

Hardeman County Board of Education

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: Attendance	Descriptor Code: 6.200	Issued Date: 02/09/17
		Rescinds: 6.200	Issued: 10/08/15

1 A. General

- 2 1. Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and therefore, students are expected to be
3 present each day school is in session.
- 4 2. The attendance supervisor shall oversee the entire attendance program which shall include:¹
- 5 a. all accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
- 6 b. alternative program options for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance
7 requirements;
- 8 c. ensuring that all school age children attend school;
- 9 d. providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new or
10 reinstatement of driver's permit or license;
- 11 e. notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license
12 withdraws from school.²
- 13 3. Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student
14 records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access
15 to student information without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.³
- 16 4. Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or
17 his/her designee. Excused absences shall include:
- 18 a. personal illness;
- 19 b. illness of immediate family member;
- 20 c. death in the family;
- 21 d. extreme weather conditions;
- 22 e. religious observances;⁴
- 23 f. doctor/hospital visits due to pregnancy;
- 24 g. summons, subpoena, or court order; or
- 25 h. circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the
26 student has no control.

1 Students are eligible to make up daily class work and/or tests for excused absences. The time allotted
2 for the work to be made up will be one (1) day for each day missed that is excused plus one (1) day.
3 For example, if a student has three (3) excused absences, the student would have four (4) days in which
4 to complete his/her work.

5 **STATE-MANDATED TESTS/END OF COURSE EXAMS** ⁵

6 Students who are absent the day of the scheduled End of Course Exams must present a signed doctor's
7 excuse or must have been given an excused release by the principal prior to testing to receive an
8 excused absence. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam that
9 will count as 20% of their grade or excused students will receive an incomplete in the course until they
10 have taken the End of Course Exam.

11 Students who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the course exam which shall
12 be averaged into their final grade at 20% of their semester grade.

13 If an LEA does not receive its students' End of Course examinations cores at least five (5) instructional
14 days before the scheduled end of the course, then the LEA may choose not to include its students' End
15 of Course examination scores in the students' final course grade.

16 Students participating in school-sponsored activities whether on- or off-campus shall not be counted
17 absent. In order to qualify as "school sponsored," the activity must be school-planned, school-directed,
18 and teacher-supervised.⁶

19 A one-day excused absence is provided for students when their parent or custodian is deployed into
20 active military service. A one-day excused absence is also provided for students when the parent or
21 custodian returns from active military service. Principals shall also allow up to ten (10) excused
22 cumulative absences per year for students to visit a parent or guardian during a deployment cycle. The
23 student shall provide documentation to the school as proof of his/her parent's/guardian's deployment.
24 Students shall be permitted to make up schoolwork missed during the excused absences.⁷

25 The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:⁸

- 26 a. attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
- 27 b. daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent
28 for the majority of the day;
- 29 c. all student absences are verified;
- 30 d. written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness;
- 31 e. system-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

B. Truancy

1. Truancy is defined as an absence for an entire school day, a major portion of the school day or the major portion of any class, study hall, or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled.
2. Students who are absent five (5) days without adequate excuse will be reported to the director of schools/designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parents/guardians of the student's absence.⁸ The director of schools/designee shall also comply with state law regarding the reporting of truant students to the proper authorities.⁸ In addition, the principal/designee shall initiate meaningful communications with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in order to determine the underlying cause(s) of the unexcused absences. The principal/designee shall then develop an attendance plan and coordinate additional services designed to improve the student's attendance.⁹

Upon notification that a student has been absent ten (10) days without adequate excuse, the principal/designee shall attempt to meet in person with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to determine the appropriate services needed to improve the student attendance. The principal/designee shall document all communication attempts and refine the attendance plan as needed.⁹

If a student is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the parent(s) and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner.¹⁰

3. Truancy charges may be filed at the discretion of the director or his designee on any student under eighteen (18) years of age who has accumulated a total of five (5) or more unexcused absences (an aggregate of five (5) days during the school year and not necessarily five (5) consecutive days) without adequate excuse.⁸
4. A student who is eighteen (18) years of age is considered to be a dropout after ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences. During the ten (10) days, contact may be made and the student may inform the system that he/she is not returning and has not transferred to another school.

