

## **Defining Truancy**

For purposes of understanding truancy and absenteeism, the following definitions are provided directly from Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/26-2a) (from Ch. 122, par. 26-2a):

A "**truant**" is defined as a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion thereof.

"**Chronic or habitual truant**" shall be defined as a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 5% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days.

"**Truant minor**" is defined as a chronic truant to whom supportive services, including prevention, diagnostic, intervention and remedial services, alternative programs and other school and community resources have been provided and have failed to result in the cessation of chronic truancy, or have been offered and refused.

A "**dropout**" is defined as any child enrolled in grades 1 through 12 whose name has been removed from the district enrollment roster for any reason other than his death, extended illness, graduation or completion of a program of studies and who has not transferred to another public or private school.

"**Valid cause**" for absence shall be illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, and shall include such other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the board of education in each district, or such other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the safety or health of the student.

"**Religion**" for the purposes of this Article, includes all aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief.  
(Source: P.A. 84-1308; 84-1420; 84-1424; 84-1438.)