

## Attendance Policies

### Elementary Schools

A student enrolled in Clay Community Schools is expected to attend school each day. School attendance is compulsory under Indiana law (**IC 20-33-2**). Parents who permit their children to be absent without valid excuses are in violation of this law. Clay Community Schools intends to uphold vigorously the Indiana Statutes relating to school attendance.

Learning is a continuous process and, if broken by absences or tardiness, your child may miss all or part of a learning skill. If your child has been absent because of illness, the teacher will do his/her best to help him/her make up the work. However, group discussion and group work are very important and cannot be made up.

School officials will carry out the following policy:

- A.** After any absence, the parent is required to send a brief note or phone the school stating the reason for the absence. If a student's absence will exceed two days, the parent should contact the school office and request assignments.
- B. Excused Absences**
  1. Personal illness of the student (limit to 5 per semester)
    - a.** requires a note or phone call from the parent;
    - b.** absences in excess of three days in a row will require a physician's statement.
  2. Death in the immediate family.
  3. Medical, dental, or other clinical appointment for the student.
    - a.** for the time needed to make the visit to the doctor;
    - b.** parents should make every effort to schedule appointments outside the school day.
    - c.** the student should return with a written statement from the doctor, dentist, lawyer, counselor, etc.
  4. Student has to testify in court, pursuant to a subpoena or verified court appointment, or other absences authorized by state law.
  5. If a student becomes ill at school and is sent home by school officials, the date of absence will be considered an excused absence.
  6. Administration reserves the right to declare any absence in excess of 5 days as unexcused.
- C. Prearranged excused/unexcused absences (holiday, vacation, family travel and religious holidays)**
  1. The parent/guardian must fill out/submit the prearranged absence form to the principal prior to the first day of a family trip identifying the dates and places involved. This letter must be approved by the principal. School administration reserves the right to approve or deny any requested absence as excused or unexcused that does not automatically qualify for an excused or exempt absence. This form is available in the school office.
  2. It is the child's responsibility to make up the missed work within the same number of days as the excused absence.

### Exempt Absences

Under certain circumstances, schools are legally required to authorize the absence or excuse a student who:

- exhibits or participates (or a member of the student's household exhibits or participates) in the Indiana State Fair for educational purposes

### **D.** Unexcused Absences

1. All other absences will be considered unexcused. Unexcused absences have a direct impact on student achievement. Therefore, students may not receive grades for work missed during the absence.
2. Students will be considered tardy if they are not in the classroom or accounted for at the beginning of the academic day.
3. Excessive absences and excessive tardies may be questioned by the principal even if there have been written parent/physician excuses.

The procedure that will be followed when a student has accumulated absences is as follows:

1. Fifth unexcused absence — A letter will be sent to the parents informing them of the absence.
  - a. Students who exceed five unexcused absences in a rolling 10-week period, , will automatically be placed on an attendance probation. Probation requires parents to provide a doctor's slip or obtain pre-approval for any additional absence for the remainder of the semester. Failure to meet these requirements will result in an unexcused absence. Ten or more unexcused absences will result in a report being filed with the Department of Child Services and the county prosecutor.
  - b. An attendance conference may be held within 5 days of the fifth unexcused absence.
    - 1 A school representative, the student's teacher, the parents and parent's representative (if the parents request and identify their representative within 48 hours in advance of the meeting).
    - 2 The school may create a plan that may include, but not be limited to, offering wrap around services, an attendance contract, and potential counseling or mentoring services. Counseling, mentoring, or wrap around services would not exceed 45 school days. Attendance meetings will be held regardless of parental attendance.
2. Tenth unexcused absence — The student and parent shall, per Indiana Code, be requested to conference with the principal/school attendance officer.
3. Habitual Truant — A "habitual truant" (I.C. 20-18-2-6.5) is defined as a student who has ten (10) or more days of unexcused absences in one school year. The principal/attendance officer will meet with the student, parent, and possibly an official from the Department of Child Services, and/or the Juvenile Probation Department, regardless of the total number of absences.

