



## 101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2019 and 2020

HB4170

Introduced 1/22/2020, by Rep. Deb Conroy

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/10-30 new

105 ILCS 5/26-1

105 ILCS 5/34-21.9 new

from Ch. 122, par. 26-1

Amends the School Code. Allows a school board to establish a voluntary "civic engagement day" in which a student in the seventh through 12th grade may request an excused absence of not more than one full school day per school year to participate in an organized civic engagement activity or event. Sets forth the requirements that a student must satisfy to receive the excused absence to participate in the organized civic engagement activity or event. Provides that a school official may not deny a requested absence because of the content or purpose of the civic engagement activity or event. Effective immediately.

LRB101 16382 CMG 65760 b

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Sections  
5 10-30 and 34-21.9 and by changing Section 26-1 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/10-30 new)

7 Sec. 10-30. Civic engagement day.

8 (a) To encourage students to participate in civic  
9 activities and events, a school board may establish a "civic  
10 engagement day" in which students in grades seventh through  
11 12th may request from their school an excused absence of not  
12 more than one full school day per school year to participate in  
13 an organized civic engagement activity or event. A school  
14 district that establishes a civic engagement day may not  
15 require a student to participate in a civic engagement activity  
16 or event.

17 (b) To receive an excused absence to participate in an  
18 organized civic engagement activity or event under this  
19 Section, a student must, prior to the date of the requested  
20 absence, do both of the following:

21 (1) Submit a written request for approval of the  
22 absence to the appropriate school official. The written  
23 request must include notice of the student's intent to

1 participate in an organized civic engagement activity or  
2 event on the date of the requested absence. The school  
3 official must approve or deny the student's request for an  
4 excused absence. The school official may not deny the  
5 requested absence for reasons based on the content or  
6 purpose of the civic engagement activity or event.

7 (2) Provide written consent to the school official from  
8 the student's parent or guardian approving the student's  
9 participation in the organized civic engagement activity  
10 or event on the date of the requested absence. The written  
11 consent from the student's parent or guardian must contain  
12 an acknowledgment that the student's participation in the  
13 civic engagement activity or event is voluntary and is not  
14 an activity or event sanctioned or required by the school  
15 district. The student's parent or guardian must also  
16 acknowledge that he or she is responsible for the student's  
17 participation in the activity or event on the day of the  
18 excused absence.

19 Following the date of the excused absence, the student must  
20 provide sufficient evidence or documentation to the school that  
21 on the date of the excused absence he or she participated in  
22 the civic engagement activity or event.

23 (105 ILCS 5/26-1) (from Ch. 122, par. 26-1)

24 Sec. 26-1. Compulsory school age; exemptions. Whoever has  
25 custody or control of any child (i) between the ages of 7 and

1 17 years (unless the child has already graduated from high  
2 school) for school years before the 2014-2015 school year or  
3 (ii) between the ages of 6 (on or before September 1) and 17  
4 years (unless the child has already graduated from high school)  
5 beginning with the 2014-2015 school year shall cause such child  
6 to attend some public school in the district wherein the child  
7 resides the entire time it is in session during the regular  
8 school term, except as provided in Section 10-19.1, and during  
9 a required summer school program established under Section  
10 10-22.33B; provided, that the following children shall not be  
11 required to attend the public schools:

12 1. Any child attending a private or a parochial school  
13 where children are taught the branches of education taught  
14 to children of corresponding age and grade in the public  
15 schools, and where the instruction of the child in the  
16 branches of education is in the English language;

17 2. Any child who is physically or mentally unable to  
18 attend school, such disability being certified to the  
19 county or district truant officer by a competent physician  
20 licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in  
21 all its branches, a chiropractic physician licensed under  
22 the Medical Practice Act of 1987, a licensed advanced  
23 practice registered nurse, a licensed physician assistant,  
24 or a Christian Science practitioner residing in this State  
25 and listed in the Christian Science Journal; or who is  
26 excused for temporary absence for cause by the principal or

1 teacher of the school which the child attends; the  
2 exemptions in this paragraph (2) do not apply to any female  
3 who is pregnant or the mother of one or more children,  
4 except where a female is unable to attend school due to a  
5 complication arising from her pregnancy and the existence  
6 of such complication is certified to the county or district  
7 truant officer by a competent physician;

8 3. Any child necessarily and lawfully employed  
9 according to the provisions of the law regulating child  
10 labor may be excused from attendance at school by the  
11 county superintendent of schools or the superintendent of  
12 the public school which the child should be attending, on  
13 certification of the facts by and the recommendation of the  
14 school board of the public school district in which the  
15 child resides. In districts having part-time continuation  
16 schools, children so excused shall attend such schools at  
17 least 8 hours each week;

18 4. Any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in  
19 attendance at confirmation classes;

20 5. Any child absent from a public school on a  
21 particular day or days or at a particular time of day for  
22 the reason that he is unable to attend classes or to  
23 participate in any examination, study or work requirements  
24 on a particular day or days or at a particular time of day,  
25 because the tenets of his religion forbid secular activity  
26 on a particular day or days or at a particular time of day.

