

Benton County Board of Education

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in March	Descriptor Term: Attendance	Descriptor Code: 6.200	Issued Date: 07/09/18
		Rescinds: 6.200	Issued: 10/02/17

1 Attendance is a key factor in student achievement, and therefore, students are expected to be present
2 each day school is in session. The Director of Schools/designee shall develop appropriate administrative
3 procedures to implement this policy.

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

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

14 Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only
15 authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information
16 without the consent of the student or parent(s)/guardian(s).³

17 Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal/designee.
18 Excused absences shall include:⁴

- 19 1. Personal illness/injury;
- 20 2. Illness of immediate family member;
- 21 3. Death in the family;
- 22 4. Extreme weather conditions;
- 23 5. Religious observances;⁵
- 24 6. Approved College visits;
- 25 7. Pregnancy;

- 1 8. School sponsored or school endorsed activities;⁶
- 2 9. Summons, subpoena, or court order; or
- 3
- 4 10. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the
- 5 student has no control.

6 The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:⁷

- 7 1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
- 8
- 9 2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent
- 10 for the majority of the day;
- 11 3. All student absences are verified;
- 12 4. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness; and
- 13 5. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

14 **TRUANCY**

15 *General*

16 Annually, the Director of Schools/designee will provide written notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) that
17 attendance at school is required. Students shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled
18 school day in order to be counted present. Students may attend part-time days, alternating days, or for a
19 specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan and shall be
20 considered present for school attendance purposes.⁸ If a student is required to participate in a remedial
21 instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the parent(s)/guardian(s)
22 and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be
23 reported in the same manner.⁹

24 A student who is absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Director of
25 Schools/designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's
26 absence. If a parent does not provide documentation within adequate time excusing those absences, or
27 request an attendance hearing, then the Director of Schools shall implement the progressive truancy
28 intervention plan described below prior to referral to juvenile court.

29 *Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan*¹⁰

30 Prior to referral to juvenile court, the following progressive truancy intervention plan will be
31 implemented.

1 Tier I

2 Tier I of the progressive truancy intervention plan shall include the following:

- 3 1. A conference with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s);
- 4
- 5 2. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s),
- 6 and an attendance supervisor or designee. The contract shall include:
- 7
- 8 a. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the student;
- 9 b. The period for which the contract is effective; and
- 10 c. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional
- 11 disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court; and
- 12
- 13 3. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress.

14 Tier II

15 If a student accumulates additional unexcused absences in violation of the attendance contract in Tier I,

16 the student will be subject to Tier II.

17 Under this tier, a school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a

18 student has been absent from school. The employee may refer the student to counseling, community-

19 based services, or other services to address the student's attendance problems.

20 Tier III

21 This tier shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful.

22 These interventions shall be determined by a team formed at each school. The interventions shall

23 address student needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be approved by the Director

24 of Schools/designee.

25 MILITARY SERVICE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

26 School principals shall provide students with a one-day excused absence prior to the deployment of and

27 a one-day excused absence upon the return of a parent or custodian serving active military service.

28 Principals shall also allow up to ten (10) excused cumulative absences per year for students to visit a

29 parent/guardian during a deployment cycle. The student shall provide documentation to the school as

30 proof of his/her parent's/guardian's deployment. Students shall be permitted to make up schoolwork

31 missed during these absences.¹¹

32 MAKE-UP WORK

33 Students will have one (1) day for each absent day to complete all work or to take tests, unless other

34 arrangements are approved by the student's teacher(s).

1 STATE-MANDATED ASSESSMENT

2 Students who are absent the day of the scheduled EOC exams must present a signed doctor's excuse or
3 must have been given an excused release by the principal prior to testing to receive an excused
4 absence. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam. Excused
5 students will receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the EOC exam.

6 Students who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the EOC exam which may be
7 averaged into their final grade.

8 CREDIT/PROMOTION DENIAL

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

12 1. The student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be advised if the student is in danger of
13 credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism.

14
15 2. Procedures in due process are available to the student when credit or promotion is denied.

16 DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOCATION²

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

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

21 ATTENDANCE HEARING¹³

22 Students with excessive (more than five (5)) unexcused absences or those in danger of credit/promotion
23 denial shall have the opportunity to appeal to an attendance hearing committee appointed by the
24 principal. If the student chooses to appeal, the student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided
25 written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee.
26 The committee will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist to excuse an
27 absence(s) or to determine if the student has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass
28 the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance committee decision, the principal shall
29 send written notification to the Director of Schools/designee and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student
30 of any action taken regarding the excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise
31 parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Director of
32 Schools/designee.

33 The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.

34 Within five (5) school days of the Director of Schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's
35 parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the Board, and the Board shall review the record.

- 1 Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools/designee.
- 2 The action of the Board shall be final.
- 3 The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and
- 4 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 2018, Chapter No. 958
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 2018, Chapter No. 958
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