



The Laboratory Charter School

of Communication and Languages

Truancy Program Policy for the 2024-25 School Year Revised May 2023

I. Introduction

Laboratory Charter School is dedicated to ensuring the academic success and well-being of all students. Regular school attendance is fundamental to academic achievement, and chronic absenteeism can significantly impact a student's ability to succeed. The Truancy Program Policy for the 2024-25 school year addresses absenteeism in a comprehensive and supportive manner, providing necessary interventions and resources to students and families to improve attendance while ensuring compliance with state laws.

This policy is established in accordance with Section 1330 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code and Act 138, which mandate specific procedures for addressing truancy. The policy prioritizes supportive interventions over punitive measures, outlines responsibilities for maintaining regular attendance, and includes detailed procedures for addressing truancy. Importantly, the policy safeguards students' rights by prohibiting suspension, expulsion, or transfer as consequences for truant behavior and requires an attendance conference before any referral to a legal entity.

II. Purpose and Objectives

The primary purpose of the Truancy Program is to improve student attendance by addressing the underlying causes of absenteeism and providing targeted support to students and families. The objectives are:

1. **Early Identification and Intervention:** Identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism early and provide timely interventions to prevent truancy.
2. **Supportive Engagement with Families:** Engage parents/guardians in improving attendance by involving them in attendance conferences and the development of Attendance Improvement Plans (AIP).
3. **Collaboration with Community Resources:** Work with community organizations to provide additional support to students and families facing challenges that impact school attendance.

4. **Prevention of Academic Failure:** Ensure students struggling with attendance receive the support they need to succeed academically, reducing the risk of failure and dropout.
 5. **Compliance with Legal Requirements:** Ensure the school's approach to truancy is fully compliant with Pennsylvania state laws, including Section 1330 and Act 138.
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III. Legal Basis

The Truancy Program Policy is grounded in Section 1330 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code and Act 138. These statutes provide the legal framework for addressing truancy, including:

1. **Section 1330:** Mandates regular school attendance for all children of compulsory school age and outlines responsibilities for compliance.
 2. **Act 138:** Provides guidelines for addressing truancy, including the requirement for attendance conferences, development of AIPs, and prohibiting punitive actions like suspension or expulsion for absenteeism.
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IV. Roles and Responsibilities

The effective implementation of the Truancy Program requires cooperation among all stakeholders:

1. **School Administration:**
 - Implement the Truancy Program in accordance with state laws and policies.
 - Regularly monitor attendance and identify students at risk.
 - Coordinate attendance conferences and develop AIPs.
 - Collaborate with community resources to support students and families.
 2. **Teachers:**
 - Monitor attendance and report concerns.
 - Participate in attendance conferences and support AIPs with academic accommodations.
 3. **Parents/Guardians:**
 - Ensure regular attendance and timely communication with the school regarding attendance challenges.
 - Participate in attendance conferences and collaborate on AIPs.
 4. **Students:**
 - Attend school regularly and participate in developing and implementing AIPs.
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V. Attendance Monitoring and Early Identification

1. **Regular Monitoring:** Daily monitoring of attendance records to identify absenteeism patterns early.
 2. **Early Identification:** Flag students with frequent tardiness, unexcused absences, or extended absences for further intervention.
 3. **Notification to Parents/Guardians:** Promptly inform parents/guardians when attendance issues arise, emphasizing the importance of regular attendance.
 4. **Referral for Attendance Conference:** Schedule an attendance conference if absenteeism persists, involving all necessary parties to develop an AIP.
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VI. Attendance Conference Requirement

An attendance conference is a mandatory step before referring any truancy matter to a legal entity, as required by Act 138 and Section 1330. The conference allows for a collaborative approach to identifying and addressing the causes of absenteeism and developing a tailored AIP.

1. **Purpose:** Identify root causes of absenteeism and create a tailored AIP.
 2. **Participants:** Include the student, parent/guardian, relevant school personnel, and support representatives.
 3. **AIP Development:** Collaboratively outline steps to improve attendance with clear goals and responsibilities.
 4. **Follow-Up and Monitoring:** Regularly monitor attendance post-conference and adjust the AIP as necessary.
 5. **Documentation:** Record the conference and AIP in the student's records to track progress and compliance.
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VII. Prohibition on Suspension, Expulsion, or Transfer

The Truancy Policy explicitly prohibits suspension, expulsion, or transfer as consequences for truant behavior, in line with Section 1330 and Act 138. The policy emphasizes that absenteeism often reflects underlying challenges that require supportive interventions.

1. **Focus on Support:** Provide interventions like academic support, counseling, and community referrals to address absenteeism causes.
 2. **Student Retention:** Ensure students remain engaged in their education and receive necessary support to overcome attendance barriers.
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VIII. Collaboration with Community Resources

The school recognizes that some challenges affecting attendance extend beyond the school's scope. Therefore, it collaborates with community resources to provide additional support to students and families.

1. **Referral to Agencies:** Refer students and families to agencies for assistance with housing, healthcare, mental health, or family support.
 2. **Partnerships:** Establish partnerships with local organizations to support student attendance and well-being.
 3. **Integrated Support:** Combine school and community services for a comprehensive approach to addressing absenteeism.
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IX. Safeguarding Students' Rights

The Truancy Policy is designed to protect students' rights throughout the absenteeism process:

1. **Right to an Attendance Conference:** Students and families are entitled to an attendance conference before any legal referral, ensuring their voices are heard and a collaborative solution is sought.
 2. **Right to Supportive Interventions:** The school is committed to offering supportive measures rather than punitive actions, focusing on helping students succeed academically.
 3. **Protection from Punitive Measures:** The policy explicitly prohibits punitive actions such as suspension, expulsion, or transfer due to absenteeism.
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X. Evaluation Criteria for Truancy Policy

The effectiveness of the Truancy Policy will be evaluated based on:

1. **Early Identification and Intervention Success**
 2. **Parental and Guardian Engagement**
 3. **Reduction in Chronic Absenteeism**
 4. **Compliance with Legal Requirements**
 5. **Collaboration with Community Resources**
 6. **Overall Student Success**
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XI. Conclusion

Laboratory Charter School's Truancy Program for the 2024-25 school year aims to reduce absenteeism and improve academic outcomes through a supportive and legally compliant approach. By safeguarding students' rights, prohibiting punitive measures like suspension or expulsion, and requiring an attendance conference before any legal referral, the policy ensures that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Truancy Program Policy Overview: 2024-25 School Year

I. Introduction

Laboratory Charter School is dedicated to ensuring the academic success and well-being of all students. Regular school attendance is fundamental to academic achievement, and chronic absenteeism can significantly impact a student's ability to succeed. The Truancy Program Policy for the 2024-25 school year is designed to address absenteeism in a comprehensive and supportive manner, providing the necessary interventions and resources to students and families to improve attendance while ensuring compliance with state laws.

This policy is established in accordance with Section 1330 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code and Act 138, which mandate specific procedures for addressing truancy. The policy prioritizes supportive interventions over punitive measures, outlines responsibilities for maintaining regular attendance, and includes detailed procedures for addressing truancy. Importantly, the policy safeguards students' rights by prohibiting suspension, expulsion, or transfer as consequences for truant behavior and requires an attendance conference before any referral to a legal entity.

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3. **Collaboration with Community Resources:** Work with community organizations to provide additional support to students and families facing challenges that impact school attendance.
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