

Cheatham County Board of Education

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: Attendance	Descriptor Code: 6.200	Issued Date: 04/02/18
		Rescinds: 6.200	Issued: 04/04/16

1 Cheatham County School District (CCSD) strives to provide every opportunity for our students to
2 succeed, and one of the most important contributors to that success is a student's attendance at school.
3 For that reason, students are expected to be present each day school is in session. While we know that
4 regular school attendance is beneficial for students, it is also required by law. The Tennessee Compulsory
5 Attendance Law requires all school-aged children to attend school and states it is **the duty of the parent**
6 **or guardian to monitor the student's school attendance and to require the student to attend school.**

7 The attendance supervisor shall oversee the entire attendance program which shall include:¹

- 8 1. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
- 9
- 10 2. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
- 11
- 12 3. Alternative program options for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance
13 requirements;
- 14
- 15 4. Develop, recommend, and support a Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan;
- 16
- 17 5. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new or
18 reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
- 19
- 20 6. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license
21 withdraws from school.²

22 Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only
23 authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information
24 without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.³

25 All absences, tardies, and early checkouts are recorded daily (and for every class in middle and high
26 school). Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the
27 principal/designee. Written documentation for all absences must be presented on the first day a student
28 returns to school. Excused absences shall include:⁴

- 29 1. Personal illness (doctor's statement required);
- 30 2. Illness of immediate family member (doctor's statement required);

- 1 3. Death in the family (limit of two days per incident; documentation required); Immediate
2 family is defined as parents, grandparents, and siblings (including those by blood, marriage,
3 or adoption);
- 4 4. Extreme weather conditions;
- 5 5. Religious observances;⁵
- 6 6. College visits (documentation required);
- 7 7. Pregnancy (doctor's statement required);
- 8 8. School sponsored or school endorsed activities;⁶
- 9 9. Summons, subpoena, or court order (documentation required); or
- 10
11 10. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the
12 student has no control.

13 CCSD recognizes that occasions may arise when a student has an opportunity to participate in a
14 unique, once-in-a-lifetime event that will result in school absences. Students and their families must
15 meet with the principal in advance to determine if alternate educational plans/schedules are possible.
16 Approval is at the discretion of the principal and his/her team. Family vacations **do not** meet the intent
17 of this provision.

18 The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:⁷

- 19 1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
- 20
21 2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent
22 for the majority of the day;
- 23 3. All student absences are verified;
- 24 4. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness;
- 25 5. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed; and
- 26 6. A School Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan is in place and followed.

27 **TRUANCY**

28 *General*

29 Students shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled school day in order to be counted
30 present. Students receiving special education services may attend part-time days, alternating days, or for
31 a specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan.⁸

1 If a student is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day
2 where there is no cost to the parent(s) and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences
3 from these programs shall be reported in the same manner.⁹

4 Students who are absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the director of
5 schools/designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's
6 absence. The director of schools/designee shall also comply with state law regarding the reporting of
7 truant students to the proper authorities. If a student accumulates a total of five (5) unexcused absences,
8 then he/she is subject to referral to juvenile court.⁷

9 The director of schools/designee shall develop appropriate administrative procedures to implement this
10 policy.

11 *Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan*¹⁰

12 As an alternative to the filing of a truancy petition or for criminal prosecution for educational neglect,
13 the director of schools or attendance supervisor shall devise progressive truancy interventions for
14 students who violate compulsory attendance requirements. These interventions must address student
15 conduct related to truancy in the school setting.

16 Students with three (3) unexcused absences shall be subject to the progressive truancy intervention
17 framework outlined below.

18 **Tier I**

19 Tier I interventions will include a conference with the student and the student's parent/guardian; an
20 attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student, the parent/guardian, and an
21 attendance officer; and regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress.

22 If the student accumulates additional unexcused absences in violation of the attendance contract, he/she
23 shall be subject to the additional intervention tiers.

24 **Tier II**

25 Tier II interventions will include a referral to the attendance supervisor and an individualized assessment
26 by a school employee of the reasons a student has been absent from school. This may result in referral
27 to counseling, community-based services, or other services to address the student's attendance problems.

