

# **ATTENDANCE**

## **We Empower Today to Excel Tomorrow**

The mission of the Irving ISD attendance success initiative is to serve and support the students of Irving ISD by removing barriers while working collaboratively with families, community stakeholders and district resources to improve attendance and enhance students' success. Student and parent engagement are critical for the quality of your student's education.

Good academic performance goes hand in hand with consistent attendance. Our team of attendance clerks and campus attendance officers are here to work with you and your students towards successful completion at every grade level.

### **Missing School Means Missing Out.**

Texas State Compulsory Attendance Law, Section 25.085, requires all enrolled students ages 6-19 to attend school on time, all day, every day school is in session.

Violation of the law occurs when students get unexcused absences for 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period . Per Texas compulsory attendance law, 10 or more unexcused absences within a six-month period will result in a referral to truancy court involving either student, parent or both. Texas has a compulsory attendance law. Please keep in mind, making up attendance hours does not take away any truancy referrals or tickets.

### **Every Minute Counts**

Per Texas Education Code Section 25.092, districts are required to enforce the 90% rule which states that students in grades Kindergarten through 12 must attend a class for 90% of the time it is offered to receive credit, final grade, or promotion. This indicates a student can only miss 4 days in a class in a full semester. An excused absence still counts in the days allowed per semester. At the High School level students on a block schedule are also limited to 4 absences per semester. Any additional absences accumulated until the end of the semester will only be excused with a doctor's note. Please keep in mind if a student arrives tardy after the

reporting period without a doctor's note, the student will be considered absent for the periods the student misses.

When scheduling a medical appointment, choose a time that will allow the student to begin or end the day at school. If your student has a medical appointment and attends school part of the same day with a medical note, the student will be considered present for the full day, in the same way if a student leaves early for a medical appointment and returns the next day with a Dr. note for the previous day the student will also be considered present.

If your student is receiving services for academic accommodations, this does not release your student from meeting the attendance requirements.

A student, who is in attendance for at least 75% but less than 90% of the days a class, may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the school's principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class.

## **STEPS TO TAKE IF MY STUDENT WILL BE ABSENT**

### **What to do if my student will miss a day of school?**

- Call the school the day of the absence before 9:30 AM. Emails or parent handwritten notes will only be accepted if a student has missed less than 4 days in a semester (for high school on a block schedule).
- When scheduling a medical appointment, we recommend choosing a time of day that will allow the student to start or end the day at school. This means if a student has a medical appointment but attends school for a part of the same day, the student will receive credit for attending the full day (by providing a doctor's note with the same date of the absence).
- All absences not cleared within 24 hours will not be excused unless proper documentation is provided.
- Parent's permission does not necessarily mean the school will be able to excuse the absence. Please log into Home Access Center

(HAC) to see your student's daily attendance. [Home Access Center \(HAC\) - Irving ISD](#)

- Please keep in mind if a student arrives tardy after the reporting period **without** a doctor's note, the student will be considered absent for the periods they miss.

### **When does my student need a doctor's note?**

- Students who have excessive absences or more than 3 consecutive days of illness will require a doctor's note to be excused.
- Students on a block schedule are limited to only 4 absences per class per semester. If a student misses more than 4 days in a semester, the student will be placed on a doctor note status for the remainder of the semester.
- Anytime a student is admitted to a health care facility documentation should be provided by the facility and this documentation should be turned in to the attendance office. For mental health and life-threatening situations contact the attendance office for important detailed information.
- When a student misses part of the day for a doctor's appointment (Dental, Eye exam, Non ill), the student will be counted present if they attend any part of the day and they bring a doctor's note. We recommend taking a maximum of half a day to minimize instruction loss.

### **What absences may be excused?**

- Student illness or injury with a phone call or parent note up to 4 times per semester in a block schedule. After 4 times the student will be placed on a Dr. note status.
- Funerals, Please call the school for detailed information and provide an obituary or document from the funeral service.
- **Anytime** a student is admitted to a **health care facility** the parent should immediately provide documentation from the facility to the attendance office. For mental health and life-threatening situations contact the attendance office for important detailed information.

