

Prior to Referral to the Regional Office of Education

from the Illinois Compulsory School Attendance Law (Art. 26 ILSC)

The Illinois Compulsory School Attendance Law (Article 26 of the Illinois School Code) holds parents responsible for the enrollment and regular school attendance of children between the ages of seven and seventeen. Section 26-13 of the Code requires school districts to adopt absenteeism and truancy policies identifying appropriate supportive services and available resources for truants and chronic truants. These policies must be in accordance with Rules and Regulations as established by the State Board of Education which require at least these three elements:

1. A definition of a valid cause for absence in accordance with Section 26-2a of the School Code;
2. A description of diagnostic procedures to be used for identifying the cause(s) of unexcused student absenteeism, which shall, at a minimum, include interviews with the student, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s), and any school official(s) or other parties who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem; and
3. The identification of supportive services to be made available to truant or chronically truant students. These services shall include, but need not be limited to, parent conferences, student counseling, family counseling, and information about existing community services which are available to truant and chronically truant students and relevant to their needs.

Section 26-12 of the School Code stipulates that ***no punitive action, including school suspensions, expulsions and court action, is to be taken against chronic truants for such truancy unless available supportive services have been provided, or at least offered, to the student.***