

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

- 1.0 Regular and punctual daily attendance is a critical factor in a student's ability to attain the maximum benefit from the educational process. Frequent absences may lead to poor academic work, lack of social development and possible academic failure. Regular attendance is of utmost importance for school interest, social adjustment and scholastic achievement. No single factor may interfere with a student's progress more quickly than frequent tardiness or absence.
 - 1.1 Continuity in the learning process is seriously disrupted by excessive absence. Showing up for class matters. Students cannot benefit from investments in high quality instruction and more engaging, rigorous curriculum unless they are in class. In most situations, the missed classroom experience cannot be adequately replicated. Students who have good attendance generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school and are college and/or career ready after leaving school.
- 2.0 According to state law, every child who has attained the age of six (6) years by August 1 of each year and is under the age of 17 years, except as otherwise allowed by state law, shall attend school.
 - 2.1 The law states that when a student has four (4) unexcused absences in one calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year, the student is considered habitually truant.
 - 2.2 Parents, guardians and students are all responsible for making sure students are at school daily, on time and ready to learn.
- 3.0 While not addressed in state law, regular attendance in preschool and kindergarten is crucial in developing early habits of attendance. The purview of the District attendance policy includes students under the age of six (6). Once a student is enrolled in a District preschool program or is a child under the age of six (6) in a kindergarten program, daily attendance is an expectation.
- 4.0 A parent or guardian must notify the school any time a student will be absent. In non-emergency situations this notification should occur prior to the beginning of the school day. If notification of a student's absence is not received, attempts will be made by the school to notify the parent or guardian of their student's absence. If the school does not receive timely notification, the absence will be marked unexcused.
- 5.0 Students who are absent for part or all of a school day may be restricted or prohibited from participation in after school or extra-curricular events on the day of the absence. The period of time which constitutes part of a day may vary by school level.
 - 5.1 **Elementary.** At a minimum, attendance at the elementary level shall be recorded within 10 minutes after class begins in the morning and within 10 minutes after class resumes after lunch.
 - 5.2 **Secondary.** Attendance at the secondary level shall be recorded within the first 10 minutes of each class period.
- 6.0 **Excused Absences.**
 - 6.1 Excused absences are defined as absences caused and excused due to one or more of the reasons defined in this section. For an absence to be excused a telephone call or signed note from the custodial parent/legal guardian, medical practitioner(s), or other authorized official must be submitted within two (2) school days of the school day absent. In the case of multiple consecutive absences, the excuse must be submitted within two (2) school days of the last school day absent.

- 6.2 A verified illness, injury, a physical disability, or a mental or behavioral health disorder.
- 6.3 A religious observance generally recognized by an established and bona fide religious organization.
- 6.4 Absence required by the judicial system (court, juvenile authorities, police, or similar entities).
- 6.5 A family emergency such as a serious illness or death of an immediate family member.
- 6.6 Vacations or non-emergency activities should be scheduled for days or times when students are not in school. Reasonable requests for absences to be excused due to vacation or for other non-emergency reasons will be approved if the student has a 95% or higher attendance rate over the prior two (2) grading periods, and if the student is otherwise meeting academic performance expectations as determined by school administration.
- 6.7 Student absences for participation in school-sponsored or authorized activities are not considered absences from school.
- 6.8 Absences due to suspension.
- 6.9 Acceptable reasons for excused absences may be restricted, or additional documentation may be required beyond the guidelines established in this policy by the building administrator or district attendance officer. Additional documentation requirements typically apply to students with a history of habitual truancy, including students on school attendance contracts or under truancy court orders.
- 6.10 Parents may excuse up to five (5) absences per semester without documentation. Absences beyond five (5) will be considered unexcused unless proper documentation is provided.

7.0 **Unexcused Absences.**

- 7.1 All absences that are not excused as defined elsewhere in this policy will be considered to be unexcused.
- 7.2 A student that has four (4) unexcused absences in one (1) month or ten (10) unexcused absences in a calendar year is considered habitually truant. If school and/or district intervention efforts fail, sanctions for habitual truancy may include a referral to the Truancy Court of the 17th Judicial District and / or a referral to a social service agency.
- 7.3 Students who are on campus but truant from a scheduled class pose a safety and supervision concern. Students on campus but truant who refuse to comply with staff directives to attend class are considered defiant and are subject to sanctions as described in the student discipline policy.

