

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

1. School Attendance Officer

- a. The principal or the principal's agent, at each school, shall be designated as the school attendance officer and shall deal with matters relating to school attendance and truancy at his/her particular school.
- b. Each school attendance officer shall determine daily which students enrolled are absent from school and whether that absence is excused.
- c. The school attendance officer may contact home-based private educational programs to attempt to discover whether such programs meet the program criteria established by law. All such contacts shall be documented.
- d. The school attendance officer shall furnish student attendance information to appropriate agencies for purposes authorized by State law and in accordance with the District's student records policy and procedures.

2. Student Absences and Excuses

- a. The responsibility for regular student attendance rests with the student's parent or guardian and the student. Students beyond the compulsory attendance age may provide this written verification themselves. However, if the school attendance officer finds that there is a pattern of excessive absences, the student may be asked to provide other supporting evidence on the reasons for the absences. A student is deemed truant when he/she is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of any days on which school is held. Parents are expected to telephone their student's school or submit a written excuse informing them of any absence. Failure to provide an excuse will result in an unexcused absence.
- b. Prior Parent-Excused Absences – Any student excused in writing by his/her parent/guardian prior to an absence is excused from school attendance. A student may be excused by the parent/guardian under this provision for not more than 10 days in the school year. Students so excused are responsible for making up work missed during the absence.

Other District-Excused Absences- The following exceptions will be allowed and not be recorded as an absence towards the attendance rule:

1. Death or serious illness in the immediate family
2. Illness, hospitalization, or medical care-when certified by a qualified physician, dentist, etc.
3. Approved school activities
4. Emergencies or other situations approved by the building principal
5. Physical or Mental Condition - Students not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school or an educational program shall be excused from school. In the case of long-term absences, the District may request the parent/guardian to obtain a written statement from a physician or licensed practitioner as proof of the physical or mental

condition of the student. The excuse shall be in writing, state the period of time for which it is valid and shall not exceed 30 days. The school may verify any excuse of this nature.

6. Religion – Students shall be excused from school for religious holiday observances.
 7. Quarantine – Students shall be excused from school when a quarantine is imposed by a public health officer.
 8. Serving as an Election Official – Students may be excused to serve as an election official provided they have at least a 3.0 grade point average or the equivalent and have the permission of their parents/guardians and the building principal.
 9. Sounding Taps – Students in grades 6 to 12 may be excused for the purpose of sounding “Taps” during a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran.
 10. Suspensions and Expulsions - Absence from school during a period of suspension or expulsion shall also be treated as an excused absence for purposes of this attendance policy and implementing procedures.
- c. Guidelines for Make-up Work: Students with excused absences from school are responsible to make up work missed, including exams. Students are given two (2) school days to make up work/exams for every day of absence. Students with unexcused absences will have the opportunity to make up tests and quizzes, but not to make up missed assignments.

3. **Truancy**

- a. “Truancy” means any absence of part or all of one or more days from school during which the school attendance officer or principal has not been notified of the legal cause of such absence by the parent or guardian of the absent pupil, and also means intermittent attendance carried on for the purpose of defeating the intent of the compulsory school attendance law.

Each school attendance officer shall notify the parent or guardian of the child who has been truant of the child's truancy and direct the parent or guardian to return the child to school no later than the next day on which school is in session or to provide an excuse. The notice under this paragraph must be given before the end of the second school day after receiving a report of an unexcused absence and may be made by personal service, mail or telephone call on which a written record is kept.

- (1) Notice: The notice under this paragraph must be given to the parent/guardian or adult student before the end of the second school day after receiving a report of an unexcused absence and may be made by personal service, mail or telephone call on which a written record is kept.

- b. “Habitual Truancy” means that a student has been absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five (5) or more days on which school is held during a school semester. Students found to be habitually truant may be issued a municipal citation in accordance with local-municipal ordinances. The principal/attendance office/designee will ensure that District personnel have taken appropriate actions.

(1) Notice: The school attendance officer shall notify the parent/guardian of a student who initially meets the criteria of a habitual truant by registered or certified mail in accordance with state law and outlined procedures. The habitual truancy notice shall include the following:

- a. A statement of the parent's/guardian's responsibility under state law to cause the student to attend school regularly.
- b. A statement that the parent/guardian or student may request program or curriculum modifications for the student and that the student may be eligible for the District's student at risk programming.
- c. A request that the parent/guardian meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss the student's truancy. The notice must include the name of the school person with whom the parent/guardian should meet; a date, time and place for the meeting; and the name, address and phone number of a person to contact to arrange a different date, time or place if the original date is inconvenient. The date for the meeting must be within five school days after the date that the habitual truancy notice has been sent to the student's parent/guardian. With the consent of the student's parent/guardian, however, the date for the meeting may be extended for an additional five school days.
- d. A statement of the penalties that may be imposed under state law on the parent/guardian if he/she fails to cause the student to attend school regularly.

4. **Program or Curriculum Modifications**

- a. Any student's parent/guardian or the student with parent/guardian permission may request program or curriculum modification.
- b. Requests for program or curriculum modifications should be initiated at the building or department level. Decisions on such requests shall be subject to review by the District Administrator/designee upon written request of the parent/guardian.
- c. Upon the request of a student's parent/guardian, any decision made in response to a request for program or curriculum modifications shall be reviewed by the Board. The Board shall render its determination, in writing, if so requested by the parent/guardian.
- d. At the beginning of each school year the Board shall notify all students enrolled in the district and their parents/guardians about the availability of program and curriculum modifications and the procedures to request such modifications.

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