



# Rocky River City School District

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**Michael G. Shoaf, Ed.D., Superintendent**

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August 29, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians:

With the start of the 2017-2018 school year, it is a valuable time to remind our parents, guardians, and students that the state of Ohio has implemented a new approach to excessive absences and truancy as a result of the passage of HB 410. The Rocky River Schools have always been committed to stopping excessive absences and truancy.

Please keep in mind that any of the following will be considered an excused absence:

1. Personal illness
2. Illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child
3. Quarantine of the home
4. Death in the family
5. Necessary work at the home due to absence or incapacity of parent(s) / guardian
6. Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
7. Out-of-state travel (up to a maximum twenty-four (24) hours per year that the student's school is open for instruction to participate in a District approved enrichment or extracurricular activity
8. Such good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent
9. Medically necessary leave for a pregnant student in accordance with Policy 5751
10. Service as a precinct officer at a primary, special or general election

If a parent/guardian fails to submit promptly any written documentation or other information requested by school administration, the student's absence will be deemed to be Absent Unexcused.

Below is a summary of some the more significant changes recently implemented regarding excessive absences and truancy:

## Habitual Truant

A student will be designated as a "habitual truant" if s/he has been absent *without legitimate excuse* for:

- 30 or more consecutive hours
- 42 or more hours in a school month, or
- 72 or more hours in a year

## Notice

The school must provide written notice to parents within 7 days of a child's excused absence of 38 or more hours in a month or 65 or more hours in a school year.

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### Absence Intervention Team

Once a student has been designated a “habitual truant,” the school will assign the student to an absence intervention team. Within 7 school days of this designation, the school administrator shall select the members of the team, which shall include a representative of the child’s school, another representative from the school who knows the child, and the child’s parent, custodian, guardian ad litem or temporary custodian. The team may also include a school psychologist, counselor, social worker or representatives of local public agencies designed to assist students and their families in reducing absences.

### Parent Participation

Within 7 school days of the student’s designation as a “habitual truant,” the school administrator shall make at least 3 meaningful, good faith attempts to secure the participation of the student’s parent, custodian, guardian ad litem or temporary custodian in an absence intervention team meeting. If 7 school days elapse and the parent/custodian/guardian fails to respond to the attempts to secure parental participation in the team meeting, the school shall investigate whether the failure to respond requires mandatory reporting to the public children services agency and shall instruct the absence intervention team to proceed with developing a plan for the child.

### Absence Intervention Plan

Within 14 school days after the student’s assignment, the team shall develop an intervention plan for the student to reduce or eliminate further absence. Each intervention plan shall vary based on the individual needs of the student, but the plan shall state that the attendance officer shall file a complaint not later than 61 days after the date the plan was implemented if the child has refused to participate or failed to make progress on the intervention plan.

### Parent Notice

Within 7 days after the development of the plan, the school must make a reasonable effort to provide the student’s parent, guardian, custodian, guardian ad litem or temporary custodian with written notice of the plan.

### End of the Year Absences

If a student becomes habitually truant within the 21 school days prior to the end of the school year, the district may, in its discretion, assign a school official to work with the student’s parent and develop an absence intervention plan during the summer. This plan shall be implemented not later than 7 days prior to the first day of instruction in the next school year. Alternatively, the school may toll the time period over the summer months and reconvene the absence intervention process upon the first day of instruction the following school year.

### Juvenile Court Referral

The attendance officer shall file a complaint in the juvenile court on the 61<sup>st</sup> day after implementation of the absence intervention plan or other intervention strategies if all of the following apply:

- The student was absent without legitimate excuse from the public school for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one school month or 72 or more hours

in a school year.

- The school has made meaningful attempts to re-engage the student through the absence intervention plan or other intervention strategies and any offered alternatives to adjudication.
- The student has refused to participate in or failed to make satisfactory progress on the plan.

Disciplinary Removal Prohibited

The school will not suspend, expel or remove a student from school solely on the basis that the student was absent from school without legitimate excuse.