

## **PHILOSOPHY OF ATTENDANCE**

Regular quality attendance is a positive factor that develops habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility in students. Students who attend class regularly generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and are more employable after leaving school. Even though a student may make up the actual work missed because of absences, he/she may never be able to replace the social, educational, and cultural contacts that are received only through actual classroom participation.

Parents will be informed of a student's attendance records. In special cases (severe attendance/tardy problems), a student may be given an individualized attendance program to follow or may be referred to the Crawford County Juvenile Court. To ensure the highest level of student success, Galion City Schools will work cooperatively with parents and students to promote increased student attendance. This policy will be based on state attendance standards, clear and enforceable guidelines, and positive motivation for good attendance.

## **COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE**

Section 3321.04 of the Ohio Revised Code provides that every parent, guardian or other person having charge of any child of compulsory school age must send such child to a school which conforms to the minimum standards prescribed by the State Board of Education for the full time the school attended is in session. Such attendance must begin within the first week of the school term or within one week of the school term or within one week of the date on which the child begins to reside in the district.

The statutes governing school attendance are very specific and leave little option for school authorities to excuse children from school. The Ohio Revised Code classifies absence from school as excused or unexcused. The following conditions constitute reasons for excused absence from school:

1. Personal illness (a medical statement may be required)
2. Illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child
3. Death in the family
4. Religious observances
5. Family vacations (with prior approval of school authorities)
6. Appointments (doctor, dentist, etc.)
7. Emergencies (approved by school authorities)
8. Such good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent or designee

If a student is absent from school, a parent must call the school office within one hour of the start of the school day to report his/her child's absence from school. If the school is not contacted by the parent, the school will make every reasonable attempt to contact parents at home or at work. PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of the school, not the parents, to determine when an absence is excused.

Additionally, students must bring written notification of the absence from the parent on the day of his/her return. Failure to supply written documentation of the absence may result in an unexcused absence and the student may be considered truant. Additionally, once a student accumulates ten days of absence in the school year, only a doctor's note will be accepted as written documentation of an excused absence.

### **MAKE UP WORK**

Students who are absent may get their homework assignments by contacting the school. Students are expected to make up all work missed during days they are in non attendance at school; this includes all absences, both excused and unexcused, and suspensions. Work made up for these days will be counted for credit in accordance with Galion City Schools Administrative Guidelines for Grading.

### **TEMPORARY REASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS**

Students who miss class because they are attending a school-sanctioned activity are not to be recorded as absent. They are temporarily reassigned and are expected to make up all work immediately upon their return to school.

### **TRUANCY**

At any time, a student's attendance becomes excessive, questionable, or truancy is suspected, the school office will conduct an investigation. Truancy from school is considered a serious offense. A student who leaves school or class without permission, is considered truant.

The Galion City School District, in conjunction with the Crawford County Juvenile Court System, has developed a comprehensive attendance system to address student attendance issues.

### **TRUANCY PROCESS**

The following process is intended to prevent or decrease the incidence of truancy. We believe that the most effective support system is one that includes intervention early to prevent excessive tardies or absences. Unexcused tardies and early dismissals may also count towards the accumulation of unexcused absences.

Any Student who reach the following absences should expect the following notices:

#### **5 DAYS ABSENT:** Truancy Warning Letter

Parent/Legal Guardian(s) is sent a notice from the school. In compliance with R.C. 3321.2 the letter shall warn both the child and parent(s) of the legal consequences of the failure to attend school. District Truancy Officer may also visit the home.

#### **Attendance/Truancy Awareness Program for Parents and Students (5 Days of Unexcused Absences)**

Parent/Legal Guardian(s) together with their children may be required to attend a School/Court sponsored educational program as specified in R.C. 3321.19 The school is responsible for sending the notice to the parents informing them that their attendance is required.

The program shall address the following topics:

- a.) School Attendance Law including the potential consequences of criminal charges being filed against the parent, guardian, or other person having care of child.
- b.) Overview of school opportunities and options including positive approaches for addressing the identified social, emotional, and academic needs of the student.
- c.) Benefits of high school graduation versus disadvantages of dropping out.
- d.) Parenting skills

Parent/Guardians who choose not to attend the mandated educational program may be required by the Court to attend an unofficial hearing.

