

## **Administrative Procedure**

### **Attendance and Excuses - Extended Vacations**

It is the responsibility of the building principal to inform parents as fully and completely as possible of their responsibility to make certain that the pupil misses no school days as a result of extended family vacations. Such absences are unauthorized, and if the parent decides to remove the pupil from school for one or more days, it is the parent's responsibility and is contrary to the recommendation of the professional staff of District No. 111.

It is recognized that family vacations can provide many worthwhile learning experiences, and these experiences should supplement, not replace, the carefully planned, sequential classroom learning. Recognizing these principles, the Kankakee School District Calendar traditionally has provided two full weeks during the Christmas holidays, and is planned generally to accommodate family vacation planning as fully as possible.

If a parent does insist on removing the pupil from school without authorization, the principal and teachers will, in the best interests of the pupil, after his return to school, make arrangements to minimize the loss, recognizing that the first obligation is to pupils in attendance. There will be no disciplinary action, nor will any be imposed on the pupils in the form of lowered grades beyond the detrimental effect which the absence will have upon his learning achievement. The absence will be recorded on the pupil's attendance record as unexcused. Because this unexcused absence is the result of circumstance beyond the pupil's own control and responsibility, he will be given the opportunity to make up the work missed, provided the pupil takes the initiative, and within the limitations of the teacher's time and obligation to other pupils.

Students in grades 8-12 who have missed ten days or more during that semester (excluding suspension days) will not be excused for the vacation days. Make-up work will receive no credit and the student will receive one step on the attendance policy for the vacation days taken beyond ten days absence in the semester.

The primary consideration is the need to impress on all parents the importance of regular school attendance and the responsibility which they share with school personnel to inculcate in the pupil's mind a deep respect for the significance of each school experience.

#### **RATIONALE TO SUPPORT THIS POLICY STATEMENT:**

1. The school calendar provides for 176 days during which pupils are in actual session at school. Each one of these 176 days is carefully planned by the teacher to provide important learning experiences. Excuse from attendance can be authorized only for specific reasons of illness, death in the family, or some other unavoidable cause.

2. The school days immediately preceding and following vacation periods are particularly important in the teachers planning of classroom experiences. These days are often used for examinations, review of work covered, introduction of new material, and special enrichment experiences which are correlated with the particular holidays.
3. The school district has employed an Attendance Officer who is a professional person with the responsibility to insure that each pupil receives full benefit from all school experiences available to him through perfect attendance.
4. The first responsibility of teachers and principals is to provide for those pupils who are in attendance or who are absent for authorized reasons. While every attempt will be made to minimize the educational loss resulting from absence due to family vacations, the teachers and principals must give first priority of time and attention to pupils in attendance.
5. Days lost from school cannot, in reality, be "made up." There is no substitute for the uninterrupted personal contact between teacher and pupil in the classroom experiences which are planned carefully by the teacher. Homework assignments or pages to be read cannot make up for this loss.
6. In addition to the learning experiences which are denied, these absences cause a psychological barrier to the child's full progress upon his return to school. He is at a disadvantage because he feels uncertain as to what he may or may not have missed; he is aware that the teacher and the class have carded on discussions and have shared experiences of which he has not been a part. There is a lapse of time before the pupil again feels an integral part of the group.

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