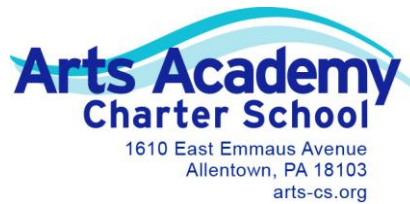


Adoption Date:	06/19/2017
Revision Date(s):	05/21/2018 04/20/2026



Board Policy 2.4.2

Truancy/Mandatory Attendance Enforcement

The Board recognizes that regular attendance is an important part of student success and that chronic absenteeism can have devastating effects on a student's academic progress, and can also negatively affect a student socially, and can cause stress and anxiety for the absent student and his/her family. The Board also recognizes that families dealing with chronic attendance issues may benefit from additional support to help them address the problem.

Purpose

The Board intends for the processes and procedures used to combat truancy and comply with applicable mandatory attendance laws to be as supportive of the families as possible, utilizing referrals to the magistrate only as a last resort when other more collaborative, non-punitive options have not been successful.

Applicability

This policy applies to all students of compulsory school age, which is the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school, which may be no later than at the age of six (6) years, until the age of eighteen (18) years or graduation from a high school, whichever occurs first.. This Policy does not apply to individuals who hold a certificate of graduation from a regularly accredited, licensed, registered or approved high school.

Delegation of Authority

The Executive Director or designee shall develop administrative regulations that set forth specific truancy procedures that are consistent with the law and with this Policy. Each building principal shall be responsible for addressing truancy issues in his/her building through consistent implementation of this Policy and the administrative regulations promulgated pursuant to it.

Definitions

- **"Person in parental relation"** shall mean a:
 - (1) Custodial biological or adoptive parent.
 - (2) Noncustodial biological or adoptive parent.
 - (3) Guardian of the person of a child.
 - (4) Person with whom a child lives and who is acting in a parental role of a child.

Adoption Date:	06/19/2017
Revision Date(s):	05/21/2018 04/20/2026

- **"School-based or community-based attendance improvement program"** shall mean a program designed to improve school attendance by seeking to identify and address the underlying reasons for a child's absences. The term may include an educational assignment in an alternative education program, but may not include an assignment in a program for disruptive youth established pursuant to Article XIX-C of the Pa School Code.
- **"Truant/Tuancy"** occurs where a student has accrued three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.
- **"Habitually Truant/Habitual Tuancy"** occurs where a student has accrued six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.
- **"Unexcused absence"** shall mean an absence from school which is not permitted by Board Policy 2.4 (Attendance) or for which an approved explanation has not been submitted within the time period and in the manner prescribed by Board and/or by the Superintendent or designee through administrative regulations.

Procedures

Pursuant to law, AACS shall provide written notification to a person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student within ten (10) school days of the student's third unexcused absence, in cases where the student has accrued three (3) unexcused absences.

The notice shall:

- 1) Be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation and:
 - a) Include notice that a habitually truant student may not transfer, during the school year, to a cyber charter school unless a judge determines that the transfer is in the best interest of the student; and
 - b) Include resources available to assist the student and the person in parental relation with returning the student to compliant compulsory attendance and opportunities for academic recovery in response to the truant behavior.
- 2) Include a description of the consequences if the student becomes habitually truant; and

When the notice is transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, it shall also be provided to the student's biological or adoptive parent, if the parent's mailing address is on file with the school and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order.

The notice may include the offer of a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC). If the student incurs additional unexcused absences after issuance of the notice and a SAIC was not previously held, AACS shall offer a SAIC.

The Executive Director or designee must also notify the student's school district of residence.

Adoption Date:	06/19/2017
Revision Date(s):	05/21/2018 04/20/2026

A SAIC is a conference to discuss where the child's absences and reasons for the absences are examined in an effort to improve attendance, with or without additional services. The following individuals shall be invited to the conference:

- (1) The child.
- (2) The child's "person in parental relation," as defined, above.
- (3) Other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource.
- (4) Appropriate school personnel.
- (5) Recommended service providers.

AACS shall notify the person in parental relation in writing and by telephone of the date and time of the SAIC. Neither the student nor the person in parental relation shall be required to participate, and the SAIC shall occur even if the person in parental relation declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference.

The outcome of this conference will be documented in a School Attendance Improvement Plan.

AACS may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until the scheduled SAIC has been held and the student has incurred six (6) or more days of unexcused absences.

Students who accrue six (6) or more unexcused absences are considered "habitually truant" under the law.

When a student under fifteen (15) years of age is habitually truant, AACS:

- 1) Shall refer the student to:
 - a. A school-based or community-based attendance improvement program; or
 - b. The local children and youth agency.
- 2) May file a citation in the office of the appropriate magisterial district judge against the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.

When a student fifteen (15) years or older is habitually truant, AACS shall:

- 1) Refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program;
or
- 2) File a citation in the office of the appropriate magisterial district judge against the student or the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.

AACS staff may refer a student who is fifteen (15) years of age or older to the local children and youth agency if the student continues to incur additional unexcused absences after being referred to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program or if the student refuses to participate in such a program.

Regardless of age, when AACS refers a habitually truant student to the local children and youth agency or files a citation with the appropriate magisterial district judge, AACS shall provide verification that the school held a SAIC.

Adoption Date:	06/19/2017
Revision Date(s):	05/21/2018 04/20/2026

Generally, a truancy citation is filed with the magisterial district judge where the child attends school or would attend school in the child's school district of residence. For children attending AACS, the student's school district of residence must file truancy citations with the magisterial district judge where the AACS student resides.

AACS shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment, or transfer for truant behavior.

Unless a judge determines that it is in the student's best interest, a habitually truant student will not be permitted to transfer to a cyber charter school during the school year.