

## Absences and Excuses

Pupils are required to attend regularly and punctually the school in which they are enrolled. Recording of absences and tardies shall be made in compliance with the requirements of 702 KAR 7:125.<sup>1</sup>

Students with consistent attendance in school generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and upon graduation enter vocational or academic endeavors more successfully. Consistent classroom attendance is considered to be an integral part of the student's course of study and assists in the development of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. The learning experiences that take place within the school environment are considered a meaningful and essential part of our educational system. Absences tend to disrupt this continuity of the instructional process in terms of the opportunity for interaction and exchange of ideas.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITY**

Kentucky Revised Statute 159.010 states that the parent or guardian is responsible for keeping his/her child in regular school attendance.

### **TRUANCY DEFINED**

Any student who has attained the age of six (6), but has not reached his/her eighteenth (18th) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) days or more, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) days or more, is a truant. These three (3) days do not have to be consecutive.

Any student enrolled in a public school who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years, but has not reached his/her twenty-first (21st) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) or more days, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) or more days, is a truant.

Any student who has been reported as a truant two (2) or more times is an habitual truant.

Truant students under the age of eighteen (18) and their parents shall be petitioned to the courts for truancy.

For the purposes of establishing a student's status as a truant, a student's attendance record is cumulative for an entire school year. When students transfer from one Kentucky district to another, attendance information from the previous district shall become part of their official attendance record for that school year.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

An excused absence or tardiness is one for which the student shall be permitted to make up work or tests for credit, such as:

1. Death in the family,
2. Illness of the pupil,
3. Religious holidays and practices,
4. One (1) day for attendance at the Kentucky State Fair,

**Absences and Excuses****EXCUSED ABSENCES (CONTINUED)**

5. Documented military leave,
6. One (1) day prior to departure of parent/guardian called to active military duty,
7. One (1) day upon the return of parent/guardian from active military duty,
8. Visitation for up to ten (10) days with the student's parent, de facto custodian, or person with legal custody who, while on active military duty stationed outside of the country, is granted rest and recuperation leave,
9. Ten (10) days for students attending basic training required by a branch of the United States Armed Forces, or
10. Other valid reasons as determined by the Principal, including trips qualifying as educational enhancement opportunities.

Students shall be granted an excused absence for up to ten (10) school days to pursue an educational enhancement opportunity determined by the Principal to be of significant educational value. This opportunity may include, but not be limited to, participation in an educational foreign exchange program or an intensive instructional, experiential, or performance program in one (1) of the core curriculum subjects of English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and the arts.

Unless the Principal determines that extenuating circumstances exist, requests for date(s) falling within State or District testing periods shall not be granted.

The Principal's determination may be appealed to the Superintendent/designee whose decision may then be appealed to the Board under its grievance policy and procedures.

Students receiving an excused absence under this section shall have the opportunity to make up school work missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence.

**NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE**

Parents or guardians are encouraged to call the school as soon as possible on the day of their child's absence or tardiness or, if possible, in advance. If parents call before 8 a.m., they may leave a message on the voice mail system. Parents without a telephone shall be identified; notes will be accepted from these parents only if the note is sent to school with the student on his/her immediate return. If no telephone call or note is received, the absence/tardy shall be marked unexcused.

Notes or calls from students shall not be accepted as adequate notification.

## Absences and Excuses

### **STATEMENT REQUIRED**

The District shall excuse up to ten (10) absence events with doctor/medical excuse/notes. Any absence events due to medical reasons in excess of ten (10) shall require the presentation of the District's Medical Excuse Form before the absence will be excused. The forms shall be available at each school, Superintendent's office and some medical facilities upon parent request. All absence events and tardies shall be considered unexcused until the appropriate written note, excuse, or documentation is presented to the school. These notes, excuses, etc. must be turned in to the school within twenty-four (24) hours of return to school.

### **SUSPENSION/UNEXCUSED ABSENCES/MAKE-UP WORK**

Absences due to suspension shall be considered unexcused absences.

