

Absences and Excuses

Students are required and expected to attend regularly and punctually the school in which they are enrolled in order to realize the maximum benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. Recording of absences and tardies shall be made in compliance with the requirements of 702 KAR 007:125.¹

The Board views the matter of student attendance as one of its primary concerns and believes there is a direct relationship between poor attendance and a lack of achievement. Students who have a strong attendance record generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and are much better adjusted to live successfully in society. Therefore, the Board encourages the active cooperation of teachers, students, parents and administrators in maintaining a high level of student attendance at all schools.

Elementary attendance shall be checked a minimum of one (1) time in the morning and one (1) time in the afternoon. Middle school and high school shall be checked by class period.

TRUANCY DEFINED

Any student who has attained the age of six (6), but has not reached his/her eighteenth (18th) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) days or more, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) days or more, is a truant.

Any student enrolled in a public school who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years, but has not reached his/her twenty-first (21st) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) or more days, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) or more days, is a truant.

Any student who has been reported as a truant two (2) or more times is an habitual truant. The attendance of an habitual truant will carry forward for a period of one (1) year from the Final Notice Date.

For the purposes of establishing a student's status as a truant, a student's attendance record is cumulative for an entire school year. When students transfer from one Kentucky district to another, attendance information from the previous district shall become part of their official attendance record for that school year.

EXCUSED ABSENCE EVENTS AND TARDINESS

Students in Crittenden County Schools' shall be allowed up to five (5) absence events per year to be excused with a signed parent note. Students who enroll after October 1 will be allowed one (1) parent note for each two (2) months they are enrolled. If the limit of parent notes has been reached, the absence/tardy will be considered unexcused.

The District shall excuse up to ten (10) absence events with doctor/medical excuse/notes. Any absence events due to medical reasons in excess of ten (10) shall require the presentation of the District's Medical Excuse Form RX10 before the absence will be excused. The RX10 forms shall be available at each school, Superintendent's office and some medical facilities upon parent request. Students who have been court-ordered to attend school must use RX10 forms for all absences and tardies, which must be signed by the medical provider on the first day of the student's absence. All absence events and tardies shall be considered unexcused until the appropriate signed note, excuse, or documentation is presented to the school. These notes, excuses, etc. must be turned in to the school within five (5) days after the absence event or tardy. Any absence still unexcused on the fifth (5th) day will remain unexcused.

Absences and Excuses**EXCUSED ABSENCE EVENTS AND TARDINESS (CONTINUED)**

Students in Crittenden County Schools' shall be allowed up to four (4) daily tardies to be excused with a signed parent note for the entire school year.

When a student is deemed Chronically Absent (has absences and tardies, excused or unexcused, that equal or exceed ten percent (10%) of instructional time to date), the following consequences may be incurred:

- i. Exclusion from activities considered extra or non-essential to the academic process;
- ii. Forfeiture of driving privilege;

Note: Any student who is absent from school for more than five (5) consecutive days without a valid notification to the school shall be considered unexcused. Valid notification is defined as an approved contact from a parent or guardian.

An excused absence event or tardiness is one for which there is a valid reason and for which work may be made up for credit. Valid reasons shall include:

1. Personal illness of the pupil including emergency medical and dental care - After the fourth and subsequent absence event for illness, the Principal may require the student to submit a physician's statement, signed by the physician, stating the specific cause of the illness and how long the student will be out of school. As prescribed by order of the District Juvenile Court, dated May 1, 1991, a doctor's statement shall state the specific cause of illness and the actual days the student should be excused from school.
2. Death in the pupil's immediate family - Immediate family shall mean brother, sister, mother, father, grandmother, grandfather. The Principal may recognize others as immediate family, depending upon circumstances. Up to three (3) consecutive events may be excused by the Principal for death in the family.
3. Court appearances by subpoena - Verification may be required.
4. Act of God, such as extreme weather conditions (earthquake, etc.).
5. Test for driver's license, if accompanied by parent or guardian and with prior approval of the Principal.
6. College visitation for seniors limited to one (1) event. College visitation days shall be granted to students who are perceived to have a genuine interest in attending college or another post-secondary institution and who have registered for or taken the ACT or the SAT prior to the visit, unless the visit is to a vocational school. Visits must be pre-arranged and approved by the Principal. Prior to the visit, parents must arrange for a conference with the Principal if a visit will require more than one (1) day of travel.
7. Approved religious holidays and practices deemed to be legitimate by the school authorities.
8. Participation in cocurricular activities that are not sponsored by the school. Parents/guardians shall pre-arrange such activities with the Principal at least three (3) days in advance, in order for the absence to be excused.
9. Documented military leave.

Absences and Excuses**EXCUSED ABSENCE EVENTS AND TARDINESS (CONTINUED)**

10. One (1) day prior to departure of parent/guardian called to active military duty.
11. One (1) day upon the return of parent/guardian from active military duty.
12. Visitation for up to ten (10) days with the student's parent, de facto custodian, or person with legal custody who, while on active military duty stationed outside of the country, is granted rest and recuperation leave.
13. Trips qualifying as educational enhancement opportunities, as determined by the Principal.

Students shall be granted an excused absence for up to ten (10) school days to pursue an educational enhancement opportunity determined by the Principal to be of significant educational value. This opportunity may include, but not be limited to, participation in an educational foreign exchange program or an intensive instructional, experiential, or performance program in one (1) of the core curriculum subjects of English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and the arts.