8.0 **Chronic Absenteeism.**

- 8.1 A student will be considered chronically absent if he or she has missed 10% or more of the days enrolled in the public school year during the school year. A student is absent if he or she is not physically on school grounds and is not participating in instruction or instruction-related activities at an approved off-grounds location for the school day. Chronically absent students include students who are absent for any reason (e.g., illness, suspension, the need to care for a family member), regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused. Chronically absent students are subject to school and district attendance interventions.

- 8.2 In an effort to prevent a student from becoming chronically absent, schools may use attendance teams, District attendance protocol, and/or attendance achievement bands to determine when to intervene.
- 8.3 Individual student needs and circumstances will be considered in determining appropriate interventions for chronic absence. For students with disabilities, the student's Individual Educational Team or Section 504 Team shall be consulted regarding appropriate interventions.

9.0 **Tardies and Partial Absences.**

- 9.1 For secondary schools, a tardy is defined as the student entering or departing a class within 10 minutes of the scheduled start or end time. For elementary schools, a tardy is defined as the student entering or departing a class within 60 minutes of the scheduled start or end time. This differentiation is due to the length of attendance periods.
- 9.2 A partial absence for secondary schools is defined as a student entering class more than 10 minutes late, but before the midpoint of the attendance period. This also applies to students being in class beyond the midpoint, but departing more than 10 minutes early.
- 9.3 A partial absence for elementary schools is defined as a student entering class more than 60 minutes late but before the midpoint of the attendance period. This also applies to students being in class beyond the midpoint, but departing more than 60 minutes early.
- 9.4 Excessive tardies and partial absences that negatively impacts the student's achievement and/or ability to complete make-up work comparable to in-class activities may result in consequences at the discretion of school officials, and may include the initiation of an attendance contract.

10.0 **Attendance Recognition Criteria.** Schools should employ strategies that aim to establish a climate and culture of positive attendance.

11.0 **Withdrawal for Non-Attendance.**

- 11.1 Before withdrawing a student for non-attendance, the following due diligence steps must be taken.
 - 11.1.1 Student has been unexcused from school for 10 consecutive days;
 - 11.1.2 Contacts have been attempted to all phone numbers listed in the student records database including non-household relationships and emergency contacts;
 - 11.1.3 Check state-wide student records for any updates;
 - 11.1.4 Conduct a home visit or welfare check; and
 - 11.1.5 Document all attempts in the student's record.
- 11.2 Students who are seventeen (17) years of age or older may legally drop out of school. Such students should not be formally withdrawn until school administration has attempted to contact parents or guardians by phone and in writing to discuss educational options that may be available, or until otherwise approved by a District administrator.
- 11.3 Students who are withdrawn for non-attendance should not be on campus without administrative approval.
- 11.4 In rare situations it may be appropriate for a non-expelled high school student who is under the age of seventeen (17) to temporarily withdraw from school until the beginning of the next grading period. Such withdrawals may only occur by joint approval of the school's principal and the parents, and only with written permission of District administration. In such cases a "Temporary Withdrawal with Intent to Return" contract must be developed which must specify, at minimum, the student's intended date of return and the educational or vocational activities planned during the period of withdrawal.

- 12.0 **Eligibility for Homeschooling (Home-Based Education).**
- 12.1 Students with a history of habitual truancy within the last six (6) months of enrollment are not eligible to withdraw from school for the purpose of homeschooling until parents have fully satisfied application and planning requirements described in District homeschool policy and in state law.
- 13.0 **Eligibility for Homebound or Out-of-School Support Services.** Parents of a student who is anticipated to be absent for more than fifteen (15) school days due to a physical, mental or emotional disability or a recovery period from an illness or injury, may request assessment by district staff to consider whether homebound instruction or other out-of-school education support services may be appropriate. Specific documentation and appropriate confidentiality waivers allowing physicians treating the child to communicate with district officials are required in order for a student to be considered for out-of-school educational support services.
- 14.0 **Enrollment, Attendance, and Participation Tracking Practices for Online Schools.** The following will be used to document student attendance and participation in the online schools of the District:
- 14.1 Teacher attendance logs and/or student sign-in sheets with student name and date may be used to document attendance at in-person events/activities such as an orientation session prior to beginning online coursework, in-person instruction, and participation in District and state mandated assessments.
- 14.2 Synchronous and asynchronous internet-based educational activity will be documented through activity/assessment logs for online education programs, which may include system logins/logoffs, emails/chats/video conferences between students and staff members or other students, message board utilization, or any other means of interaction/engagement between a student and an instructor or other peers.

LEGAL REFERENCE:

State Of Colorado Compulsory Attendance Law
C.R.S. 22-33-104
C.R.S. 22-33-107

CROSS REFERENCE:

Code 5025