

Book	Policy Manual
Section	Catch Up V17N1 thru V20N2
Title	ATTENDANCE
Code	*po5200 6/7/19 fs 17N2 18N1 Rev 19N2 mh/fh
Status	First Reading
Adopted	October 28, 2008
Last Revised	August 25, 2015

5200 - ATTENDANCE

The educational program offered by this District is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the schools during the days and hours that the school is in session. School attendance is the responsibility of parents and students. The parent or adult student shall report absences to the school attendance office as soon as practicable.

In accordance with statute, the Superintendent shall require, from the parent of each student of compulsory school age or from an adult student who has been absent from school or from class for any reason, a statement of the cause for such absence. The School Board reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each single absence.

In addition, educators have the responsibility to encourage regular attendance of students, maintain accurate attendance records, and follow reporting procedures prescribed by the Superintendent. Schools will record absent and tardy students in the automated student attendance recordkeeping system.

Provision shall be made for promoting school attendance through adjustment of personal problems, education of parents, and enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws and related child-welfare legislation. Accordingly:

- A. absences must be reported to the school by the parent or adult student as soon as practicable;

Failure to report and explain the absence(s) shall result in unexcused absence(s). The final authority for determining acceptability of the reason for the absence(s) shall rest with the principal~~+~~

- B. upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the principal or designee shall contact the student's parent to determine the reason for the absence;
- C. teachers shall record absentees each period of the school day and report absences, excused and unexcused, as required by the school;
- D. insofar as possible, parents should be contacted each time their child has an unexcused absence, or an absence for which the reason is unknown, to prevent the development of patterns of nonattendance;
- E. when a student has at least five (5) unexcused absences or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month, or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within an ninety (90) calendar day period, the teacher shall report to the Principal that the child may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. Unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, the Principal will refer to the case to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies. If the problem is not resolved, the child study team will implement interventions as set forth in, and act in accordance with, the requirements in ~~as provided in~~ F.S. 1003.26.

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 - 1. If a parent refuses to participate in the remedial strategies determined by the child study team because s/he believes that the strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent may appeal to the Board.
 - 2. The appeal will be head by a hearing officer who will make recommendations for final action to the Board.

3. If the Board's final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate, and the parent still refuses to participate or cooperate, the superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.

If the parent of a child who has been identified as exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance enrolls the child in a home education program pursuant to F.S. Chapter 1002, the superintendent shall provide the parent a copy of F.S. 1002.41 and the accountability requirements set forth in F.S. 1003.26. The superintendent shall also refer the parent to a home education review committee composed of the District contact for home education programs and at least two (2) home educators selected by the parent from a District list of all home educators who have conducted a home education program for at least three (3) years and who have indicated a willingness to serve on the committee. The home education review committee shall review the portfolio of the student, as defined by F.S. 1002.41, every thirty (30) days during the District's regular school terms until the committee is satisfied that the home education program is in compliance with F.S. 1002.41(1)(d). The first portfolio review must occur within the first thirty (30) calendar days of the establishment of the program. The follow provisions shall also occur if the committee does not determine that the home education program is in compliance with F.S. 1002.41(1)(d):

1. If the parent fails to provide a portfolio to the committee, the committee shall notify the superintendent.
2. The superintendent shall then terminate the home education program and require the parent to enroll the child in an attendance option that meets the definition of "regular school attendance" under F.S. 1003.01(13)(a), (b), (c), or (e) within three (3) days.
3. Upon termination of a home education program pursuant to this subparagraph, the parent shall not be eligible to reenroll the child in a home education program for 180 calendar days.
4. Failure of a parent to enroll the child in an attendance option as required by this subparagraph after termination of the home education program pursuant to this subparagraph shall constitute noncompliance with the compulsory attendance requirements of F.S. 1003.21 and may result in criminal prosecution under F.S. 1003.27(2).
5. Nothing contained herein shall restrict the ability of the superintendent to review the portfolio pursuant to F.S. 1002.41(1)(e).

If a student subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the parent or the superintendent shall refer the case to the case staffing committee pursuant to F.S. 984.12 and the superintendent may file a truancy petition pursuant to the procedures in F.S. 984.151.

Under the direction of the superintendent, ~~the~~ the District Attendance Coordinator or Home Education Coordinator _____ shall give written notice that requires enrollment or attendance within three (3) days after the date of notice, in person or by return-receipt mail, to the parent when no valid reason is found for a student's nonenrollment in school.

