
Attendance Policies and Procedures/Truancy

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled school days. We ask that if a student is going to be absent for the parents to contact River's Edge Academy (REA) by 9:15 a.m. at (815) 942-5780 with a valid cause for their absence. Follow the prompts for River's Edge Academy (REA) and Attendance. Those students who also attend their home school district and/or the Grundy Area Vocational Center (GAVC) should also notify them of your student's absence. If any student is absent from school and there is no notification that the absence has been authorized by the parent, legal guardian, or other person having legal custody of the child, a Grundy County Special Education Cooperative (GCSEC) employee or other GCSEC designated agent shall make a reasonable effort to notify you of your student's absence from school by telephone. "Valid cause" for absence shall be illness, including the mental or behavioral health of the student, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, or family emergency and shall include such other situations beyond the control of the student, as determined by the board of education in each district, or such other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the mental, emotional, or physical health or safety of the student.

A student may accumulate nine (9) absences within a school year. Tardies are counted as absences for the purposes of truancy. Following the ninth (9th) absence a student will be required to have a doctor's note for each subsequent absence or be excused by their home district school nurse. All other absences will be considered unexcused. REA staff will assist in determining the cause for the unexcused student absenteeism, which shall, at a minimum, include interviews with the student, his or her parent or guardian, and any school officials who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem. Those students who have an excused absence will be allowed one day for every day absent to make up their work without penalty. If the work is not completed in the time provided and/or the student has an excused absence, 10% may be deducted from the total percentage the student received for the assignment for each day the assignment is late, unless otherwise stated in the student's IEP. Additional consequences may be assigned for unexcused absences (e.g. loss of behavior level, in-school suspension) beyond day nine (9).

Truancy

Truancy is defined as an unexcused absence from school. Individuals in custody of a child under the age of seventeen (17) are responsible for the regular attendance of the child during the school year. If a student exhibits chronic truancy, the special education personnel and home school district, along with the Truancy Prevention Specialist, will decide on further steps that may need to be taken to resolve the issue. Additionally, this team shall identify any supportive services to be made available to truant or chronically truant students. These services shall include, but need not be limited to, parent conferences, student counseling, family counseling, and information about existing community services that are available to truant and chronically truant students and relevant to their needs. Chronic truancy is defined as any student having nine (9) absences in the last 180 school days. Therefore, the previous school year is taken into consideration when determining absences. All students under the age of seventeen (17) who have nine (9) absences in the last 180 school days must be referred to the Truancy Prevention Specialist. The Truancy Prevention Specialist, with assistance from REA Staff, shall collect and review chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success. The review shall include an analysis of chronic absence data from River's Edge Academy (REA). River's Edge Academy (REA) shall post its absenteeism and truancy policy on its Internet website, if any, and incorporate into its student handbook.