

## **School Attendance**

### **Mandatory Attendance**

According to Section 299.1 of the Iowa Code, the parent, guardian, or legal or actual custodian of a child who is of compulsory attendance age is accountable for the child's attendance at school. Section 299.1A of the Iowa Code mandates that children who have reached the age of six and are under sixteen years of age by September 15 are of compulsory attendance age for that school year.

A child who has reached the age of five by September 15 and who is enrolled in a school District shall be considered to be of compulsory attendance age unless the parent or guardian of the child notifies the school District in writing of the parent's or guardian's intent to remove the child from enrollment in the school District.

A child who has reached the age of four by September 15 and who is enrolled in the statewide preschool program under chapter 256C shall be considered to be of compulsory attendance age unless the parent or guardian of the child submits written notice to the school District implementing the program of the parent's or guardian's intent to remove the child from enrollment in the preschool program.

### **School Attendance and Punctuality**

Any day or part day of instruction missed, whether excused or unexcused impacts a student's learning. Families play a key role in making sure their children attend school on time every day. It is important that both schools and families understand why attendance is important for school and success. Parents/guardians are strongly urged to schedule vacation during the summer and various breaks in the school calendar. All students including students over the compulsory attendance age will be held to the Dubuque Community School District attendance policy. Each school will have procedures to address school attendance and punctuality.

### **Absences**

Parents will notify the school and provide the reason for each absence of their child. Schools will analyze attendance data and engage parents and students to generate solutions to improve school attendance. Generally, absences of 5% or less of current membership days represent good attendance. Missing between 5% and 10% of the current membership days can significantly impact a child's academic achievement. Chronic absenteeism is missing 10% or more of the school year. Based on the unique circumstances of each absence, the principal or designee will make the final decision on whether the absence is excused or unexcused. The principal or designee may request documentation or verification for any of the following absences and may consider an excess of absences (more than 10% of current membership days) as unexcused truant days.

#### **Excused Absence**

The following reasons may be identified as possible excused absences: personal illness, occasional professional appointments which cannot be arranged outside of school time, recognized religious observances, required court appearances, College visits, pre-arranged/approved absences (contact school office in advance of absence), bereavement, and out-of-school suspensions.

The District believes that traditional, in-person school attendance leads to the greatest learning opportunities for students. However, there may be rare and unusual circumstances created by public emergencies declared by state or local officials which temporarily prevent students from attending traditional, in-person school. In these circumstances, the superintendent will have discretion to make reasonable accommodations for students, on a case-by-case basis, to attend school through remote learning opportunities within the available resources of the District and as permitted by law. During approved remote learning, attendance will be taken, assessments may be administered, and grades will count towards students' cumulative grade point average as if they were attending in person. The provision of special education and accommodations for students who have individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans will be determined by each respective IEP or Section 504 team.

### **Unexcused Absence**

Unexcused absences will include, but not be limited to, the following: class cuts, falsely informing the school about the reasons(s) for the absence, and failure to contact schools. Regular and ongoing absences and tardies that interfere with a student's ability to receive their required education will be unexcused.

### **Truancy**

Students are expected to be in attendance every day of the school calendar and parents, guardians, legal or actual custodians are expected to assure attendance of their children. In accordance with 299.8 of the Iowa Code, any child of compulsory attendance age who fails to attend school as required by the school board's policy or who fails to attend competent private instruction under chapter 299A, without reasonable excuse for the absence, shall be deemed to be a truant.

According to Iowa Code, 299.5A, if a parent, guardian, legal or actual custodian, or child refuses to accept the school's attempt to assure the child's attendance or the school's attempt to assure the child's attendance is otherwise unsuccessful, the truancy liaison shall refer the matter to the county attorney for mediation or prosecution.

### **Academic Accountability**

Students who are absent from school miss instruction which could negatively impact the student's grades. Students are required to do make-up work within a reasonable amount of time for all absences. Teachers will provide full credit and if necessary, additional and/or alternative instructional interventions for each and every absence. Additionally, no student will be dropped from classes based exclusively on attendance.

Absences may impact grades in the following ways:

- Failure to attend make-up sessions as assigned.
- Failure to complete make-up assignments satisfactorily within a reasonable time is a separate act and constitutes grounds for reduced grades.