28 **Tier III**

29 Tier III interventions will include a referral to the Student Attendance Board.

30 **Tier IV**

31 If the application of the tiered progressive truancy interventions fails to meaningfully address the
32 student's habitual and unlawful absences from school, the director of schools or attendance supervisor
33 shall report the student to the appropriate judge having juvenile jurisdiction.

1 **MILITARY SERVICE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN**

2 School principals shall provide students with a one-day excused absence prior to the deployment of and
3 a one-day excused absence upon the return of a parent or custodian serving active military service.

4 Principals shall also allow up to ten (10) excused cumulative absences per year for students to visit a
5 parent or guardian during a deployment cycle. The student shall provide documentation to the school as
6 proof of his/her parent's/guardian's deployment. Students shall be permitted to make up schoolwork
7 missed during the these absences.¹¹

8 **MAKE-UP WORK**

9 Procedures related to make-up work shall be at the discretion of school administration and shall be
10 included in student handbooks.

11 **STATE-MANDATED ASSESSMENT**

12 Students who are absent the day of the scheduled End of Course Exams must present a signed doctor's
13 excuse or must have been given an excused release by the principal prior to testing to receive an excused
14 absence. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam. Excused students
15 will receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the End of Course Exam.

16 Students who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the course exam which shall
17 be averaged into their final grade.

18 **CREDIT/PROMOTION DENIAL**

19 Credit/promotion denial determinations may include student attendance, however, student attendance
20 may not be the sole criterion.¹² If attendance is a factor, prior to credit/promotion denial, the following
21 shall occur:

22

23 1. The student and the parent/guardian shall be advised if a student is in danger of
24 credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism.

25 2. Procedures in due process are available to the student when credit or promotion is denied.

26 **DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOCATION²**

27 More than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) reported unexcused absences by a student during any
28 semester renders a student ineligible to retain a driver's permit or license, or to obtain such if of age.

29 In order to qualify for reclaiming a driver's permit or license, the student must make a passing grade in
30 at least three (3) full unit subjects or their equivalency at the conclusion of a subsequent grading period.

31 **ATTENDANCE HEARING¹³**

32 Students whose attendance has not improved after implementation of the first tiers of the Progressive
33 Truancy Intervention plan, including students who are in danger of credit/promotion denial, shall be

- 1 referred to the Student Attendance Board to allow them the opportunity to address the panel and discuss
 2 the circumstances surrounding their absences. The student or parent/guardian shall be provided with
 3 written notification of the hearing. The student and/or parent/guardian shall be provided with a written
 4 statement of the action recommended by the panel regarding the excessive absences.
- 5 Failure to appear before the Student Attendance Board indicates that the Progressive Truancy
 6 Intervention plan has failed, and the student may be referred to juvenile court.
- 7 Students (or their parent(s)/guardian(s)) have the right to appeal the decision of the Student Attendance
 8 Board. This appeal must be made within two (2) school days to the director of schools/designee.
- 9 The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.
- 10 Within five (5) school days of the director of schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's
 11 parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the Board, and the Board shall review the record.
 12 Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the director of schools/designee.
 13 The action of the Board shall be final.
- 14 The director of schools/designee shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and
 15 disseminated to all students, parents, teachers and administrative staff.

 Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.08(1)(a); TCA 49-6-3006
2. TCA 49-6-3017(c)
3. TCA 10-7-504; 20 USCA § 1232g
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.17(1)(c)
5. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(15); TCA 49-6-2904(b)(5)
6. TN Department of Education, *Student Membership and Attendance Procedures Manual* (2017)
7. TN Department of Education, *Student Membership and Attendance Procedures Manual* (2017); TCA 49-6-3007; Public Acts of 2017, Chapter No. 379
8. TN Department of Education, *Student Membership and Attendance Procedures Manual* (2017)
9. TCA 49-6-3021
10. TCA 49-6-3007; TCA 49-6-3009; Public Acts of 2017, Chapter No. 379
11. TCA 49-6-3019
12. TCA 49-2-203(b)(7)
13. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.17

 Cross References

- School Calendar 1.800
- Extracurricular Activities 4.300
- Interscholastic Athletics 4.301
- Field Trips/Excursions/Competitions 4.302
- Reporting Student Progress 4.601
- Promotion and Retention 4.603
- Recognition of Religious Beliefs, Customs & Holidays 4.803
- Voluntary Pre-K Attendance 6.2011
- Students in Foster Care 6.505
- Student Records 6.600