



Book	Policy Manual
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5200 - **ATTENDANCE**

Parents and students are responsible for attendance which shall be required of all students of compulsory school age during the days and hours that school is in session.

Schools shall encourage regular attendance of students, maintain accurate attendance records, and follow the reporting procedures prescribed by the Superintendent.

I. Attendance Defined

- A. A student is in school attendance for a full school day if the student is actually present for at least two (2) hours of the school day, is engaged in an approved, school-sponsored educational activity which constitutes a part of the instructional program for the student, or is participating in pre-approved extra-curricular activities.
- B. A student who reports to a school center for instructional purposes for a partial day, or to an area vocational technical center, a vocational school or a community college for a partial day, is in school attendance only for the appropriate portion of the day at each center (e.g., half day).
- C. A student is in class attendance if the student is physically present in class for at least half of the class period, has been excused by the teacher to perform a class-related assignment, or has been requested by a school staff member to participate in an approved school activity during the class period.
- D. A student is tardy if the student is not present when school begins or when the school bell rings for class to begin, but then reports at some point during the school day, or class period. A student who is tardy must not be marked absent if the student reports to school as provided in Section I.A. above.
- E. A student is considered excessively absent when the student is subject to compulsory school attendance and has had at least five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within one (1) calendar month; or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a ninety (90) calendar day period.
- F. A student is considered truant when the student is subject to compulsory school attendance and, with or without the knowledge or consent of the parent, has had more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a ninety (90) calendar day period.
- G. A student is considered habitually truant when the student becomes truant, as defined in Section I.F. above, and fails to comply with the interventions assigned by the Attendance Review Committee.

II. Excused Absences and Tardies

A. Reasonable excuses for school or class absences and tardies are as follows:

1. personal illness or injury of the student;

An absence or tardy due to a student's personal illness or injury will be excused if the student provides documentation explaining the absence or tardy.

If a student is absent due to an illness or injury for more than five (5) consecutive days, a written statement from a licensed practicing physician must be submitted to the school. The written statement must include all the days the student has been absent due to the illness or injury.

If a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school due to a specific medical condition, the student must be under the supervision of a health care provider for the absences to be excused.

2. medical appointments;

An absence due to a medical appointment will be excused if the parent or student secures and submits to the school a written statement from a health care provider indicating the date and time of the appointment. Excused absences to attend medical appointments include, but are not limited to, absences to attend appointments for therapy services provided by licensed health care practitioners or certified behavior analysts.

3. pre-approved non-school sponsored activities and events;

Absences to attend activities or events that are not school-sponsored (including but not limited to public functions, conferences, and regional, State, and national competitions) will be excused if prior permission to attend the activity or event is given by the principal in writing. When more than one (1) school is involved in the activity or event, prior permission must be granted by each principal and Region Superintendent involved.

4. court and Department of Children and Families (DCF) center appearances;

Absences to appear in court or to testify in proceedings will be excused if the student's appearance is pursuant to a subpoena or if it is otherwise mandatory for the student to attend the proceeding. Absences to appear at centers under the supervision of the DCF will also be excused.

5. outdoor suspensions;

Absences due to outdoor suspensions will be excused.

6. private matters and religious observances.

Absences due to a death in the immediate family will be excused.

Absences for religious holidays or services when it is mandated for all members of a faith that such a holiday or service should be observed, and absences to participate in religious instruction, will be excused in accordance with State Board F.A.C. 6A-1.09514, Policy 5223, *Absences for Religious Instruction*, and Policy 5225, *Absences for Religious Holidays*.

B. Absences other than those listed above and absences due to insurmountable conditions, as defined in F.A.C. 6A-1.09513, can also be excused subject to the principal's approval and may require the submission of supporting documentation. All such absences not approved by the principal will be marked as unexcused.

C. Principals are authorized to verify explanations for absences and to investigate the cause of each absence. Principals shall have final authority for determining if the reason for an absence is acceptable.

D. Required documentation under this section must be submitted to the school within three (3) school days of the student returning to school.

E. When absences are excused, all educational requirements for the student's course(s) shall be met before a passing grade and/or credit is assigned. Students shall be given a reasonable amount of time to complete make-up work for excused absences in accordance with District procedures. Principals may grant extensions

to the make-up time limit for extenuating circumstances.

