

Gary Community School Corporation

Attendance Policy

1. ATTENDANCE

Legal Requirements

Chapter 2 of the Indiana Code (IC 20-33-2) describes the legal obligations of GCSC to ensure that students attend school regularly. Pursuant to IC 20-33-2-3, this chapter applies to each situation that involves any of the following:

- A person less than eighteen (18) years of age who is domiciled in Indiana.
- A person less than eighteen (18) years of age who:
 - is not domiciled in Indiana; and
 - intends to remain in Indiana for a period established by rule of the state board.
- A student:
 - who is less than eighteen (18) years of age;
 - whose behavior has resulted in an expulsion from school; and
 - who is assigned to attend:
 - an alternative school; or
 - an alternative educational program.

Pursuant to IC 20-33-2-3.2, “attend’ means to be physically present:

- in a school; or
- at another location where the school’s educational program in which a person is enrolled is being conducted; during regular school hours on a day in which the educational program in which the person is enrolled is being offered.”

Pursuant to IC 20-33-2-6, a student is bound by the requirements of the Indiana Compulsory Student Attendance rules from the earlier of the date on which the student officially enrolls in a school or the beginning of the fall school term for the school year in which the student becomes seven (7) years of age until the date on which the student:

- graduates;
- becomes eighteen (18) years of age; or
- becomes sixteen (16) years of age but is less than eighteen (18) years of age and the requirements under section 9 of this chapter concerning an exit interview are met enabling the student to withdraw from school before graduation; whichever occurs first.

Students are marked absent when they are not in attendance for twenty (20) or more minutes during any class period.

All school staff continuously monitors student attendance and communicate the importance of regular attendance to students and parents. There are two major types of student absences: excused and unexcused.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are defined as absences that the school corporation regards as legitimate reasons for being out of school, as included in the school policy. The school principal ultimately determines whether an absence is “excused” or “unexcused”. Some reasons for an excused absence are as follows:

- Illness verified by note from parent/guardian or call by parent/guardian to school by 10:00 a.m. on the following school day.
- Illness verified by note from Physician
- Medical, dental, or other clinic appointments
 - Students visiting a medical or dental professional during part of the day must bring an official form from the professional upon returning to school. This form must show the time and day of the visit to be considered excused. If not, it may be considered unexcused.
- Prearranged family travel vacation
 - Parents are encouraged to vacation during scheduled school breaks. Students who wish to apply for **prearranged absences will need to have the vacation approved by a school administrator prior to the vacation. Administrative discretion will be used to determine if the application is approved.** Applications from students with poor attendance records will be denied.
 - The parent must personally file a request with the school prior to the vacation.
 - The student must travel with a parent or guardian.
 - The student must notify each of his/her teachers of the request.
 - Class work must be made up promptly on return or in advance (teacher option).
- Family funeral
- Maternity (students)
- Military Connected Families (e.g. absences related to deployment and return)

