

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 shall be the responsibility of parents/guardians and students. Absences shall be reported to the school by the parent or adult student as soon as practicable.

In accordance with statute, the Superintendent shall require, from the parent/guardian 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 Board reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each single absence.

In addition, educators shall have the responsibility of encouraging regular attendance of students, maintaining accurate attendance records, and following reporting procedures prescribed by the Superintendent as follows:

- A. teachers shall record absentees each period of the school day and report absences as required by the school;
- B. parents/guardians should be notified each time their child is absent insofar as possible;
- C. when a student has been absent three (3) consecutive days and the school has been unable to ascertain the reason for the absences, the absences shall be investigated or at any other time if deemed necessary by the school principal.
- D. absences must be reported in writing to the school by the parent/guardian or adult student as soon as possible. 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.

Each school should establish procedures to ensure good attendance. A student who is absent more than nine (9) days within a semester or more than four (4) days within a nine (9) week period for schools on a block schedule, will not receive a passing grade for the semester.

Absences **not** counted in the nine (9) days/four (4) days attendance policy are:

- A. court dates
- B. religious holidays
- C. illness with medical documentation
- D. chronic and extended illness

A student is considered to be present at school, if away from school on a school day and engaged in an educational activity that constitutes a school approved instructional program or activity.

Kindergarten students must be in attendance for a minimum of 162 days, as a criteria for progression to first grade. The principal may in consultation with the teacher, deny promotion based on this criteria.

All students must be in attendance a minimum of four (4) hours of instructional time to be considered present each day.

Absence from School for Religious Instruction

~~Upon application to the principal, a student may be released from school up to one (1) hour per day for religious instruction away from the school site. The application shall include the notarized written consent of the parent or guardian for those students who have not attained the age of majority.~~

~~The religious institution shall also provide weekly attendance records to the school. Prior to approval, the principal shall ensure that the student is enrolled in sufficient courses to allow for promotion or graduation and that the student's grades are adequate for promotion or graduation. The principal may terminate the student's permission for non attendance.~~

~~On days designated as religious holidays, students may request prior approval to be absent from school for personal and family observance. School cooperation is requested when scheduling tests or major project due dates. Student absences for religious purposes should not prohibit students from receiving "perfect attendance" recognition.~~

Make-Up Work

Students may be able to make up any work missed for grade or credit within the nine (9) days per semester or the (4) days within a nine (9) week period for schools on a block schedule. All educational requirements for the course shall be met before a passing grade and/or credit is assigned. The student shall have a reasonable amount of time, left up to the discretion of the teacher, to complete make-up work. Principals may grant extensions to make-up time limit for extenuating circumstances.

The principal shall determine, in consultation with teachers, when appropriate, whether the student should be given the opportunity to make-up schoolwork and course requirements missed while absent due to out-of-school suspension.

If this privilege is given, the student shall have a reasonable amount of time left up to the discretion of the teacher following suspension to complete the schoolwork missed and shall do so on his or her own initiative.

Attendance Appeal Committee

Each school shall establish an Attendance Appeal Committee to implement the appeals process. A uniform set of procedures has been developed by the district's attendance committee.

Each student is entitled to an appeal once the student has been absent more than nine (9) days within a semester or more than four (4) days within a nine (9) week period for schools on a block schedule. Individual schools will publicize the availability of the appeals process which will be scheduled at the discretion of the principal.

Tardies

Each school should establish a tardy policy to ensure prompt arrival to school and class. Chronic tardies to school and/or class may result in referral to the appropriate administrator or designee.

Habitual Truant

As defined in F.S. ~~1000.01~~ 1003.01, a "habitual truant" is "a student who has fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences within ninety (90) calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student's parent/guardian, and who is subject to compulsory school attendance."

Any student who accumulates a total of fifteen (15) days of unexcused absence in a period of ninety (90) calendar days will be considered habitually truant. The student and his/her parent shall be informed of excessive absences as well as the district's intent to file a complaint with the Circuit Court Juvenile Division and notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV).

Drivers License

Pursuant to F.S. 322.091, the 1997 Florida Legislature enacted requirements that schools report to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) the name, birth date, sex, and social security number of any minor who attains the age of fourteen (14) and accumulates fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a period of ninety (90) calendar days. The legislation further provides that those minors who thus fail to satisfy attendance requirements will be ineligible for the driving privilege.

Married and/or Pregnant Students

Married and/or pregnant students shall not be prohibited from attending school. Teenage parents shall receive the same educational instruction or its equivalent as other students, but may voluntarily be assigned to a class or program suited to their special needs. Students participating in Teenage Parent Programs (TPP) shall be exempt from minimum attendance requirements for absences relating to pregnancy or parenting, but shall be required to make up the work missed due to the absence pursuant to F.S. 1003.54 before a passing grade and/or credit is assigned. Make-up work should be completed as soon as possible.

The District will provide information on alternative and adult education programs. Pregnant students may choose to attend one of these programs, provided the curriculum allows for credit or coursework toward a high school diploma.

College Visits and Military Recruitment

Trips for college/military should be scheduled when school is not in session. The administration may make an exemption if the college or military facility has a planned program agenda for a specific day or if the student has a specific appointment with a college or military official that is validated in writing. These trips are limited to junior and senior students, for three (3) school days per school year.

Adult Students

An adult student (eighteen (18) years of age) who is not residing with a parent or legal guardian shall not be prohibited from registering or remaining in school. All adult students are required to follow all school board rules, policies and procedures, and shall be under the authority of the principal as it relates to leaving school grounds, attendance and discipline procedures.

On-Line Attendance

All schools shall implement the on-line attendance reporting procedure using TERMS from the classroom by July 2003.

Regular School Attendance

- A. Regular school attendance shall be the responsibility of parents and students. In addition, the parent/guardian shall be required to justify each absence of the child by providing the reasons and explanations for the child's absence to the school.
- B. Each school shall continually encourage and promote regular school attendance of students. Furthermore, each school shall maintain accurate attendance records, track absences and follow attendance reporting procedures prescribed by the superintendent.
- C. Teachers shall record absentees each period of the school day and report absences as required by the school. Parents/guardians should be notified each time their child is absent insofar as possible.
- D. For each absence for which the reason is unknown, the principal or designee shall contact the student's parents or guardian to determine the reason for the absence. The final authority for determining acceptability of the reason for the absence(s) shall rest with the principal.
- E. Any student who fails to attend any regularly scheduled class and has no excuse for absence shall be referred to the appropriate school administrator. Disciplinary action shall include notifying the student's parent/guardian. Chronic truancy, deliberate nonattendance, or students with at least five (5) unexcused absences shall result in a referral to the ~~Child Study Team~~ Individual Problem Solving Team (IPST).

- F. Students identified as physically or mentally impaired and eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and are exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance, shall be referred to the ~~Child Study Team~~ Individual Problem Solving Team (IPST) to review the attendance record and make appropriate recommendations.

Absence of Student for Work

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.

F.S. 1002.20, 1003.01, 1003.21, 1003.24, 1003.26, 1003.27

Revised ~~12/10/02~~