## **What if my student needs time off for a Religious Holy Day, Court, Military visits, College Visit or other?**

- Religious Holy Days- a student can miss school if they are observing a Religious Holy Day. 1 day travel to and from are allowed if out of the state. Church retreats, camps, mission trips and individual religious rites (Baptism, Christening, Bar Mitzvah, etc.) are not considered Holy Days. Please provide advance notice to the attendance office. Parent/guardian must complete the religious accommodation form. [Link to Form](#)
- College Visits - please provide a letterhead from the campus you are attending. This is a signed document from the university with a name and date you attended. It can be obtained from their admissions office or the person giving a campus tour. This is limited to juniors and seniors, a maximum of two days per school year.
- Military Enlistment - students who are pursuing military enlistment are only excused with a recruitment letter or if you are taking your Hazmat test (also a letter head is needed). Limited to students 17 years or older, four days maximum.
- Visiting Military Parents/Guardians - Students are visiting a parent/guardian who is being deployed, on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment. Maximum five days per school year.
- DMV visits are excused up to two days per year with documentation, this includes one day for permit and one day for a driver's license. Please provide a permit or license documentation. Limited to high school students. [LINK to VOE Form](#)
- Playing TAPS at a Military Funeral - Limited to students in grades 6-12. The funeral must be held in Texas for a deceased veteran.
- Citizen Application and Citizen Oath appointments each case maximum 3 days total per each event, proper documentation is required.
- Court Appearance - provide documentation where a student is required to attend a court hearing. 1 day travel to and from are allowed if outside the city.
- Election Clerk or Early Voting Clerk - students 16 or older, with the principal's approval, may miss up to 2 days per school year to serve as an election clerk.

- Prior arrangement - absences are limited to 2 days per year with proper form request. Students must be under the 90% requirement to be approved for the time off. See campus attendance office for form.

### **What absences are not excused?**

- Vacations, business trips are not recognized by the state as acceptable reasons for students being out of school and will be treated as unexcused.
- Parents failing to contact the school within 24 hours will result in an unexcused absence, unless a Doctor note is provided.
- Being truant. This includes skipping, roaming hallways or being more than 20 mins late to a class, or leaving the class without permission.
- Oversleeping. Any student who arrives tardy after ~10:30 AM will be considered absent, unless they have a doctor's note to excuse the classes they missed.
- Non-related sporting events are not recognized by the district as necessary time off from school and all non-school sporting activities will not be excused.
- Other Absences Any reason for which extenuating circumstances are not approved by the campus administration.
- Constantly picking up a student early without a medical necessity will increase the risk for a student to fail due to excessive absences.

### **What if my student needs to leave campus during school hours?**

Students must have parent and school permission before leaving the campus, except at the end of their regular school day. A phone request for dismissal should be made in the main office, following proper campus procedure. Any student leaving during school hours must be signed out when leaving the campus and signed back in when returning. Remember to schedule your medical appointments after 11:40 am.

### **What are the requirements for my student to obtain a VOE (form used to obtain a driver's permit)?**

Students with excessive absences **may not** receive the Verification of Enrollment (VOE) and Attendance form. This form is required by the

Department of Public Safety to receive a driver's license. VOE forms may be requested from the attendance office and must be picked up 48 hours after the request.

## **What does it mean that my student is truant?**

### ***School Attendance is NOT a Choice, it is the LAW***

If a student is absent without an excuse on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the district will file truancy court proceedings on parents/guardians and/or the student for violation of the Texas Compulsory Attendance Law. If students don't obey the truancy court's orders, they could be found in contempt of court and have to pay a fine.

