



## **GCVS TRUANCY POLICY & PROCEDURES**

*Approved by GCVS Board of Trustees: March 24, 2020*

## **Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School - Truancy Policy & Procedures**

The personalization of a student's learning experience is the cornerstone of the learning model at Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS). Unlike brick and mortar schools, GCVS's system of "attendance" cannot simply be measured by the number of hours a student spends in a building. As a public school, GCVS is required to ensure that all students adhere to the required number of hours of school attendance, where such information is explained in our Student Handbook. However, as important as documenting the minimum of hours is, so too is ensuring that the student is progressing through the required instructional lessons, assessments, activities, as well as live class classroom activities when applicable, by logging in and attending school daily.

Each classroom teacher is the official keeper of student attendance records. Attendance will be taken by each teacher of each class and reported in the Student Information System (SIS) in PowerSchool daily. As a partner in student learning, learning coaches work with GCVS staff to ensure students are attending school daily as required. GCVS will alert families of attendance concerns and work in partnership to keep students in "good standing" by meeting the state attendance requirements.

### **Parent Communication - For All Absences**

Using the many electronic resources at our fingertips, we will send out an email and a robocall, by the following morning, for students who were absent without parent/guardian notification the day before. After 3 consecutive absences, a phone call will be made to the parent/guardian. If absentee problems continue, into the truancy area, the procedures below will be followed.

*The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall have a pupil absence notification program in each of its schools. The program shall be designed to ensure that each school notifies a parent or guardian of the child's absence if the school has not received notification of the absence from the parent or guardian within 3 days of the absence. Each school committee shall have a policy of notifying the parent or guardian of a student who has at least 5 days in which the student has missed 2 or more periods unexcused in a school year or who has missed 5 or more school days unexcused in a school year. The notification policy shall require that the school principal or headmaster, or a designee, make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal or headmaster, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies (M.G.L., c.76, §1B).*

Truancy at GCVS is defined as:

1. Three (3) or more consecutive days of unexcused absences with no parent contact and/or days in which no work has been completed, or
2. Seven (7) or more unexcused absences in a semester or fourteen (14) unexcused absences in a full year, or
3. Seven (7) or more days in which no work has been completed within a six-month period.
4. Not meeting state-mandated minimum number of hours per week.

When a student has been identified as being truant, the following occurs:

*Week 1:* Truancy Issue is Identified and shifted to GCVS's Family Engagement Coordinator (FEC) for review. The student may also be referred to the Response to Intervention (RTI) process if they have not already been referred.

*Week 2:* Once reviewed, the FEC sends an initial truancy email to the learning coach and/or parent/guardian notifying them of GCVS's concern of their student's attendance. If the truant student is new to GCVS for the current school year, s/he would be assigned a mandatory meeting with a member of the Family Engagement Team to discuss attendance requirements and how to plan for a successful schooling experience.

*Week 3:* A Family Engagement Liaison monitors the student for re-engagement and attendance and if there is no response or confirmation that the learning coach and/or parent/guardian received the email, the FEC sends a text message and calls the learning coach and/or parent/guardian.

*Week 4:* If the student's attendance does not change/improve, a truancy letter is sent to the learning coach and/or parent/guardian. Two (2) copies of the truancy letter are sent, one in the mail and one certified, requesting a response within seven (7) days (response date is outlined in the letter).

*Week 5:* Truancy meeting held and a Truancy Action Plan (TAP) is created.

- If the family attends - Develop the Truancy Action Plan and email with the TAP attached to the learning coach and/or parent/guardian and student.
- If the family does not attend - Develop the Truancy Action Plan and send an email with the TAP attached to the learning coach, parent/guardian and student, and additionally send the TAP through certified mail with a follow-up phone call to the caretaker.

*Week 6:* If the student still has not logged on and/or has not followed the guidelines as outlined in the TAP, the FEC calls the learning coach and/or parent/guardian to notify them that their student is being returned to their local school, their sending district. Additionally, an email and certified letter will also go out with the same information.

*Week 7:* The FEC requests the student is withdrawn, where the student is unsanctioned, the sending district is notified, and the student is withdrawn.