Habitual Absence Under **IC 20-33-2-25**, the Superintendent or an attendance officer having jurisdiction shall report a child who is habitually absent from school in violation of this chapter to an intake officer of the juvenile court or the department of child services. The intake officer or the department of child services shall proceed in accord with **IC 31-30- through IC 31-40**.

- E.** A student missing 10 or more days of instruction per semester may jeopardize his/her chances for promotion.

**F.** A student absent from school will not be permitted to participate in an event or practice that day unless the absence is prearranged with the principal. A student who is considered a habitual truant as defined by I.C. 20-18-2-6.5 potentially risks participation in any extracurricular activities and determination of participation shall be at the discretion of the school administration.

**G. Late Arrival/Half Day Attendance**

1. Students arriving after the start of the school day but prior to lunch will be counted as tardy to school.
2. Students arriving after lunch will be counted as absent AM and present ½ day PM.
3. Students leaving after lunch and prior to 2:00 will be counted as absent ½ day PM.
4. Students leaving after 2:00 will be considered full day attendance.

Every effort will be made to encourage maintenance of good attendance habits.

## Secondary Schools

A student enrolled in Clay Community Schools is expected to attend school each day. School attendance is compulsory under Indiana law. (IC 20-33-2) Parents who permit their children to be absent without valid excuses are in violation of the law. Clay Community Schools intends to uphold vigorously the Indiana Statutes relating to school attendance.

Excessive absence and tardiness are looked upon as serious matters. The school accepts the responsibility of helping develop good character habits in its students. Chronic tardiness is a deterrent to the establishment of such habits and, therefore, cannot be condoned. Please consult your school for tardy policies.

School officials will carry out the following policy:

- A. Any student who misses five (5) days of school, or five (5) periods of any class, or two (2) unexcused absences in any one semester may be subject to suspension, expulsion, loss of driving privileges, loss of work permit, and/or referral to Clay County Juvenile Probation Department.

## Excused Absences

A. The only excused absences will be for:

1. Personal illness of the student requires a note or phone call from the parent; absences in excess of three days in a row will require a physician's statement. – **Limited to 5 days**
2. Death in the immediate family.
3. Medical, dental, or other clinical appointment for the student.
  - i. for the time needed to make the visit to the doctor;
  - ii. parents should make every effort to schedule appointments outside the school day.
  - iii. the student should return with a written statement from the doctor, dentist, lawyer, counselor, etc.
4. Student has to testify in court, pursuant to a subpoena or verified court appointment, or other absences authorized by state law.
5. If a student becomes ill at school and is sent home by school officials, the date of absence will be considered a excused absence.
6. Administration reserves the right to declare any absence in excess of 5 days as unexcused.

**B. Prearranged excused/unexcused absences (holiday, vacation, family travel and religious holidays)**

The parent/guardian must fill out/submit the prearranged absence form to the principal prior to the first day of a family trip identifying the dates and places involved. This letter must be approved by the principal. School administration reserves the right to approve or deny any requested absence as excused or unexcused that does not automatically qualify for an excused or exempt absence. This form is available in the school office.

Following administrative approval, the pre-arranged absence will be shown to all teachers who will provide the homework missed during excused days. All assignments must be completed and turned in upon the student's return to school. Failure to pre-arrange such absences will result in unexcused absences with no make-up work accepted for credit. A vacation request during "Required Assessments" (ILEARN or SAT) is strongly discouraged. Every effort will be made to encourage students to remain in school and insure good attendance habits.