### **Mediation/Prosecution**

In accordance with Section 299.1B of the Iowa Code, students under the age of 18 who are not in daily attendance may be referred by the superintendent to the Iowa Department of Transportation for the suspension of their driver's license.

If interventions have not resulted in satisfactory attendance, the case may be referred to the county attorney's office as outlined in 299.5A, Mediation, of the Iowa Code. The school District shall be responsible for monitoring any agreements arrived at through mediation. If a parent, guardian, legal or actual custodian refuses to engage in mediation or violates a term of the agreement, the matter shall be referred to the county attorney's office for prosecution under section 299.8 of the Iowa Code.

The truancy liaison may refer a truant and his or her parents/guardian to the County Attorney's office if mediation breaks down without an agreement being reached. Any person who violates a mediation agreement is subject to Iowa Code 299.6.

Adopted: September 16, 1991  
Revised: April 11, 2016  
Revised: September 14, 2020  
Revised: March 8, 2021

## School Attendance

**Absences**

Principals will be responsible for designating school personnel who address attendance issues.

Elementary: Students who arrive late, leave early or otherwise miss a block of time up to 90 minutes will be considered tardy. Time missed over 90 minutes will be a half day absence.

Middle and High School: Attendance is taken each class period. Each school will develop protocol to address tardiness.

**Interventions**

Each school's plan will include a series of interventions designed to provide school personnel with methods to work with families to improve student attendance and punctuality. These interventions begin with notification to students and their family and increase in intensity if attendance does not improve. It should be noted that notification alone is not considered an adequate response to persistent truancy. In choosing an intervention, authorized school personnel will consider the student's attendance history. Interventions will begin at the first sign of an attendance problem and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Student conference with school personnel (may include truancy liaison)

Agency referral

Consequences and interventions as stated in Policy 5200

Medical evaluation

Parent contact (phone calls/written communication/electronic communication)

Parent conference with school personnel

Referral to an alternate program

Referral to truancy liaison for possible mediation

Student improvement plans

Suspension of Driver's License

Referral for evaluation to determine eligibility for a 504 Plan

**Revoking Driver's License**

Iowa code 299.1B Failure to Attend-Driver's License

A person who does not attend a public school, an accredited nonpublic school, competent private instruction in accordance with the provisions of chapter 299A, an alternative school, or adult education classes shall not receive an intermediate or full driver's license until age eighteen.

A student who is 16 and no longer of compulsory attendance age, but who has not reached the age of 18, will have his/her driving privilege suspended if he/she no longer attends a public school, an accredited nonpublic school, competent private instruction, an alternative school, or adult education classes.

The building principal or designee shall make the referral using the Revoking Driver's License form and send the form to the Director of Student Services.

Upon review of the information, the Director of Student Services shall forward the information to the Superintendent of the Dubuque Schools for a signature.

The superintendent shall send the signed form to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT).

If a student decides to re-enroll after having his/her license revoked, it is up to the student to work with the IDOT to prove he/she is re-enrolled and to provide appropriate documentation in an effort to regain his/her driver's license.

## Revoking Driver's License Form

### Student Information

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last

\_\_\_\_\_  
First

\_\_\_\_\_  
Middle

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

House phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell  
phone \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License Number (required): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School

:

\_\_\_\_\_

Last Day of Student Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

School official recommending revocation of driver's  
license \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Building Principal's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Forward completed form to Director of Student Services at the Forum.

TO: Driver Services  
Iowa Department of Transportation  
Box 9204  
Des Moines, Iowa 50306-9204

FROM: Superintendent of Schools  
Dubuque Community School District  
2300 Chaney Road  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001  
Phone (563) 552-3012

Last date of attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

As of the above date, this juvenile is not attending a public school, an accredited nonpublic school, or competent private instruction in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 299A. Pursuant to Iowa Code Section 299.1B and Iowa Administrative Code Section 761-615.23(2), please suspend the juvenile's drivers license until the juvenile reaches the age of 18.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent  
Dubuque Community School District

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

State of Iowa  
County of Dubuque

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Notary Public

Date \_\_\_\_\_