

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA TRUANCY LAW, 24 P.S. §§ 13-1326 – 13-1354: COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, UNLAWFUL ABSENCES, AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT CONFERENCES**

Saint Andrew School has updated our Attendance Policy to aligned with the changes of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Truancy Law, 24 P.S. §§ 13-1326 – 13-1354: Compulsory School Attendance, Unlawful Absences, and School Attendance Improvement Conferences.

**Unlawful Absences**

Unlawful absence shall be defined as a student of compulsory school age, or an enrolled student of an earlier age, who is absent without a valid excuse.

A note should be handed in upon return of student to school, or reported via email to the school. The note should be no later than 3 days after student absent, or it will be considered an unlawful absence.

**Enforcement of Compulsory Attendance Requirements**

**Student is Truant -**

When a student has been absent for three (3) days during the current school year without a lawful excuse, school staff shall provide notice.

The notice may include the offer of a School Attendance Improvement Conference after the third unlawful absence.

**School Attendance Improvement Conference -**

The School shall notify the student's parent/guardian in writing and by telephone of the date and time of the School Attendance Improvement Conference.

The purpose of the School Attendance Improvement Conference is to examine the student's absences and reasons for the absences in an effort to improve attendance with or without additional services.

Neither the student nor the person in parental relation shall be required to participate, and the School Attendance Improvement Conference shall occur even if the person in parental relation declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference.

The School may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the

date of the scheduled School Attendance Improvement Conference has passed.

**Habitually truant** shall be defined as absent for more than three (3) school days or their equivalent following the first notice of truancy given after a student's unlawful absence for three (3) school days.

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

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 judge against the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.

### **Authority**

Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in schools during the days and hours that school is in session, except that a principal or teacher may excuse a student for temporary absences upon receipt of satisfactory evidence of mental, physical, or other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence.

Absences shall be treated as unlawful until the school receives a written excuse explaining the absence, to be submitted within three (3) days of the absence.

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. Excusal beyond ten (10) cumulative lawful absences shall require submission by the parent/guardian an excuse from a licensed physician. Students who miss ten (10) consecutive school days shall be dropped from the active enrollment unless the school is provided with evidence the excuse is legal or the school is pursuing compulsory attendance prosecution.