



### ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OVERVIEW

To achieve...your child needs to be in school, on time, every school day, prepared to participate. Good attendance and good grades go hand in hand. The Chicago Public Schools and parents/guardians can work together to promote excellent student attendance at school. In order to promote cooperation and to help parents/guardians understand how the Chicago Public Schools' attendance policies work, key items and basic attendance procedures have been defined below.

- **Compulsory Enrollment and Attendance**

From age 6 until reaching age 17, a child who resides in Illinois must be enrolled and attend a public school in the district where s(he) resides unless s(he) has graduated from high school, attends a private or parochial school or is physically or mentally unable to attend school.

- **Free Education Entitlement**

Enrolled students are entitled to a free, full-time public education until the age of 21 (22 if a special education student) unless s(he) graduates from high school, is expelled for misconduct or withdraws from enrollment. CPS shall not deny re-enrollment of a student who dropped out of school and is less than 19 years old. CPS can deny re-enrollment of a student who is 19 or older that, due to age and a lack of credits, could not attend classes during the normal school year and graduate before his/her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday/22<sup>nd</sup> birthday for a special education student (aged-out).

- **Confidentiality of Records**

Other than to CPS or Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) employees/officials, no personally identifiable school student records or information may be released, transferred, disclosed or otherwise disseminated to any individual, agency or organization without the written consent of the student's custodial parent/guardian.

- **Parent/Guardian Contact Phone Numbers**

A student's parent/guardian is required to supply (and update with changes) the school with at least one (1) working phone number at which the parent/guardian can be reached.

- **Emergency Contact Persons**

Upon enrolling their child in school, the parent/guardian must provide emergency contact information that includes which contacts are authorized to pick up their child from school before the end of the school day (early dismissal).

- **School-to-Home Absent Student Notification Call**

State Law requires *elementary schools* phone a student's home within two hours of the start of their school day each day the student is absent without prior notice from the parent/guardian to the school.

- **CPS District Automatic Absent Student Notification Call**

The CPS Absentee (Robo) Outcaller system phones the home of all elementary and high school students that are absent without prior written notice from the parent/guardian. A parent/guardian who phones in an absence notification to the school will not receive a school-to-home absent student notification call but will receive the district absent student notification phone call.

- **Excused Absences**

CPS Board approved valid causes for an absence being deemed excused are: (1) Student's illness, (2) observance of a religious holiday or event, (3) death in the immediate family, (4) family emergency, (5) circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for child's safety or health *as approved by the principal* and (6) other situations beyond the control of the student *as determined by the principal*.

- **Unexcused Absences and "Reason-for-Absence Notes"**

Each student absence is recorded as unexcused until the school's receipt and acceptance of a signed note from the parent/guardian identifying one of six CPS Board approved valid reasons for the absence. The student shall provide the school with the signed note on the first day s(he) returns to school from an absence. The Principal or Principal's



designee shall approve each note. A “Reason for Absence Note” available in English, Spanish and Polish preprinted with the six valid reasons for an absence to be deemed excused is available from your school.

- **Recoding Tardy and Early Dismissals to an Absence**

A student that receives less than 300 minutes of instruction on a regular attendance day is deemed absent:

- If the student has at least 150 minutes of instruction for the day, the student will be coded a ½ day unexcused absence “AUHD”.
- If the student has less than 150 minutes of instruction for the day, the student will be coded a full-day unexcused absence “AUFU”.

- **Student Absence Due to “Cut” Classes**

A high school student that attends all or part of a class receives credit for attending the entire class period. High school tardiness is a discipline (not attendance) issue, to which detention and in-school suspension can be assigned for excessive violations. A student that does not attend any portion of a class is deemed as having “cut” the class. The minutes of instruction of a “cut” class are not included in the student’s total minutes of instruction. Recoding attendance due to “cut” classes is based on the same 300/150 minute thresholds in the above paragraph.

- **Truant Absence**

A truant absence is an unexcused absence by a student in grades K-12.

- **After a Student’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Truant Absence**

The school notifies the parent/guardian of their required attendance and participation at a truancy remediation conference conducted at the school.

- **After a Student’s 5<sup>th</sup> Truant Absence**

The school mails the parent/guardian a “5-Day Truant Absence Letter” via 1<sup>st</sup> class mail. In addition, the school notifies the parent/guardian that they and their child are required to attend a conference conducted at the school with key school staff to develop a truancy intervention case plan that documents strategies that address and remedy the student’s truant behavior.

- **After a Student’s 10<sup>th</sup> Truant Absence**

The school mails the parent/guardian a “10 Day Truant Absence Letter” by certified mail, return receipt requested, that designates the student as a chronic truant and solicits the parent/guardian’s collaborative involvement in assessing and revising the “Truancy Intervention Case Plan” to more effectively remedy the student’s truant behavior.

- **Dropping Students**

CPS Board Policy 04-0128-P03 prohibits schools from withdrawing students from enrollment (dropping) *due solely* to excessive absences.

- **Schools can withdraw a student from enrollment for the following reasons:**

The student: (1) is absent on the first school day of the year- (Did Not Arrive), (2) transfers or graduates, (3) is legally committed to a correctional institution, (4) is home-schooled by parent, (5) whereabouts cannot be determined: “lost child” after calling all known phone numbers, mailing a certified letter with return receipt requested and visiting the last known address, (6) 17 years old and voluntarily withdraws from school with the signed approval of the parent/guardian and (7) 18 or more years old and voluntarily withdraws from school without the parent/guardian’s approval.

**CPS Truancy Hotline**  
(773) 553-FACE (3223)

**CPS Crisis Intervention Hotline**  
(773) 553-1792

**CPS Student Safety Hotline**  
(773) 553-3335

**CPD Gang Hotline**  
(312) 746-4264

**DCFS Missing Children Helpline**  
(866) 503-0184

**DCFS Child Abuse Hotline**  
(800) 252-2873