



Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	ATTENDANCE
Code	po5200
Status	Active
Adopted	May 1, 2002
Last Revised	December 13, 2022

5200 - **ATTENDANCE**

A. General

1. 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/legal guardians and students. Absences shall be reported to the school by the parent/legal guardian or adult student as soon as practicable.
2. In accordance with statute, the Superintendent or designee shall require, from the parent/legal 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.
3. 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 or designee. Schools will record absent and tardy students in the automated student attendance recordkeeping system.

B. 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:

1. absences must be reported to the school by the parent or adult student as soon as practicable;
 - a. 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.
2. upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the principal or designee shall contact the student's parent;

3. teachers shall record absentees each period of the school day and report absences, excused and unexcused, as required by the school;
 4. 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;
 5. 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 a ninety (90) calendar day period, the teacher shall report to the Principal or designee 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 or designee will refer 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 set forth in, and act in accordance with, the requirements in F.S. 1003.26.
 - a. 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 Principal or designee.
 - b. If the Principal's or designee'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 or designee may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.
- C. 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 or designee shall provide the parent a copy of F.S. 1002.41 and the accountability requirements set forth in F.S. 1003.26. The superintendent or designee 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 following 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 or designee.
 2. The superintendent or designee 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 or designee to review the portfolio pursuant to F.S. 1002.41(1)(e).
- D. If a student subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the parent or the superintendent or designee shall refer the case to the case staffing committee pursuant to F.S. 984.12 and the Superintendent or designee may file a truancy petition pursuant to the procedures in F.S. 984.151.
- E. Under the direction of the Superintendent, their designee 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 non-enrollment in school.
1. If the notice and requirement are ignored, the superintendent's designee 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 non-enrollment behavior are exhausted.

3. If the parent still refuses to cooperate or enroll the child in school, the superintendent or designee shall take such steps as are necessary to bring criminal prosecution against the parent. Subsequently, the superintendent or designee shall give written notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent that criminal prosecution is being sought for nonattendance. The superintendent or designee may file a truancy petition, as defined in F.S. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in F.S. 984.151.

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

G. Excused Absences

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

- a. Illness with medical documentation.
- b. Court appearance of the student.
- c. Medical appointment of the student (see Policy 5751).
- d. Pregnancy related issues.
- e. Approved school activity.
- f. Insurmountable conditions. Insurmountable conditions are extreme weather conditions, communicable disease outbreaks, and local conditions determined by the School District which, after taking into account the material circumstances, would render impracticable a student's attendance at school. (F.A.C. 6A-1.09513)
- g. Other absences with prior approval of the principal or designee.
- h. Attendance at a center under Children and Families Services supervision.
- i. Significant community events with prior permission of the principal or designee.
- j. Religious instruction or religious holiday.
- k. Death in the immediate family.
- l. 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.
- m. Chronic and extended illness.

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

I. Make-Up for Absences

1. For excused absences, the student shall have a reasonable amount of time, up to ten (10) school days, to complete make-up work. Principals or designee may grant extensions to the make-up time limit for extenuating circumstances.
2. For unexcused absences, each principal or designee shall establish site-specific procedures that encourage both regular attendance and high academic achievement and shall review and modify these procedures from time-to-time as required to maintain and improve their effectiveness.

J. Tardies

1. Each school shall 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.

K. Discipline

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. The Superintendent or designee 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 to the school-based Individual Problem Solving Team (IPST) to consider an 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 or the completion of a chronic health condition form.

L. Habitual Truant

1. 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 or designee 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 or designee 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.

M. Driver's License

1. Pursuant to F.S. 322.091, each public school principal or \designee shall report to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) the legal name, birth date, sex, and social security number of any minor under its jurisdiction who 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.

N. Absence of Student for Work

1. 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.

O. Open Enrollment Revocation

1. Revocation of an Educational Location Option (ELO) or Educational Program Opportunity (EPO) may occur for the following reasons:
2. Poor attendance
3. Inappropriate behavior
4. Unacceptable grades due to lack of academic effort by the student
5. Excessive tardies or late pick-up after school of the student
6. Falsification of address or entrance documents

Revised 12/10/02
Revised 7/22/14
Revised 9/11/18
Revised 12/13/22

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Legal

- F.S. 984.151
- F.S. 1002.20
- 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-1.09512, 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