention, diagnostic, intervention and remedial services, alternative programs and other school and community resources have been provided and have failed to result in the cessation of chronic truancy, or have been offered and refused.

### POLICY

School attendance is compulsory in the State of Illinois. The responsibility of compliance with the law belongs to the parents, but the school is obliged to keep an accurate record of daily attendance. The record is placed in the student's permanent file at the end of each school year. The principal will investigate and involve the parent/guardian when:

- there is a suspicion that a student is truant
- a student returns to school with no excuse or one that might not be valid
- a student continues to be absent for no apparent reason

Valid cause for absence shall be:

- illness, including the mental or behavioral health of the student
- observance of a religious holiday
- death in the immediate family, or family emergency
- medical visits
- situations beyond the control of the student (such as court appearances)
- other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the mental, emotional, or physical health or safety of the student
- other reasons with approval of the school administration (such as family vacations)

The following diagnostic procedures will be used to identify the causes of unexcused student absenteeism:

- Interviews with the student, parent/guardian, and any school officials who may have information about the reason for the student's attendance problem
- The school may choose additional methods as deemed appropriate

The school will recommend to truant or chronically truant students various interventions, strategies, and supportive services to improve attendance. Such services shall include, but need not be limited to:

- parent conferences
- student counseling, family counseling, and providing parents with information about existing community services that are available to truant and chronically truant students relative to their needs. Student or family counseling can be provided directly through the school counselor (if available) or via outside community services.

The following interventions/strategies will be implemented when students are absent, truant, or chronically truant:

1. If the student is not phoned in as absent – the school will contact the parents.
2. All parties listed as emergency contacts in the student's file will be contacted if the parents cannot be reached.
3. If the administration is unsuccessful in reaching the parents/guardians or the emergency contacts, the police will be notified and asked to conduct a well-being check on the student/family.
4. Parents of students who are chronically truant or absent will be provided with all available supportive services.

The school shall collect and review chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage and encourage the habit of daily attendance for chronically absent students and their families to promote academic success.

When all efforts to persuade the student to regular attendance fails, and the student's absences without valid cause exceeds more than five percent (5%) of the total student attendance days in the school year, written notice shall be sent to the parent/guardian stating that the matter is being turned over to the truancy department of the Regional Office of Education. Additionally, the school may drop the student from enrollment.