1 Each school board shall prescribe rules and regulations  
2 relative to absences for religious holidays including, but  
3 not limited to, a list of religious holidays on which it  
4 shall be mandatory to excuse a child; but nothing in this  
5 paragraph 5 shall be construed to limit the right of any  
6 school board, at its discretion, to excuse an absence on  
7 any other day by reason of the observance of a religious  
8 holiday. A school board may require the parent or guardian  
9 of a child who is to be excused from attending school due  
10 to the observance of a religious holiday to give notice,  
11 not exceeding 5 days, of the child's absence to the school  
12 principal or other school personnel. Any child excused from  
13 attending school under this paragraph 5 shall not be  
14 required to submit a written excuse for such absence after  
15 returning to school;

16 6. Any child 16 years of age or older who (i) submits  
17 to a school district evidence of necessary and lawful  
18 employment pursuant to paragraph 3 of this Section and (ii)  
19 is enrolled in a graduation incentives program pursuant to  
20 Section 26-16 of this Code or an alternative learning  
21 opportunities program established pursuant to Article 13B  
22 of this Code;

23 7. A child in any of grades 6 through 12 absent from a  
24 public school on a particular day or days or at a  
25 particular time of day for the purpose of sounding "Taps"  
26 at a military honors funeral held in this State for a

1           deceased veteran. In order to be excused under this  
2           paragraph 7, the student shall notify the school's  
3           administration at least 2 days prior to the date of the  
4           absence and shall provide the school's administration with  
5           the date, time, and location of the military honors  
6           funeral. The school's administration may waive this 2-day  
7           notification requirement if the student did not receive at  
8           least 2 days advance notice, but the student shall notify  
9           the school's administration as soon as possible of the  
10          absence. A student whose absence is excused under this  
11          paragraph 7 shall be counted as if the student attended  
12          school for purposes of calculating the average daily  
13          attendance of students in the school district. A student  
14          whose absence is excused under this paragraph 7 must be  
15          allowed a reasonable time to make up school work missed  
16          during the absence. If the student satisfactorily  
17          completes the school work, the day of absence shall be  
18          counted as a day of compulsory attendance and he or she may  
19          not be penalized for that absence; and

20               8. Any child absent from a public school on a  
21               particular day or days or at a particular time of day for  
22               the reason that his or her parent or legal guardian is an  
23               active duty member of the uniformed services and has been  
24               called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately  
25               returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support  
26               postings. Such a student shall be granted 5 days of excused

1 absences in any school year and, at the discretion of the  
2 school board, additional excused absences to visit the  
3 student's parent or legal guardian relative to such leave  
4 or deployment of the parent or legal guardian. In the case  
5 of excused absences pursuant to this paragraph 8, the  
6 student and parent or legal guardian shall be responsible  
7 for obtaining assignments from the student's teacher prior  
8 to any period of excused absence and for ensuring that such  
9 assignments are completed by the student prior to his or  
10 her return to school from such period of excused absence.

11 9. A child participating in a civic engagement activity  
12 or event in compliance with Section 10-30 or 34-21.9 of  
13 this Code.

14 (Source: P.A. 99-173, eff. 7-29-15; 99-804, eff. 1-1-17;  
15 100-185, eff. 8-18-17; 100-513, eff. 1-1-18; 100-863, eff.  
16 8-14-18.)

17 (105 ILCS 5/34-21.9 new)

18 Sec. 34-21.9. Civic engagement day.

19 (a) To encourage students to participate in civic  
20 activities and events, the board may establish a "civic  
21 engagement day" in which students in grades seventh through  
22 12th may request from their school an excused absence of not  
23 more than one full school day per school year to participate in  
24 an organized civic engagement activity or event. In  
25 establishing a civic engagement day, the school district may



1 not require a student to participate in a civic engagement  
2 activity or event.

3 (b) To receive an excused absence to participate in an  
4 organized civic engagement activity or event, a student must,  
5 prior to the date of the requested absence, do both of the  
6 following:

7 (1) Submit a written request for approval of the  
8 absence to the appropriate school official. The written  
9 request must include notice of the student's intent to  
10 participate in an organized civic engagement activity or  
11 event on the date of the requested absence. The school  
12 official must approve or deny the student's request for an  
13 excused absence. The school official may not deny the  
14 requested absence for reasons based on the content or  
15 purpose of the civic engagement activity or event.

16 (2) Provide written consent to the school official from  
17 the student's parent or guardian approving the student's  
18 participation in the organized civic engagement activity  
19 or event on the date of the requested absence. The written  
20 consent from the student's parent or guardian must contain  
21 an acknowledgment that the student's participation in the  
22 civic engagement activity or event is voluntary and is not  
23 an activity or event sanctioned or required by the school  
24 district. The student's parent or guardian must also  
25 acknowledge that he or she is responsible for the student's  
26 participation in the activity or event on the day of the

1 excused absence.

2 Following the date of the excused absence, the student must  
3 provide sufficient evidence or documentation to the school  
4 official that on the date of the excused absence he or she  
5 participated in the civic engagement activity or event.

6 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
7 becoming law.