III. Unexcused Absences

- A. A student's absence will be marked as unexcused until the required documentation explaining the absence has been submitted to the school. A parent and/or student's failure to submit required documentation within three (3) school days of the student returning to school will result in the absence being marked as unexcused.
- B. Unexcused absences shall specifically include those due to:
 - 1. vacations and personal services;
 - 2. unapproved non-school sponsored events, programs, or sporting activities, except as provided in Section II.A. above;
 - 3. older students providing day care services for siblings;
 - 4. illness of others; and
 - 5. non-compliance with immunization requirements, unless lawfully exempted (see Policy 5320, *Immunization*).
- C. A departure from school without being in attendance for at least two (2) hours will be treated as an unexcused absence unless the required documentation excusing the departure is submitted to the school within three (3) school days.
- D. Unexcused absences and tardies shall not be grounds for suspension from school but may result in discipline and/or placement in alternative programs.
- E. Unexcused absences do not require that the teacher provide make-up work for the student.
- F. A student accumulating the equivalent of ten (10) or more unexcused class absences in an annual course, or five (5) or more unexcused class absences in a designated semester course, may have quarterly, semester, and final grade(s) withheld pending an administrative screening and completion of interventions assigned by the Attendance Review Committee.

IV. Parent and Student Responsibilities

- A. Students of compulsory school age under State law shall attend class 180 days each school year and for as many days or hours as required by State Board F.A.C. 6A-1.045111.
- B. Except as expressly provided in State law, parents are responsible for their child's school attendance and must stress the importance of regular and punctual school and class attendance with their child.
- C. Parents and students must report each school or class absences or tardy and provide a statement explaining the absence or tardy to the school attendance office as soon as practicable. Failure to report and explain the absence(s) or tardy(ies) and to provide the documentation required under Section II above, shall result in the absence(s) or tardy(ies) being marked as unexcused.
- D. Students must request make-up assignments from their teachers for all excused absences and tardies within three (3) days upon their return to school or class. If make-up assignments are available, they must be completed by the deadline established by the District. Parents and students are responsible for ensuring that make-up assignments are requested and completed in a timely manner. Failure to complete these assignments will result in a lower assessment of the student's academic and/or effort grade.
- E. If an Attendance Review Committee is convened, parents must provide information related to their child's absences and participate in and cooperate with remedial strategies recommended by the Attendance Review Committee.
- F. Students and parents must comply with all court orders resulting from truancy petitions.

V. School Responsibilities

A. Teachers shall take the following actions in documenting and encouraging student attendance:

1. provide challenging and rigorous instruction and curriculum and demonstrate an interest in the welfare of students;
2. record attendance during homeroom, whenever students change instructors in elementary schools, and at the beginning of each period of the school day in secondary schools using the student attendance recordkeeping system required by State Board rules;
3. report and/or refer students who fail to attend school or any regularly scheduled class with a valid excuse to the appropriate administrator;
4. provided make-up assignments for excused absences and tardies upon the request of a student and/or parent if make-up assignments are available;
5. prohibit students from leaving class within the final thirty (30) minutes of the school day unless authorized by the principal or principal's designee for an extenuating circumstance (i.e., emergency, sickness); and
6. perform any other actions directed by the principal or principal's designee to document and/or encourage student attendance.

B. Principals shall take the following actions in documenting and encouraging student attendance:

1. establish site-specific strategies that encourage both regular attendance and high academic achievement, and review and modify these strategies from time-to-time as required to maintain and improve their effectiveness;
2. determine, or authorize designees to determine, the status of each student absence/tardiness;
3. require that attendance be taken and that absences and tardies are recorded at a designated time every official school day;
4. assure that staff members are instructed in the proper recording of attendance;
5. insofar as possible, notify or have a designee notify parents each time their child is absent from class or school for an unknown reason, or without sufficient reason, once the absence becomes known;
6. notify or have a designee notify the Board when students in their care who are subject to compulsory school attendance have become truant, as defined in Section I.F. above;
7. establish an Attendance Review Committee at the school;
8. process any student and/or parent appeals of recommendations made by the Attendance Review Committee;
9. ensure compliance with the requirements of F.S. 1003.26; and
10. perform any other actions directed by the Superintendent or designee to document and encourage student attendance.

VI. Enforcement of Attendance Laws

A. Attendance Review Committees and Truancy Petitions

1. If a student becomes excessively absent or truant (as defined in Section I above), the student's teacher(s) shall report the excessive absences or truancy to the school principal or the principal's designee.
2. The principal shall, unless there is clear evidence that the student's absences do not exhibit a pattern of nonattendance, then refer the case to the school's Attendance Review Committee to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.