**10 DAYS ABSENT: Unofficial Court Hearing** to be held at the school with District Truancy Officer and School Official.

**Unofficial Hearing (10 Days of Absences) – Or failure and/or Refusal to Attend Truancy Awareness Program**

- a.) Parent/Legal Guardian(s) and child will be required to attend an unofficial court hearing. A representative of the school will send a notice of the hearing.
- b.) If more than one parent/legal guardian is responsible for the care of the child, both parents/legal guardians will be expected to attend.
- c.) The hearings will be held at the school.
- d.) A Court official and a designated school official will conduct the hearing.
- e.) While the hearing is unofficial, the process should be formal and enable both the child and the parent to clearly understand their responsibilities.
- f.) Focus of intervention at this level will be to identify child and family needs and make referral to appropriate school services and/or human services agencies if needed.
- g.) The result of the unofficial hearing should be a family/school plan, which will resolve the truant behavior. As part of the plan, the parent may be asked to become specifically involved in the daily school activities (helping with homework, transportation to school, regular contact with teachers, etc.). Schools will be asked to identify creative options for parental involvement.
- h.) Student will be deemed to have excessive absences and be placed on Medical Status.
- i.) Parent/Legal Guardian(s) who fail to show for the unofficial hearing, refuses to cooperate, or is unable to cause the child's attendance at school will be charged with "Failure to Send" when the child's absences qualify him/her as a habitual truant.

**12 DAYS or more ABSENT: Official Truancy Hearing** Crawford County Juvenile Court.

**Official Truancy Hearing**

The following legal guidelines will be followed by the school when filing a Truancy Complaint with the Crawford County Juvenile Court:

**UNRULY CHILD/ORC 21514.011 – Habitual Truant**

Any school age child who is absent without legitimate excuse from school for:

- 30 or more consecutive hours which equals 5 consecutive unexcused days.
- 42 or more hours in month which equals 7 unexcused days.
- 72 or more hours in a year which equals 12 unexcused days.

**EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

- Absent 38 or more hours in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse.
- Absent 65 or more hours in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse.

**DELINQUENT CHILD/ORC 2152.02**

Any school age child who violates a court order regarding prior adjudication as an unruly child for habitual truancy.

#### UNRULY CHILD

Any child who is habitually truant and previously been found to be unruly.

#### CONTRIBUTING TO THE UNRULINESS OR DELINQUENCY OF A CHILD

Any person/s that cause a child to become unruly or delinquent

#### FAILURE TO SEND CHILD TO SCHOOL

No parent/guardian or person having care of the child and may fail to cause that child to attend school. Neither marriage nor pregnancy excuses a student from attending school on a regular basis. Any excessive or unexcused absences may result in a visit from the Galion City School District Attendance Officer. By working together, we can eliminate excessive absences and provide a quality education for your student.

### **MEDICAL STATUS**

Students who are absent for 10 days during the school year, excused or unexcused, may be put on medical status. At this point, only a doctor's statement or hospital record, court excuse, death in the immediate family or principal's approval will be accepted within 24 hours of the student's return to school. The excuse must state the date of doctor visit as well as a return to school date. Parents of students with chronic medical conditions should contact the principal.

After 10 absences, those absences not covered by a doctor's excuse, court excuse, death in the immediate family, or principal's approval will be processed as unexcused.

Absences for extenuating circumstances are excused and work missed must be made up. Therefore, documentation for this type of absence must be presented to the office upon the return of the student and no later than two weeks after his/her return.

### **TARDIES**

Any student late to school must report to the office. Students who are more than 15 minutes late to school should bring a note from their parents or they will be considered truant. All tardies are considered unexcused.

Continual tardiness to school may result in disciplinary action. Tardies to school may result in loss of privileges. Students who drive may lose their driving/parking privilege.

State law classifies students as to the number of unexcused absences/truancies they accumulate throughout the school year. There are two classifications and depending upon the amount of accumulated unexcused absences, the Galion City School District is required to take corrective action.