

STUDENT ABSENCES/EXCUSES/DISMISSALS

I. Student Attendance Policy

Student attendance is a cooperative effort and the School Board shall involve parents and students in accepting the responsibility for good attendance.

Each parent/guardian or person having control or charge of a child within the compulsory attendance age shall be responsible for such child's regular and punctual attendance at school as required under provisions of the law.

A reasonable effort shall be made to contact a parent/guardian of each absent student every day, and to obtain an explanation for the student's absence, where there is no indication that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence. A log will be kept of call attempts.

Students who are absent must bring a valid note stating the reason for absence upon returning to school. Unexcused absences shall be handled according to regulations issued by the superintendent.

The superintendent's regulations will include procedures for excusing students who are absent by reason of observance of a religious holiday. Such regulations will ensure that a student is not deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, which he missed by reason of such absence, if the absence is verified in an acceptable manner.

Students shall attend school for a full day unless otherwise excused. Secondary students shall be scheduled for a full school day unless they are enrolled in a cooperative work-study program. All other exceptions to a full day schedule must be approved on an individual basis by the superintendent or designee.

High school students may spend school days each academic year participating in High School to Work Partnerships established pursuant to guidelines developed by the Board of Education. The superintendent's regulations will specify that students who miss a partial or full day of school while participating in Partnership programs will not be counted as absent for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The regulations will also include procedures by which students may make up work missed while participating in a High School to Work Partnership.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or the division superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law.

II. Compulsory Attendance Procedures

A. Upon Fifth Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support

If (1) a student fails to report to school for a total of five scheduled school days for the school year, and (2) there is no indication that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence; and (3) reasonable efforts to notify the parent of the absences have failed, then the Principal or his designee or the attendance officer shall make a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the parent, either in person or through telephone conversation, to obtain an explanation for the pupil's absence and to explain to the parent the consequences of continued nonattendance. The school principal or his designee or the attendance officer, the pupil, and the pupil's parent shall jointly develop a plan to resolve the pupil's nonattendance. Such plan shall include documentation of the reasons for the pupil's nonattendance.

B. Upon Sixth Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support

If the pupil is absent an additional day after direct contact with the pupil's parent and the attendance officer has received no indication that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, either the school principal or his designee or the attendance officer shall schedule a conference within ten school days, which must take place no later than the fifteenth school day after the sixth absence. At the conference, the pupil, his parent, and school personnel, shall meet to resolve issues related to the pupil's nonattendance. Other community service providers may also be included in the conference.

C. Upon Additional Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support

Upon the next absence after the conference without indication to the attendance officer that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, the Principal or designee shall notify the attendance officer or Superintendent or his designee who shall enforce the compulsory attendance rules by either or both of the following: (i) filing a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations court alleging the pupil is a child in need of supervision as defined in § 16.1-228 or (ii) instituting proceedings against the parent pursuant to § 18.2-371 or § 22.1-262. In filing a complaint against the student, the attendance officer shall provide written documentation of the efforts already undertaken to resolve the pupil's absence. If the student's parents have joint physical custody of the student and the school has notice of the custody arrangement, then both parents shall be notified at their last known addresses.

D. Parental Cooperation in Remediating Excessive Unexcused Absences

It is expected that parents will cooperate with the attendance officer and other school officials to remedy the student's attendance problem. Where direct contact with a parent cannot be made, despite reasonable efforts, or where parents otherwise fail to cooperate in remediating the student's attendance problem, the superintendent or the superintendent's designee may seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance laws. The attendance officer, with the knowledge and approval of the Superintendent, shall institute proceedings against any parent who fails to comply with the

requirements of the compulsory attendance laws. Where the complaint arises out of the parent's failure to comply with the requirements of § 22.1-258, the attendance officer shall document the school division's compliance with this Code section.

III. Report for Suspension of Driver's License

In addition to any other actions taken pursuant to this policy, if a student who is under 18 years of age has 10 or more unexcused absences from school on consecutive school days, the principal may notify the juvenile and domestic relations court, which may take action to suspend the student's driver's license.

