

# Attendance

## Attendance Policy

The Texas Education Code (25.085) provides that every child in the state who is six (6) years of age or who has not completed the academic year in which the 18th birthday occurs, will be required to attend the public schools in the district of his/her residence.

### I. Attendance Guidelines

- A. It is your duty to be in class (and on time) daily. Attendance will be taken during the first five minutes of each class period. Five minutes after the tardy bell, students will be counted absent and must report to the office for a re-admit slip.
- B. When possible, students should make advance arrangements for scheduled absences in the principal's office and with their teachers. At the teacher's discretion, assignment(s) may be given in advance and the student may be expected to complete the assignment before the scheduled absence.
- C. *Procedure to use when you are tardy at the beginning of the school day:* Before going to class, go immediately to the office where an excused or unexcused tardy slip will be issued.
- D. *Procedure to use when you are tardy to class during the school day:* The teacher will rule on the tardy.
- E. If no prior arrangements have been made regarding your absence, you should go immediately to the office and request a reinstatement permit. The readmit slip will be marked excused or unexcused and becomes your responsibility to present it to each teacher for his or her signature.
- F. The teachers will not admit a student to class without a reinstatement permit from the office.
- G. Students are not allowed to leave the campus during the school day without permission from the principal's office or other designee. Students may not sign themselves out during the school day without permission from the parent.
- H. Early dismissals will be granted only upon parental request. Students are to get early dismissal forms in the office at the beginning of the school day. Forms are to be shown to the teacher in the class that the student is to be dismissed from, and brought to the office upon leaving school.
- I. Students must always sign out in the office when leaving school during the school day or the absence will be considered as truancy. A reasonable amount of time will be given for travel to and from appointments.

### II. Absences

- A. Any student not already exempt from the compulsory attendance law may nevertheless be excused for the following extenuating circumstances:
  - An extracurricular activity or public performance, approved by the District's Board of Trustees.
  - A District-approved mentorship designed to meet requirements for the Distinguished Achievement graduation program.
  - Required screening, diagnosis, and treatment for Medicaid-eligible students.
  - Observance of religious holy days, including travel for that purpose.
  - A documented health care appointment—if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day as the appointment.
  - A temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the teacher, principal, or Superintendent, including personal illness, or illness or death in the immediate family.
  - A juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer.
  - An absence required by state or local welfare authorities.
  - A family emergency or unforeseen or unavoidable instance requiring immediate attention.
  - An approved visit to a college campus.

The actual number of days a student must attend in order to receive credit will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year. If credit is lost, the attendance committee will decide how the student may regain credit. The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the District's Board of Trustees by filing a written request with the Superintendent.

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note, signed by the parent, that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older.

A student absent for any reason should promptly make up specific assignments missed and/or complete additional in-depth study assigned by the teacher. Class time is important. Doctor's appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time.

A parent wishing to withdraw a student from school must present a signed statement to the principal explaining the reason for the withdrawal and the effective date. (For further information, see [Education Code 25.087(a)] (See also Board Policy FDC)

If any parent, or person standing in parental relation to a child who is subject to the compulsory school attendance law and not lawfully exempted or properly excused from attendance, fails to require the child to attend school, he/she will be warned in writing by the school attendance officer that attendance is immediately required. (See Board Policy FDC).

If after this warning, a parent or person standing in parental relation intentionally, knowingly, recklessly, or with criminal negligence fails to comply, he/she will be subject to punishment as provided by law, unless he/she can prove inability to compel the child to attend school. In that case, the child will be subject to action by the juvenile court. [Education code 25.093]

The reason for an excused absence must be by notification over the telephone or stated in writing and signed by the parent, legal guardian, or person standing in parental relation to the student.

The Attendance Committee will review the student attendance records of any student who has been in attendance less than 90% of the class days during a semester. Credit can be denied if the student violates Education Code 25.092. A parent or guardian may appeal to the Attendance Committee to request that credit be given. If credit is denied, the attendance committee will decide how the student may regain credit.

A student absent from school for any unexcused reason will not be allowed to participate in school-related activities on that day or evening.

A student who misses class because of participation in an activity sponsored by a non-approved organization may receive an unexcused absence.

All senior students will be allowed one (1) day of college visitation. Seniors must fill out a leave of absence form and present it to all teachers in order to obtain assignments, and have the form signed by the college official visited for the absence to be excused. These forms must be returned to the principal.

The District will not schedule, nor permit students to participate in any school-related activities, on or off campus, that would require, permit, or allow a student to be absent from class in any course more than the number specified by school policy (full year course).

The District may apply to the Commissioner of Education for specific exceptions on individual students based on hardship or unforeseen circumstances. The Commissioner's decision will be final. 19 TAC 97.113(a).

### **III. Truancy**

Students absent from school without permission of parent(s) or guardian(s) or absent from class without the principal's permission, will be considered truant and will be subject to disciplinary action. (Board Policy FDC) Students who are 18 years old or older and accrue more than five unexcused absences may have their enrollment into the district revoked. [HB 907]

#### **IV. Tardies**

- A. Only unexcused tardies will result in disciplinary action. The following guidelines on tardies will be implemented:
  - B. The faculty will keep tardy counts on each student. After 3 tardies total per semester per class, punishment will be as follows:
  - C. Fourth tardy - 30 minutes in detention. Parent will be contacted.
  - D. Fifth tardy – 60 minutes of detention. Parent will be contacted.
- 6+ tardies will result in more severe disciplinary actions and parental contact.

#### **Make-up Work**

Students will be allowed to make up all work missed due to an excused absence. The student will receive one day for each day missed in order to get all missed work completed. The student will not receive any type of grade deduction. If the students' absence is unexcused, the student will be given one day to make up all work with a maximum grade of 70%. It is the responsibility of the student, regardless of the reason; excused or unexcused to obtain all assignments missed. It is in the best interest of the student to get assignments before the absence occurs in order to stay on schedule with the class.

#### **Check-in Procedure**

Students who have missed part of the school day and return or come in late to school must sign-in at the office at the time of arrival. Failure to sign-in may result in an unexcused absence.

#### **Check-out Procedure**

Early dismissal requires communication with parents and administration. Any time a student leaves the campus for any reason he/she must sign-out at the office. Leaving school without signing out may result in disciplinary action.

#### **Release of Students from School**

A student will not be released from school at times other than regular dismissal hours or without the principal's permission or according to the campus sign-out procedures. The office must have permission from a student's parent(s)/guardian in order to release a student during the school day. Students should secure early dismissals in the office before the school day begins. Parent notification is required.