

## DISTRICT PROCEDURES – ATTENDANCE

### PROCEDURE:

1. **Please see School Board Policy 5.40**

2. **Compulsory Attendance**

All children who have attained the age of 6 years or who will have attained the age of 6 years by February 1 of any school year or who are older than 6 years but have not attained the age of 16 years are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term. A student who attains the age of 16 during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board. Public school students who have attained the age of 16 years and who have not graduated are subject to compulsory school attendance until the formal declaration of intent is filed with parent consent.

3. **Student Absences**

In complying with his/her responsibility to administer the state's compulsory attendance law, the principal shall record each absence as being either "excused" or "unexcused."

In order to be considered present for the day, a student must be in attendance for:

- High School – equivalent of four periods in a traditional seven period day (200 minutes) or three block periods (270 minutes)
- Middle School – four periods of the day (200 minutes)
- Elementary – half of the school day (200 minutes)

a. **Excused Absence:** An excused absence is one which results from:

1. Illness of the student, documented by the parent, guardian, or medical doctor. If the student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school, the parent may be requested to provide medical documentation. Such excuse provides that a student's condition justifies absence for more than the number of days permitted by the school board rules. (See (4) on the following page.) CODE "E"
2. Documented major illness in the student's immediate family. CODE "E"
3. Funerals as excused by the principal. CODE "E"
4. Special and unique situations **pre-approved** by the principal; (i.e., Take your Daughters and Sons to Work; Family Vacation Days, etc.) CODE "E"
5. Religious holiday(s) of the specific faith of the student. CODE "R"
6. Out-of-School Suspension. CODE "O"

b. **Unexcused Absence:** An unexcused absence is one which:

1. The reason or excuse is inadequate or does not meet the criteria for an excused absence. CODE "U"
2. The absence is unexplained.

- c. **Present:** Students should be marked “P” for “present” by the period or for the day if they are on a field trip, extra-curricular activity (such as band, orchestra, choral, sports, debate, etc.), in the clinic, administrative office, guidance, etc. The student is “P” if they are under the supervision of a staff member. CODE “P”
- d. **Tardy:** Students are tardy if they are late to school or late to class. CODE “T”
- e. **Early Dismissal:** Early dismissal from school. Code “D”
- f. **In-school suspensions:** Students who have received an IN-SCHOOL suspension from the principal or designee should be marked. CODE “S”

**4. Acceptable Attendance**

Students are expected to attend school each of the 180 regular school days, however it is understood that excused absences will occur. Over nine excused absences per semester for illness OR eighteen for illness in a school year without a doctor’s note is considered excessive. Once a student’s absences for illness are excessive without information on file, the principal may require a doctor’s statement for further absences to be excused.

The Superintendent must provide the Department of Highway and Safety and Motor Vehicles the legal name, sex, date of birth and social security number of each minor who has been identified as having 15 unexcused absences (including any period/day) within a rolling 90 day period.

**5. Truant & Habitual Truant**

Any student who has 5 unexcused absences, excluding absences related to discipline, within a 30 day period OR 10 unexcused absences, excluding suspensions, within a 90 day period is considered to be truant. Any student who has 15 unexcused absences, excluding suspensions, within 90 calendar days, with or without the knowledge or justifiable consent of the child’s parent or legal guardian is considered to be a habitual truant. If school procedures have been followed, legal steps may be taken.

**6. Make Up Work**

A student who has been absent (includes “P”), shall be expected to make up the work missed. The school shall provide opportunities for the student to make-up assigned work and not receive an academic penalty unless the work is not made-up within a reasonable time. In the case of unexcused absences, students will be expected to make-up all work missed during the period of the unexcused absence. In the case of unexcused absence, other than for suspension, a teacher may deduct up to 30% from the earned grade for work made up. The teacher shall specify a reasonable period of time for make-up work. In no case shall the time be less than one full calendar day for each day missed. (Policy 5.40)

- a. A student who has been excused for observance of a religious holiday shall be given a reasonable period of time to complete any work missed, including any homework, study, or work assignment. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result. Examinations should not be administered on the day of a known religious holiday.

**7. Married and Pregnant Students and Unwed Parents**

Married students and unwed parents of compulsory attendance age shall be required to attend school regularly. Pregnant students shall be exempt from such attendance during the term of the pregnancy, but must attend school regularly thereafter until age (16). The Superintendent may

exempt a student of compulsory school age who is a parent of a child from the compulsory attendance when a determination has been made that the parent has no access to childcare.

**8. Religious Instruction**

A student may be released from school, with prior approval of the principal, during the regular school hours for religious instruction, provided that:

- a. The instruction takes place off the public school premises;
- b. The parent/ legal guardian provides a written statement including:
  1. A request for the release of the student;
  2. Assumption of responsibility for the student while off the public school campus; and
  3. An identification of the person or institution to which the student is to be released.
- c. Responsibility for transportation of any student released for religious instruction shall be that of the parent or guardian.

**9. Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment**

Florida Statute 1003.21 (c) indicates that a student who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he/she attains that age if the student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the school board. Parents/guardians need to sign the declaration. Parents/guardians must be notified of receipt of the student's declaration to terminate school enrollment.

- a. Lifetime earning potential – declaration must include a statement which indicates that they understand that by leaving school prior to graduation they are likely to reduce their lifetime earning potential.
- b. Driving privilege – students terminating their enrollment at the age of 16 years or older who leave prior to graduation, will be informed that they will be reported to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles which will in all likelihood cause their drivers license to be suspended or prevent them from obtaining a drivers license until they reach the age of 18.
- c. An exit interview with the student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and to identify actions that could be taken to keep the student in school must be conducted by the guidance counselor or other school personnel.
- d. The student must complete a survey in a format prescribed by the Department of Education.