IV. Attendance Reporting

Student attendance shall be monitored and reported as required by state law and regulations. At the end of each school year, each public school principal shall report to the Superintendent the number of pupils by grade level for whom a conference was scheduled pursuant to Part II (B) above. The Superintendent shall compile this information and provide it annually to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

V. Dismissal Precautions

Principals shall not release a student during the school day to any person not authorized by the student's parent/guardian to assume responsibility for the pupil. Students shall be released only on request and authorization of parent or guardian. The superintendent shall provide procedures for release of pupils who are not residing with or under the supervision of a parent/guardian. The burden of proof on the authority of the person to receive the student is on the requesting party. A formal check-out system shall be maintained in each school.

Adopted: July 8, 2013

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-254, 22.1-258 through 22.1-269, 22.1-279.3, 46.2-323 and 46.2-334.001.

8 VAC 20-110-10 et seq.

Cross Refs.:	IGAJ	Driver Education
	JFC	Student Conduct
	JFC-R	Standards of Student Conduct

STUDENTS

Absences/Tardiness/TruancyA. Absences

All students are expected to be in regular attendance. Students who are absent from school must submit, the day following an absence, a doctor's excuse or a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Excuses are to be kept on file for the entire school year.

1. Pre-excused Absences

Absences that are known in advance and are approved by the principal or a designee are pre-excused absences. The student must take the initiative in getting and completing necessary assignments and work from teachers. All assignments and work must be completed upon the date of return unless otherwise approved by the principal or a designee.

2. Excused Absences

The student must take the initiative in getting and completing necessary assignments and work from teachers. Upon return to school all assignments and work must be completed within the same number of days as the excused absence(s).

3. Unexcused Absences

It is assumed that an unexcused absence represents a deliberate attempt by the student or his/her parents or guardian to avoid the duty of attending school. Students will be required to complete work or assignments missed due to the unexcused absence(s). An unexcused absence will result in the student being assigned to after school detention.

4. Suspensions

Absences due to a suspension are to be treated as unexcused absences and will result in the student receiving no credit for work or assignments missed. EXCEPTION: Students who meet the eligibility requirements for alternative placement and who take the initiative to attend an alternative education program provided by Tazewell County Public Schools will receive credit for completed work and assignments.

5. Excessive Absences

Regular school attendance is essential for maintaining satisfactory academic progress and to establish, at an early age, work habits required for successful employment. Credit for assignments or work missed for absences exceeding 7 days per semester or 14 days per year will not be permitted unless the absence is for medical reasons (requires a medical excuse), death in the immediate family, or natural disaster. Building principals shall establish procedures and guidelines to monitor and control attendance prior to students' recording 7 absences per semester or 14 absences per year.

B. Tardiness/Check-ins/Check-outs

Procedures and regulations designed to control student tardiness, check-ins, and checkouts shall be established by each building principal.

Absences/Tardiness/Truancy (Continued)

C. Truancy

A child is considered truant after five (5) unsupported or unexcused absences or is not enrolled in school. The school principal shall immediately report all cases of truancy to the attendance officer.

D. Homebound Instruction

In the event a student develops a medical condition which could result in prolonged absences from school, that student may be a candidate for Homebound Instruction. Students approved for Homebound Instruction are considered present.

Code of Va., §22.1-254
Code of Va., §22.1-258
Code of Va., §22.1-261
Code of Va., §22.1-262
Code of Va., §22.1-263
Code of Va., §22.1-265
Code of Va., §22.1-280.1 amended

Adopted by School Board: August 12, 1996
Amended by School Board: July 9, 2001
Amended by School Board: May 29, 2002
Amended by School Board: January 8, 2007
Amended by School Board: August 11, 2008

STUDENTS

Attendance Records

A. Generally

It is important that the teacher fulfill the policies and procedures of individual schools associated with recording student attendance. Student attendance data is used for proper student accounting in the instructional program, for school administration, and for the distribution of major State school funds.

It is the responsibility of instructional personnel to verify the accuracy of student attendance data.

B. Retention

Student attendance data is to be maintained in accordance with the regulations established by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Regulatory Authority: (1980)

Virginia State Board of Education, Regulations, "Pupil Accounting Records" (September, 1980) PP. 75-76.