

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

The Board of Education believes that attendance is a key factor in student achievement. Thus, any absence from school represents an educational loss to the student. The Board recognizes, however, that some absences are unavoidable. Therefore, this policy is designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to absences that reasonably can be considered to be unavoidable.

The building principal or his designated representative will be responsible for the maintenance of individual student attendance records.

Students will be in attendance either a full day or a half day. The student must attend at least half of the time for half day at the elementary schools and 3 periods to be counted present for a half day at the Middle School and High School. Absence will be marked accordingly on the attendance form.

No student may be counted present who is absent from school unless on a field trip or college visitation as approved by the principal.

An excuse for absence from school may be approved on the basis of any one or more of the following conditions:

- A. Personal illness: The approving authority may require the certificate of a physician if he deems it advisable.
- B. Illness in the family.
- C. Quarantine of the home: The absence of a child from school under this condition is limited to the length of quarantine as fixed by the proper health officials.
- D. Death of a relative: The absence arising from this condition is limited to a period of three days unless a reasonable cause may be shown by the applicant child for longer absence.
- E. Work at home due to absence of parents or guardians: Any absence arising because of this condition will not extend for a period longer than that for which the parents or guardians are absent.
- F. Observance of religious holidays: Any child of any religious faith will be excused if his absence was for the purpose of observing a religious holiday consistent with his creed or belief.

Students who must be absent because of special religious events will be given an excused absence but will be counted absent. These absences would include special religious holidays, such as absence for the first communion, etc. The intent is not to permit half- or part-day absence to attend special church services when these services can be attended before or after school hours.

- G. Out-of-state travel, not to exceed twenty-four (24) hours per school year that the student's school is open for instruction, for participation in an enrichment activity approved by the Board of Education or an extracurricular activity, defined as a student activity program operated by the District but not included in a graded course of study.
- H. At the superintendent's discretion, a visit with a parent or legal guardian who is an active duty member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Public Health Service and who has been called to duty for, or is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting.
- I. Emergency situation: An emergency situation or a set of circumstances which, in the judgment of the Superintendent of Schools, constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school will be approved for a student.
- J. Other circumstances which, in the judgment of the Superintendent, constitute a good and sufficient cause for absence from school, including, but not limited to circumstances which are out of a student's control and which cause his/her absence due to the District's implementation of a "Remote Learning Plan" under H.B. 164, or "Blended Learning Policy" under R.C. 3301.079, if adopted by the Board.

A student suspended from school is absent for the days suspended.

All excuses from parents, as well as other documents pertaining to a student's enrollment, attendance, and withdrawal from the District, shall become a part of the official attendance record and shall be maintained regardless of format or condition.

Excessive Absence

Excessive absence is recognized as one of the major causes of school dropouts. The principal or his designated representative should plan to investigate all chronic absenteeism or excessive absence. Early identification of students with chronic absence patterns is extremely important. Elementary principals should investigate at the earliest age possible all students who display a pattern of chronic or continuous absence.

Attendance and Loss of Driving Privileges

A student shall be considered an habitual absenteeism problem by state law when, in spite of warnings and/or his/her parent's efforts to ensure attendance, he/she has accumulated sixty (60) consecutive hours in a single month or ninety (90) hours in a school year of unexcused absence.

Whenever any student under the age of eighteen (18) has more than sixty (60) consecutive hours in a single month or ninety (90) total hours in a school year of unexcused absence, the Board authorizes the Superintendent to inform the student and his/her parents of the attendance record and the district's intent and obligation to notify the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and the Judge of the Juvenile Court in writing of the student's excessive absenteeism (O.R.C. §3321.13 (B)(2)).

After receiving such information from the Superintendent, O.R.C. §4507.061 requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to suspend the temporary instruction permit or driver's license of the student who is the subject of the notice. If a temporary permit or license has not been issued for that student, the Registrar, under current law, is prohibited from issuing a temporary permit or a license. Any denial of driving privileges would remain in effect until the student reaches eighteen (18) or until the denial of driving privileges is terminated for another reason allowable under the Ohio Law.

In accordance with Ohio Law, a student whose driving privileges have been denied can file a petition with the juvenile court in whose jurisdiction he/she resides.

Parental Education Program

In accordance with Ohio Law, the Board may require the parent or guardian of any student who is suspended or expelled from school or who is truant (absent without legitimate or legal excuse) or habitually absent (unexcused absences in excess of 10 consecutive days or 15 days per year) from school to attend a parental education or training program. If the parent fails to attend the program, he/she may be charged with a misdemeanor of the fourth degree, punishable by a maximum fine of \$250 and imprisonment of up to 30 days. This policy shall be posted in a central location in all Toronto City School buildings, and shall be made available to students and their parents or guardians upon request (O.R.C. §3313.663).

LEGAL REFS: O.R.C. §§3301.60; 3321.041; 3321.13

Ohio Department of Education EMIS Manual, Section 2.1.1: Student
Enrollment Overview, Version 4.0 (2017)

Adopted: August 27, 2020