Make-up Work

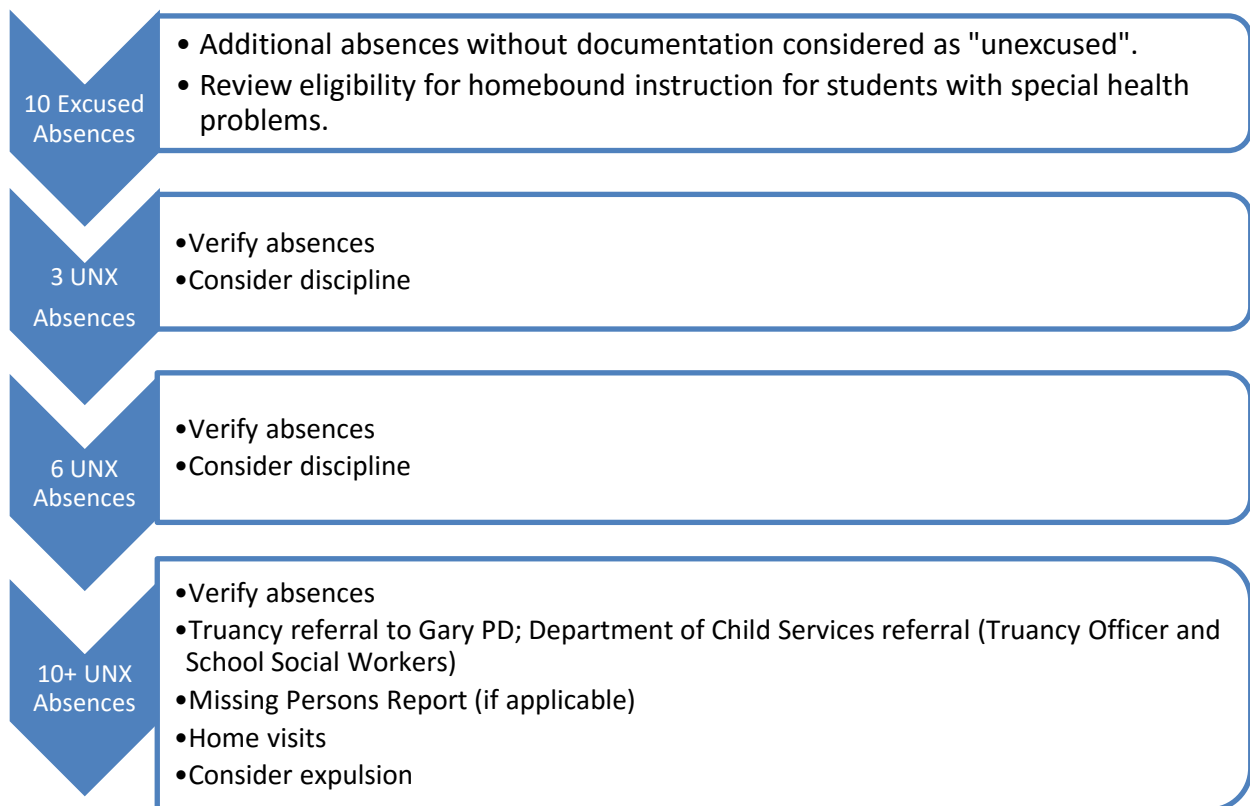
All work missed in class because of absence may be made up. It is the student’s responsibility to arrange for making up the work. As a rule, the student will have the same number of days to make up the work missed as the length of the absence. However, in the case of work or projects assigned one week or more before the due date, the project may be due the day the student returns to school. In the case of a planned absence, the arrangements to determine when the work will be due should be made before the absence.

Excessive Excused Absences

When a student has more than ten (10) excused absences, additional absences may be considered unexcused unless documented by medical professional, legal professional, school nurse and/or school administrator. School administrators shall consider circumstances of prior absences when determining categorization of future absences. Students who with excessive excused absences for health reasons may be eligible to receive homebound instruction.

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is any absence not covered under the definition of excused or exempt. Unexcused absences will warrant action steps of an administrator and/or attendance officer. Students can make up work when they have an unexcused absence, at the teacher's discretion, but may not receive credit for work. GCSC's procedures for supporting student attendance are listed in the following graphic.



Exempt

The following are not counted as absences (excused or unexcused) in accordance with Indiana Code.

- Page or honoree in the Indiana General Assembly (IC 20-33-2-14)
- Witness in judicial proceedings. This includes any required court appearance such as probation hearings (IC 20-33-2-16)
- Helper to a political candidate, a political party, or to a precinct election board on the date of an election (IC 20-33-2-15)
- Serving with the National Guard for no more than 10 days (IC 20-33-2-17)
- Serving with the Civil Air Patrol for up to 5 days (IC 20-33-2-17.2)

Lateness

A student who arrives late for school will be considered late unless a note from a medical professional is presented on the day the student arrives late. No parental notes will be accepted, only a note from a medical professional. Students who miss more than 2 classes will be considered absent and will have an unexcused absence for the day on their attendance record. Students arriving after 10:30 must be accompanied by a parent or have proper documentation in order to be admitted into class as determined by school administrator. Elementary students who arrive late for school after 40 minutes on 3 occasions should be considered one day absence.