Fines range from \$100 to \$500 per day that student remains truant. Other results of truancy are:

- Loss of VOE form required for a driver's education permit
- The truancy court may also order a suspension or delay of the student's driver's license or permit
- Parents/students may have to participate in counseling, special classes or community services.

## **What can I do to prevent Truancy?**

- Always advise the school when a student will miss a school day.
- Monitor your student's daily attendance
- Request conferences with the school personnel
- update your home address and emergency contact information.
- If you have any concerns regarding the accuracy of your student's attendance, contact the school's attendance office.
- Ensure that your student arrives at school on time, attends each class period and avoid early releases/pick-ups from school unless there is an extreme emergency.

- Always withdraw your student when moving schools within 24 hrs. or earlier. If you leave your student enrolled and you move, the accumulated days will harm the students' attendance.

## **What to do if you receive a Truancy Warning Letter regarding your students' attendance?**

When you receive a warning letter, please contact your students' truancy officer to set up a meeting at your earliest convenience. If you receive a warning letter, take steps to avoid future unexcused absences.

[Sample Truancy Letter](#)

## **PARENT'S ATTENDANCE TIPS**

### **Let's Come Together and Ensure Your Student Attends School**

Parents and students are encouraged daily to check online on the Home Access Center (HAC) to look for any problems with attendance.

✓ Prioritize – Make attendance THE priority. An absence is an absence no matter if it is excused or unexcused. Students on a block schedule are only permitted 4 absences per semester.

✓ Communicate – Parents should call the day of the student's absence and follow up with a parent note the following day.

For students on a block schedule, If a student has excessive absences (4 or more) per semester, a doctor's note will be required.

All absences not cleared within 24 hours of the student's absence will require a doctor's note

Parents should call the day of the student's absence and follow up with a parent note within 24 hours. If a student has excessive absences, a Doctor's note will be required.

Doctor notes need to be turned in within the same six weeks.

Monitor – Check your child’s daily attendance and grades through Home Access Center (HAC). [Home Access Center \(HAC\) - Irving ISD](#)

✓ Schedule – Schedule medical/dental appointments during non-school hours and schedule trips/vacations according to the district school calendar (see back).

✓ Update – Provide your current address and contact number to the school.

✓ Organize – Develop morning and evening routines (layout clothes, pack backpack the night before and arrange transportation to/from school).

✓ Partner – Team up with your child’s school: Parents and schools are partners.

✓ Irving ISD is committed to keeping our staff and students healthy and safe.

## Helpful Tips for Parents?

- Praise your child when they exhibit good attendance and promptness.
- Establish routines. Give your child enough time to get ready for school in the morning by preparing lunches, school bags, and outfits the night before.
- Establish an alternate plan for who can help get you to get your child to school when something comes up.
- Allow your child to stay home only when he/she has a contagious illness, fever, or is too sick to be comfortable.
- When scheduling appointments with health care providers, choose a time that will allow your child to begin or end their day at school. A student who has an appointment with a health care provider but attends school for a part of that same day or class will receive credit for attending the whole day or class.
- Switch between morning and afternoon appointments so that your child does not miss the same class all the time.



- When your child is absent, work with teachers to provide your child with opportunities to learn and make up their work.
- Follow district policy for reporting absences and submitting absence documentation within 24 hours of the first day your student missed school.
- Consistently talk to your student about why going to school every day is important. Help your student get excited about going to school.
- Monitor your student’s attendance through Home Access Center (HAC) Family Access. [Home Access Center \(HAC\) - Irving ISD](#)

## ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY CONTACT

Contact your student’s school any time they will be absent due to illness, sick medical visits appointment or extenuating circumstances beyond your control that will prevent your child from attending school.

\*\*\*[Link all attendance clerk and truancy officers](#)

Example below

Irving High School

### HIGH SCHOOLS



Natasha McCallum | 972-600-6316  
Lead Attendance, A - DOS

✉ [nmccallum@irvingisd.net](mailto:nmccallum@irvingisd.net)



Ludivina Sanchez

Houston Middle School

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