1. If the notice and requirement are ignored, ~~the~~ the District Attendance Coordinator or Home Education Coordinator _____ shall report the case to the superintendent, who may refer the case to the child study team at the school the student would be assigned according to attendance area policies or to the case staffing committee, established pursuant to F.S. 984.12.
2. The child study team shall diligently facilitate intervention services and shall report the case back to the superintendent only when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonenrollment behavior are exhausted.
3. If the parent still refuses to cooperate or enroll the child in school, the superintendent shall take such steps as are necessary to bring criminal prosecution against the parent. Subsequently, the superintendent shall give written notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent that criminal prosecution is being sought for nonattendance. The superintendent may file a truancy petition, as defined in F.S. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in F.S. 984.151.

Each school should also establish procedures to ensure good attendance consistent with this policy.

~~A student who is absent more than nine (9) days within a semester or more than four (4) days for schools on a block schedule, will not receive a passing grade for the semester unless:~~

- ~~A. medical evidence is presented to the principal in writing justifying a specific number of days absence, absences are for approved school activities, or absences are approved by the principal or designee, and~~
- ~~B. the student demonstrates mastery of the student performance standards in the course(s) as identified in curriculum guides and/or adopted textbooks.~~

- C. ~~If the absences are excused, all educational requirements for the course shall be met before a passing grade and/or credit is assigned.~~

Make-Up for Absences

For excused absences, the student shall have a reasonable amount of time, up to ten (10) school days, to complete make-up work. Principals may grant extensions to the make-up time limit for extenuating circumstances.

For unexcused absences, each principal shall establish site-specific policies that encourage both regular attendance and high academic achievement, and shall review and modify these policies from time-to-time as required to maintain and improve their effectiveness.

Excused Absences

The Board considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed at school:

- A. Personal illness of the student (medical evidence may be required by the principal or designee for absences exceeding five (5) consecutive days).
- B. Court appearance of the student.
- C. Medical appointment of the student.
- D. An approved school activity.
- E. Insurmountable problems. Prior permission by principal or designee is required except in the case of an emergency.
- F. Other absences with prior approval of the principal or designee.
- G. Attendance at a center under Children and Families Services supervision.
- H. Significant community events with prior permission of the principal. When more than one (1) school is involved, the ~~Area~~ Superintendent or designee will determine the status of the absence.
- I. Religious instruction or religious holiday.
- J. Death in the immediate family.
- K. Appointments for a therapy service provided by a licensed health care practitioner or behavior analyst certified pursuant to Florida law for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder including, but not limited to, applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.

Absences not included in excused absences listed above shall be unexcused.

Students may not be given excused absences to remain out of school for the purpose of working, unless the job is an integral part of the student's instructional program.

Discipline

No student will be suspended for unexcused tardiness, lateness, absence, or truancy but the student may be assigned to detention or placed in existing alternative programs.

Any student who fails to attend any regularly scheduled class and has no excuse for absence should be referred to the appropriate administrator. Disciplinary action should include notification to parents or guardians.

A student's grade in any course is based on his/her performance in the instructional setting and shall not be reduced for reasons of conduct. If a student violates the attendance or other rules of the school, s/he should be disciplined appropriately for the misconduct, but his/her grades should be based upon what the student can demonstrate s/he has learned.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures that:

- A. provide the student and his/her parents the opportunity to challenge the attendance record prior to notification and that such notification complies with applicable Board rules;
- B. require a school session that is in conformity with the rules of the State Board;
- C. govern the keeping of attendance records in accordance with the rules of the State Board;

- D. identify the habitual truant, investigate the cause(s) of his/her behavior, and consider modification of his/her educational program to meet particular needs and interests;
- E. require that students whose absence has been excused have an opportunity to make up work they missed and receive credit for the work, if completed;
- F. require that any student who, due to a specifically identifiable physical or mental impairment, exceeds or may exceed the District's limit on excused absence is referred for evaluation for eligibility either under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or other appropriate accommodation.

Habitual Truancy

Whenever any student has a total of fifteen (15) unexcused absences from school within ninety (90) calendar days, with or without the knowledge or consent of the parent, s/he will be considered habitually truant. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to inform the student and his/her parents of the record of excessive absences as well as the District's intent to notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, if appropriate. The Superintendent is authorized to file a truancy petition under F.S. 984.151 if a student has accrued at least five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown within a ninety (90) calendar day period or has had more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a ninety (90) calendar day period.

Revised 8/25/15

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Legal	F.S. 984.151, 1002.20, 1003.02, 1003.21, 1003.23, 1003.24, 1003.26, 1003.27
	F.A.C. 6A-1.044, Pupil Attendance Records
	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