



OVER THE BACK FENCE

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Please duplicate and send to members in your district.

“Pursuing Excellence in Small and Rural Schools”

HOW IS YOUR GSA IQ?

First, you need to know that GSA stands for General State Aid. With approximately 50 new first time superintendents in Illinois this year, General State Aid might be new subject. Here are a few True or False Questions related to GSA. The answers are found at the bottom of this newsletter.

1. School must be in session for at least 300 minutes to be considered a full-day.
2. For elementary schools, recess can count for the number of minutes needed.
3. Students on a supervised field trip during the school day can be claimed for attendance.
4. If a student is in the nurse’s office or sick room can be claimed for attendance.
5. If a student’s absence is excused, he or she can be counted for attendance.
6. Students can be claimed for attendance when they attend a State Tournament in support of their school.
7. Attendance can be claimed for a student who participates by going to work with a parent/guardian on the “Take Your Child to Work Day”.
8. A student begins the school year and turns 17 during the year. The parent calls and informs the school that the student is going to quit school. The school should drop the student from the enrollment records on this date.
9. A parent enrolls a student but he/she does not attend school for the first few days. The school can claim attendance starting on the day the student was enrolled.
10. Both, “in-house” and “out-of-school” suspensions can be counted for attendance.

Answers to these questions and more can be found on the Illinois State Boards Home Page. Click on

more... at the bottom of Administrator Links, go to General State Aid and click on the *Frequently Asked Questions*.

INTERRUPTED SCHOOL DAYS & HEAT

A major responsibility of a local school superintendent is the health and safety of your students. Section 18-12, the School Code allows the use of Interrupted School Days for “adverse weather conditions”. *Here is the policy of the Illinois State Board of Education with regard to extreme heat.* ISBE allows four options:

1. Amend the public school calendar to start school at a later date
2. Dismiss after 5-clock-hours of instruction
3. Utilize an Emergency Day
4. Utilize an Interrupted Day

If an Emergency Day is utilized it is strongly recommended that an Amended Calendar be submitted electronically through IWAS to the Regional Office of Education (ROE) for approval, to assure that the most up to date Public School Calendar is available on-line via the School Calendar Inquiry. If an Interrupted Day is utilized, an Amended Calendar must be submitted electronically through IWAS, within 30 days of occurrence, to the ROE, who will forward it to ISBE for approval. The Calendar Code for Emergency Day is ED. The Calendar Code for an Interrupted Day is XID. The calendar code XID requires Student Attendance Time to verify a minimum of 1 instructional clock hour was conducted as well as a brief explanation of why the day was interrupted.

ISBE’s current policy further states **that if the announcement is made in advance (i.e., on the previous day) that school will be closing on any day or days after less than 5 clock hours because of heat, you must use an emergency day(s). You cannot count that shortened day as a full-day of attendance under those circumstances.**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1, 3, 4, & 8 are true. 2, 5,6,7,9, & 10 are false. Only “in-house” suspensions can be claimed.