

## **St. Mary School - Absenteeism & Truancy Policy**

### **Attendance**

Daily attendance is required. The Illinois School Code, Article 26-1, requires those who have custody of any child between the ages of six and seventeen years shall assure the child attends school daily the entire time it is in session during the regular school term.

Attendance at school has a direct correlation to student performance, and absences from school are regarded as deterrent to success in school. Parents/Guardians have the responsibility for requiring and promoting their child's regular school attendance. Our attendance policy is designed to develop student punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility.

The school calendar provides for extended weekends and breaks throughout the school year. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.

### **Absence**

Each school day begins at 8:30am and ends at 3:15pm. Any time a student is not in school he/she is designated absent. The parent or guardian is required each time a student is going to be absent to call the school to report the reason for the absence. If parents do not call the school by 8:45 am, the school will call the parents. Upon return to school, parents/guardians need to provide a written note explaining the absence.

If a student is absent more than 1½ hours, during any part of the day, he/she will be marked as ½ day absent. A student is tardy when he/she arrives after 8:30 am and/or leaves school prior to the day's scheduled dismissal time, unless they are gone more than an hour and half at which time they are absent.

Each student absence will be determined as either Excused or Unexcused.

1. Excused – A student will be excused for the following reasons:
  - Student illness, including mental or behavioral health
  - Student medical appointment that can not be scheduled outside the school day
  - Death in the immediate family or family emergency
  - Observation of a religious holiday
  - Circumstances that cause reasonable concern to parents for the mental, emotional, or physical health or safety of the student
  - Situations beyond the control of the student, as determined by the principal
  - Other reasons approved by the principal with the parents' prior request. In emergencies the principal may excuse absences without prior request if it was determined that prior approval was not possible.
  - Involvement in school related activities (i.e. field trips, extra-curricular events, etc.)
2. Unexcused – All other absences will be unexcused, including an absence that the parent neglects to report to the office.

### **Excessive Absence/Truancy**

Each student will be allowed 10 excused absences per school year on a parental excuse. Any absence after the 10 allotted excused absences will be considered UNEXCUSED unless a written medical statement by a physician is submitted upon the student's return. Any student who has used the allotted 10 absences will be considered unexcused without a medical excuse and, therefore, truant for each day.

When a student reaches this point, the following will take place:

- A meeting will be convened with the student (if appropriate), parent(s) and principal to determine/understand the reason for excessive absences.
- The principal and/or parents may choose to include other school personnel to participate in the meeting to best ensure a successful plan to remediate the current course as it relates to attendance.

At this time, students and their families will be made aware of the resources available to them to ensure timely and consistent school attendance as part of the process to remediate the issue:

- Conferences with principal and teachers (weekly, as needed)
- Daily check-in/check-out for student
- Staff assistance before, during, and after the school day when available
- Family counseling services available in the area
- Other services available from community agencies

The principal will meet review attendance reports on a monthly basis, specifically noting the reports for those students who are chronically absent, checking for progress and/or regression from the remediation process.

When a student is absent 20 days, the parent(s) will be notified that the student may be retained. A conference will be held with parents, teacher(s), and the principal; the teacher(s) and principal will make the final decision and contact the parents with their recommendation.

A student who is absent from school and whose parent cannot be reached to confirm a reason for the absence will be considered truant and reported to the proper authorities.

### **Late Arrival/Early Departure/Tardiness**

A student is tardy if he/she arrives after 8:30am until 9:00am or leaves after 2:45pm. If a student arrives late to school, he/she must report to the office immediately. A parent or guardian should accompany the student to the office to sign him/her in. Bus students will not be considered tardy if their bus is late. If it is necessary for a student to leave during the school day, a written note, email, or phone call with an explanation must be received by the office. The parent is asked to pick up the student at the school office to sign them out and sign them in upon their return to school.

### **Missed Work**

When a student is absent, he/she is responsible for any work that was missed. The student is allowed one school day for each day absent to make up any work that was missed. For example, a student who was absent two days would be given two school days to complete the missed work.

A parent may call the school office to arrange to pick up any missed work for an absent student. The work can be sent home with a sibling or needs to be picked up from the office between 3:15pm - 3:30pm, unless other arrangements are agreed upon.

### **Pre-Arranged Absence**

A student may obtain a pre-arranged excused absence when he/she knows he/she will be absent. The parent must provide the office with a written note stating the dates and reason for absence as early as possible, preferably at least 2 weeks in advance. The parent/student is to contact individual teachers about work that will be missed during the absence.

Adopted: January 13, 2023