1. It is the child's responsibility to make up the missed work within the same number of days as the excused absence.

### **C. Exempt Absences**

Under certain circumstances, schools are legally required to authorize the absence or excuse a student who is:

- serving as a page or honoree of the Indiana General Assembly
- serving on the precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or party on the day of a municipal, primary, or general election
- serving with the National Guard for at least 15 days in a school year
- serving with the Civil Air Patrol for up to five days
- exhibits or participates (or a member of the student's household exhibits or participates) in the Indiana State Fair for educational purposes

### **Unexcused Absences**

All other absences will be considered "unexcused." Therefore, students may not receive grades for work missed during the absence. Truancy is defined as a student who willfully refuses to attend school in defiance of parental and/or legal authority and is considered unexcused.

### **D. Unexcused Absences**

Excessive absences and excessive tardies may be questioned by the principal even if there have been written parent/physician excuses.

The procedure that will be followed when a student has accumulated absences is as follows:

1. Fifth unexcused absence — A letter will be sent to the parents informing them of the absence.
  - a. Students who exceed five absences will automatically be placed on an attendance probation. Probation requires parents to provide a doctor's slip or obtain pre-approval for any additional absence for the remainder of the semester. Failure to meet these requirements will result in an unexcused absence. Ten or more unexcused absences will result in a report being filed with the Department of Child Services and the county prosecutor.
  - b. An attendance conference may be held within 5 days of the fifth absence.
    1. A school representative, the student's teacher, the parents and parent's representative (if the parents request and identify their representative within 48 hours in advance of the meeting).

2. The school may create a plan that may include, but not be limited to, offering wrap around services, an attendance contract, and potential counseling or mentoring services. Counseling, mentoring, or wrap around services would not exceed 45 school days. Attendance meetings will be held regardless of parental attendance.
2. Tenth unexcused absence — The student and parent shall, per Indiana Code, be requested to conference with the principal/school attendance officer. Habitual Truant — A "habitual truant" (I.C. 20-18-2-65) is defined as a student who has ten (10) or more days of unexcused absences in one school year. The principal/attendance officer will meet with the student, parent, and possibly an official from the Department of Child Services, and/or the Juvenile Probation Department, regardless of the total number of absences.

Habitual Absence Under **IC 20-33-2-25**, the Superintendent or an attendance officer having jurisdiction shall report a child who is habitually absent from school in violation of this chapter to an intake officer of the juvenile court or the department of child services. The intake officer or the department of child services shall proceed in accord with **IC 31-30- through IC 31-40**.

A student missing 10 or more days of instruction per semester may jeopardize his/her chances for promotion.

3. A student must attend 4 periods of a school day to participate in an event or practice. Any student absent from school for an entire day will not be permitted to participate in an event or practice that day unless the absence is prearranged with the principal. A student who is considered a habitual truant as defined by I.C. 20-18-2-6.5 potentially risks participation in any extracurricular activities and determination of participation shall be at the discretion of the school administration.

### **E. Tardy/Half Day Attendance**

- a. Middle School (Clay City Junior High and North Clay Middle School)
  - i. For morning absences, students must arrive before 11:00 am and attend 4 periods for Clay City Jr. High and 5 periods for North Clay MS to be eligible for athletic or extracurricular participation the day of the absence.
  - ii. For afternoon absences, students must attend 4 periods total for Clay City Jr. High and 5 periods for North Clay Middle School to be eligible for athletic or extracurricular participation the day of the absence.
  - iii. Students arriving within 15 minutes after the start of the school day will be considered tardy. Students arriving later than 15 minutes of the start of the school day will be considered absent for 1<sup>st</sup> period of the school day.
- b. High School (Clay City High School and Northview High School)
  - i. For morning absences, a student must arrive before 11:00 am and attend 4 periods\* to be eligible for athletic or extracurricular participation the day of the absence.
  - ii. For afternoon absences, a student must attend a total of 4 class periods\* the day of the absence to be eligible for athletic or extracurricular participation the day of the absence.
  - iii. Students arriving after 8:20 will be considered tardy to first period. Students arriving after 8:30 will be considered absent for first period.

\*Per IHSAA rules