Tardiness

Tardy means that students come to class within the first 20 minutes of class, but after the bell has rung or the time for the passing period has elapsed.

Students who are tardy to class will incur the following consequences:

- 1st tardy - verbal warning
- 2nd tardy - parent contact from teacher
- 3rd tardy – office discipline referral; consequence(s) determined by school administrator could result in an unexcused absence.

Early Dismissal

Students who leave school early and miss 2 or more classes will be considered absent and will have an unexcused absence on their attendance record. Parents are encouraged to avoid scheduling appointments during school hours. When an emergency makes it necessary for a student under the age of 18 to leave before dismissal, the student's parent or guardian is required to pick up the student. Parents will be required to present proper identification. If a parent or guardian cannot pick up the student, the adult picking up the student must be listed on the emergency card and must provide proper identification. GCSC will not allow any student to leave the school premises without the presence of a parent/guardian or an emergency contact listed in the student file.

Students who are 18 years old or older **can** sign themselves out at the main office per the following procedures.

1. Only students 18 years old or older can sign themselves out of school.
2. Student must return with a parent/guardian in order to be readmitted back into school. Exceptions are at the discretion of the administrator.
3. Only pre-approved medical or dental appointments will be considered excused absences.
4. Students who sign themselves out need documentation from a medical or dental professional before returning to school that same day.
5. Students signing out must present school identification and can complete all required paperwork before leaving.
6. Students who exit the building without following the proper procedure will be deemed truant.

Truancy/Habitual Truant

Truancy is defined as being willfully absent from school without parental verification or knowledge, leaving school grounds without consent of parents and administration, or attempting to evade the school's attendance policy. **Absences that occur without parental notification must be verified by parents within 48 hours after the student returns to school by direct contact, or a note from the parent/guardian. Absences that remain unverified after 48 hours may be deemed truancy and subject to consequences.**

A student who has been found to be truant for the tenth (10) time in a school year is considered a "habitual truant." School administrators may withdraw the designation of "habitual truant" when the student has attended school for 180 days without another truancy.

In accordance with IC 20-33-2-11, any student who is determined to be a "habitual truant" when they are 13 or 14 years of age cannot be issued an operator's license or learner's permit until the age of 18 or until the label is removed by the school principal. This provision can include truancy from individual classes throughout the school day.

Students who are habitually truant are not eligible for work permit. Students with good attendance (i.e., 90% or higher) will be given special consideration when assigning work permits.

Students will not be allowed to perform or participate in any extracurricular clubs or activities on any day they have an unexcused absence. A Friday absence counts toward weekend events.

Students who are habitually truant will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities for the semester/trimester in which they met criteria for habitually truant. Students may be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities the following semester/trimester with approval from the school principal.

Graduation Ceremony, Prom Participation, and other Senior Activities

In order to participate in the Graduation Ceremony, seniors must have completed all of the Indiana Diploma Requirements which include passing all of the Core 40 coursework; as well as successful completion of the End of Course examinations (ISTEP 10). Any seniors who do not fulfill these requirements prior to the Ceremony will not be eligible to participate under any circumstances. Administration reserves the right to refuse graduation and other senior activities participation for discipline infractions. Verbal and written communication of specific guidelines will be provided in the third quarter or 2nd/3rd trimester.

8th graders will receive communication early in the school year regarding end of the year activities details and payment schedule. Administration reserves the rights refuse any end of the year activities for disciplinary infractions and will provide verbal and written communication of specific guidelines in the third quarter.