C. Compulsory Attendance Ages

1. Children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) years, both inclusive, must attend public or private school.¹¹
2. A parent/guardian or legal custodian who believes that their child is not ready to attend school

1 at the designated age of mandatory attendance may make application to the principal of the
2 public school which the child would attend for a one (1) year deferral in required attendance.
3 Any such deferral shall be reported to the director of schools by the principal.

4 3. Under certain circumstances, the Board may temporarily excuse students from complying with
5 the provisions of the compulsory attendance law.¹²

6 4. Any child residing within the district, six (6) years of age on or before August 15 of the current
7 school year, who makes application for admission shall be enrolled in the school designated by
8 the Board.¹³ All school assignments must be made in accordance with the Federal court order.

9 5. A child entering kindergarten shall be no less than five (5) years of age on or before August 15
10 of the current school term. No child shall be eligible to enter first grade without having
11 attended an approved kindergarten program.¹⁴

12 6. A child entering a special education program shall be no less than three (3) years of age.¹⁵

13 7. The compulsory attendance law shall not apply to the following: ¹²

- 14 a. a student who has received a diploma or other certificate of graduation;
15 b. a student who is enrolled and making satisfactory progress in a course leading to a GED;
16 c. a student enrolled in a home school who has reached the age of seventeen (17).
17

18 **D. Driver's License Revocation** ²

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

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

25 **E. Credit/Promotion Denial**

26 1. Credit/promotion denial determinations may include unexcused student attendance, however
27 student attendance may not be the sole criterion.¹⁶ If attendance is a factor, prior to
28 credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

- 1 a. Parents and students shall be advised if a student is in danger of credit/promotion denial due
2 to excessive absenteeism. For purposes of denying credit or promotion, any student under
3 eighteen (18) years of age shall be considered truant after ten (10) consecutive or fifteen
4 (15) nonconsecutive days of unexcused absences and system policies and procedures on
5 truancy have been followed.
6
- 7 b. An attendance committee appointed by the principal will conduct a hearing to determine if
8 any extenuating circumstances exist or to verify that the student has met attendance
9 requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted.¹³
10
- 11 c. The attendance committee at the school may recommend that a student be withdrawn for
12 the remainder of the semester and charged with truancy after the ten (10) consecutive or
13 fifteen (15) nonconsecutive days of unexcused absences.
14
- 15 d. The principal shall be responsible for notifying, in writing, the director of schools and the
16 parents of the student of any action taken by the school.

17 ATTENDANCE HEARING ¹¹

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

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

30 Within five (5) school days of the director of schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's
31 parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the Board, and the Board shall review the record.
32 Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the director of
33 schools/designee. The action of the Board shall be final.

34 The director of schools/designee shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and
35 disseminated to all students, parents, teachers and administrative staff.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.08(1)(a); TCA 49-6-3006
2. TCA 49-6-3017
3. TCA 10-7-504; 20 U.S.C. § 1232g
4. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.03(16); TCA 49-6-2904
5. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.06 (1)(d)(2)
6. Attendance Accounting Procedural Manual, '11-'12 (0104), Minimum Standards and Guidelines, State Department of Education
7. TCA 49-6-3019
8. TCA 49-6-3007
9. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.17
10. TCA 49-6-3021(c)
11. TCA 49-6-3001 © (1); Covell v. State (1920), 143 Tenn. 571, 227 s.w. 41
12. TCA 49-5-3005
13. TCA 49-6-3001 (a); TCA 49-6-3001 (b)(1)
14. TCA 49-6-201(3); TCA 49-6-201(8) (d); TRR/MS 0520-1-3-03(10)
15. 20 U.S.C. Sec 5. 1400-1485
16. TCA 49-2-23(b)(7)

Cross References

Extracurricular Activities 4.300
Reporting Student Progress 4.601
Promotion and Retention 4.603
Recognition of Religious Beliefs 4.803
Student Records 6.600
Special Education Program 4.202
Special Education Students 6.500