Unless the Principal determines that extenuating circumstances exist, requests for date(s) falling within State or District testing periods shall not be granted.

The Principal's determination may be appealed to the Superintendent/designee whose decision may then be appealed to the Board under its grievance policy and procedures.

Students receiving an excused absence under this section shall have the opportunity to make up school work missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence.

Educational Enhancement Opportunities will not be approved for students who are considered Chronically Absent (have absences and tardies, excused or unexcused, that equal or exceed ten percent (10%) of instructional time to date).

14. Ten (10) days for students attending basic training required by a branch of the United States Armed Forces.
15. Treatment of head lice (maximum of three (3) absences per school year). The day the student is sent home from school does not count toward the three (3) day total.

Note: Participation in school-sponsored cocurricular activities, as approved under policy 09.122, is not considered absences.

After the fourth and subsequent absence event for reasons other than illness, the Principal may require a signed, dated and notarized note from the parent/guardian of the reasons for the absence or tardiness.

Make-up of work missed during an excused absence or tardiness is the responsibility of the student. A reasonable amount of time shall be allowed for make-up work to be completed, as determined by the teacher.

Absences and Excuses**UNEXCUSED ABSENCE EVENT AND TARDINESS**

An unexcused absence event or tardiness is one for which the student does not provide the school official with sufficient reason for missing school. Examples shall include:

1. Truancy
2. Visiting
3. Shopping
4. Missing the school bus
5. Trips not approved in advance by the Principal
6. Employment or work-related absence, unless such employment is part of the curriculum.

ABSENTEE PROCEDURE

Excused absence events require a signed dated note or doctor's excuse. Absence events not accompanied with required verification may be excused only at the Principal's discretion.

Students who have been absent or tardy shall bring, upon their return to school, a dated signed note explaining their absence, which is signed by one of their parents/guardians or by a physician or other person who can attest to the validity of the excuse. Failure to adhere to this requirement shall result in the student's absence event(s) being officially recorded as "unexcused."

The Principal/designee shall determine whether absence events and tardiness are excused or unexcused, even when a student may have had parental consent to be absent or tardy.

SCHOOL/HOME COMMUNICATIONS

School will strive to maintain open and on-going communications with parents/guardians concerning the attendance status of their children through such measures as reporting attendance on report cards, sending letters, and making phone calls.

If no call is received from the home, schools shall call parents/guardians when their child is absent, to affirm the parent's knowledge of the absence or, when there are excessive absences, to verify the reasons for the absence and check on the child's welfare.

When the school determines there are excessive absences or tardiness, or when there are truancy concerns, the following process shall be implemented:

1. At the discretion of the Principal/designee, letters may be sent from the school advising parents of excessive absenteeism or tardiness and the school's concern that those will impede the child's educational progress.
2. On the third day of unexcused absence or tardy, the Principal/designee shall notify the parent/guardian in writing that the student has three (3) days of unexcused absence and is now classified as a truant, as defined by Kentucky Compulsory Attendance Law. The notification shall contain a summary of this policy and inform the parent of any requirements for doctor's statements or notarized excuses. In addition, the notice shall include an explanation of the academic and legal consequences of unexcused or excessive absenteeism and invite the parent to meet with the Principal/designee. A copy of the notice shall be sent to the Director of Pupil Personnel (DPP).

Absences and Excuses**SCHOOL/HOME COMMUNICATIONS (CONTINUED)**

3. After the fourth day of unexcused absence or tardy, the Principal/designee shall send the parent/guardian a second Truancy Notice.
4. After the sixth day of unexcused absence or tardy, at which time the student is formally classified as an "habitual truant" and upon request of the Principal, the DPP shall send the parent/guardian, by certified MAIL or hand delivered, a legal Final Notice, which shall list the individual days missed without valid excuse and a directive that the student has twenty-four (24) hours to return to, and remain in school or face charges for being a persistent violator of the Kentucky Compulsory Attendance Law.
5. Failure of the parent/guardian to respond within the given time frame may result in the processing of a Final Notice by the DPP. After the Final Notice has been processed, the case may be referred to the court system. The form "Truancy Allegations/Assessment" required by the CDW shall be completed by the DPP, who shall file a Juvenile Complaint using the petition form. Criminal charges may be filed by the DPP against parent/guardian in District Court.
6. After the student has appeared before the CDW, the school should notify the DPP when the student misses another day of school, regardless of the reason. The DPP shall immediately notify the CDW.
7. Parent of students who are deemed Chronically Absent ((have absences and tardies, excused or unexcused, that equal or exceed ten percent (10%) of instructional time to date) will be notified by the DPP.

Charges against a student between the ages of eighteen (18) to twenty-one (21) shall be referred to the County Attorney for processing as an adult offender.

The Principal and/or the DPP are authorized to by-pass or otherwise modify these steps based on extraordinary circumstances and/or past attendance records of the student.

SCHOOL HANDBOOKS

Each school handbook shall include specific attendance requirements.

REFERENCES:

¹702 KAR 007:125

KRS 36.396; KRS 38.470; KRS 40.366

KRS 158.070; KRS 158.183; KRS 158.293; KRS 158.294

KRS 159.035; KRS 159.140; KRS 159.150; KRS 159.180

OAG 76-566; OAG 79-68; OAG 79-539; OAG 91-79; OAG 96-28

RELATED POLICIES:

09.111, 09.122, 09.4281

09.126 (re requirements/exceptions for students from military families)

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