3. If the Attendance Review Committee finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, the Attendance Review Committee shall:
 - a. schedule a meeting with the student's parent to identify potential remedies; and
 - b. notify the Superintendent and the District's Federal and State Compliance Officer that the referred student is exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance.
4. If an initial meeting with the parent does not resolve the attendance issues, the Attendance Review Committee shall:
 - a. make frequent attempts at communication between the teacher and the student's parent;
 - b. evaluate the student for alternative education programs (see Policy 2455, *Dropout Prevention and Academic Intervention Programs*); and
 - c. establish an attendance contract with the student and/or the student's parent.
5. The Attendance Review Committee may also implement other interventions pursuant to State law, including referring the student to other agencies for family services or recommending the filing of a truancy petition.
6. The Attendance Review Committee shall report a student's case to the Superintendent only after all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance have been exhausted.
7. If a student subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with an Attendance Review Committee's attempts to enforce school attendance, and efforts made under this section to remediate the pattern of nonattendance are unsuccessful, the Superintendent shall refer the case to a Case Staffing Committee under F.S. 984.12. The Superintendent shall also, if applicable, notify the student's parent of the District's intent to notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles of the student's truancy pursuant to F.S. 1003.27.
8. If a student is excessively absent or truant, as defined in Section I above, the Superintendent may file a truancy petition in accordance with F.S. 984.151. If the Superintendent chooses not to file a truancy petition, a referral to a Case Staffing Committee must still be made.
9. Habitual truancy, as defined in Section I.G. above, may be sufficient grounds for withdrawal of students who are subject to compulsory school attendance under F.S. 1003.21 after all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance behavior have been exhausted.

B. Penalties for Falsification of Records

The presentation of reasonable and satisfactory proof that any District employee has falsified or caused to be falsified attendance records for which they are responsible shall be sufficient grounds for the revocation of that employee's teaching certificate by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE), or for dismissal or removal from office.

VII. Development of Procedures

The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures that:

- A. ensure school days and classes occur in conformity with the requirements of applicable laws and State Board rules;
- B. govern the taking of attendance and keeping of attendance records according to applicable laws and State Board rules;
- C. require schools to respond in a timely manner to every unexcused absence and tardy and to every absence or tardy for which the reason is unknown;
- D. identify excessively absence and truant students, investigate the cause(s) of their behavior, and consider remedial strategies, such as modifications of their educational programs, to meet their particular needs;

- E. ensure that students and their parents are provided the opportunity to challenge an attendance record prior to notifications being made and enforcement being sought under this policy;
- F. ensure that students whose absences have been excused have an opportunity to make up work they missed and receive credit for the work, if completed;
- G. ensure that students who, due to specifically identifiable physical or mental impairments, exceed or may exceed the District's limit on excused absences, are referred for evaluation for eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or are given other appropriate accommodations; and
- H. provide that student's grades in courses are based on performance in the instructional setting and is not reduced for reasons of related discipline.

VIII. Required Records, Reports, and Surveys

All school staff members and District employees shall keep all attendance records and shall prepare and promptly submit all reports that may be required by Federal and State law, State Board rules, and Board policies.

- A. Registers of enrollment and attendance must be reflected in District records. The enrollment register shall show the absence or attendance of each student enrolled for each school day of the year in a manner prescribed by the State Board. The register shall be open for inspection by the Superintendent. Violations of this section shall be a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided by law.
- B. Attendance reports shall be accurate and current according to the State-approved recording and reporting system and shall be retained as required by State law and State Board rules. The Federal and State Compliance Office will announce the dates to be covered by the Principal's Report on Attendance on an annual basis. These reports are to be certified online by the principal.
- C. During each of several school weeks during the fiscal year, a program membership survey of each school shall be made by aggregating the full-time equivalent student membership of each program by school. The District's full-time equivalent (FTE) membership shall be computed and currently maintained according to State Board rules. Instructions will be distributed by the Federal and State Compliance Office prior to each survey. These surveys are the basis of State monies forwarded to the District according to prescribed cost factors and base funds under the Florida Education Finance Program. For FTE Surveys 2 and 3, FTE will be prorated and allocated to schools based on student enrollment/attendance.

To see the Student Attendance Reporting Procedures Handbook, please click [here](#).

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Legal	F.S. 61.13(2)
	F.S. 984.03
	F.S. 984.151
	F.S. 1002.20
	F.S. 1003.01
	F.S. 1003.02
	F.S. 1003.21
	F.S. 1003.23
	F.S. 1003.24

F.S. 1003.26

F.S. 1003.27

F.A.C. 6A-1.044, Pupil Attendance Records

F.A.C. 6A-1.045111, Hourly Equivalent to 180-Day School Year and 250-Day School Year for Juvenile Justice Education Programs

F.A.C. 6A-1.09512, Equivalent Minimum School Term for Compulsory Attendance Purposes

F.A.C. 6A-1.09513, Parents' Responsibility for School Attendance

F.A.C. 6A-1.09514, Excused Absences for Religious Instruction or Holiday