A suspended student shall be prohibited from making up and receiving credit for daily work, daily quizzes, or projects that are assigned and due during the period of suspension. However, a suspended student shall receive credit for and be allowed to (1) make up major work assignments made before the suspension and (2) complete major tests and projects that are due or take place during suspension and cover material that is addressed before the period of suspension begins.

1. A student who has been assigned an out-of-school suspension/unexcused absences may not earn credit for classwork assigned during the effective dates of the suspension/unexcused absences.
2. A student will receive zeroes on all classwork missed due to the suspension/unexcused absences, except for work assigned before the suspension/unexcused absences and for major tests given during the period of suspension/unexcused absences that cover work assigned before the suspension/unexcused absences.
3. With the assistance of and under the supervision of the Principal, each classroom teacher is responsible for implementing this policy.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

Students who have an excused absence shall be permitted to make up homework or tests.

For excused absences at the middle and high school levels, make-up work is mandatory. Students with unexcused absences, including students who have been suspended, shall not receive credit for daily work or tests which are made up.

The student or parents shall be responsible for contacting teachers concerning make-up work on the first day the student returns to school. A failing grade may be assigned for any make-up work not completed as scheduled or if the student does not contact his/her teacher(s).

### **CHECK-IN REGISTER**

Parents/guardians or an individual authorized by them shall come to school to sign the check-in register before a student shall be permitted to enter school late or leave school early. Unless the absence meets the requirements for an excused absence, students being checked out of school before the end of the school day shall receive an unexcused absence.

**Absences and Excuses****TARDY STUDENTS**

Parents/guardians must accompany a student who is tardy to the school office and sign the check-in form.

**EXEMPTIONS**

Students participating in homebound instruction or an approved activity are exempted from this policy.

**ELEMENTARY ATTENDANCE**

In addition to the above provisions the following provisions shall apply to students in kindergarten through grade five (K-5).

**APPOINTMENTS**

Although parents should make every effort to schedule appointments outside school hours, elementary students shall be granted an excused absence for appointments with doctors and dentists.

**STATEMENT REQUIRED**

In order to receive an excused absence after ten (10) absences in a school year, students shall be required to present a doctor's statement as described above verifying the reason for absence from school or provide evidence of circumstances beyond human control as determined by the Principal.

**TRIPS**

Trips taken in conjunction with parent vacations shall result in an unexcused absence for which no makeup of homework or tests will be allowed.

**MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

In addition to the above provisions, the following provisions shall apply to students in middle school through high school (6-12).

**PREARRANGING ABSENCES**

Prior to being absent to participate in school-related activities, students shall contact their teachers to make arrangements for make-up work.

Seniors with no unexcused absences shall be allowed at least two (2) days to visit college campuses. Students must complete the appropriate administrative paperwork one (1) week prior to the college visitation. College days are considered school-related and must be approved prior to the day on which the student will be absent.

**ILLNESS**

If a student becomes ill during the day, s/he shall secure permission from the Principal/designee to leave the campus. The Principal/designee shall contact the student's parents/guardians.

**Absences and Excuses****STATEMENT REQUIRED**

**Middle School Students (6-8):** In order to receive an excused absence after eight (8) absences in a school year, middle school students shall be required to present upon returning to school a doctor's statement verifying the reason for absence from school or provide evidence of circumstances beyond human control as determined by the Principal or Assistant Principal

**High School Students (9-12):** In order to receive an excused absence after the fourth (4th) absence or the fourth (4th) absence per class in each eighteen (18)-week term, high school students shall be required to present a doctor's statement verifying the reason for absence from school or provide evidence of circumstances beyond human control as determined by the Principal or Assistant Principal. These four (4) absences, if unused, do not carry over from the spring term to the fall term.

High school students who have a doctor's excuse for an absence shall submit it at the Main Office upon returning to school or within three (3) school days after returning to school. After three (3) days have passed from the date of return, all related absences will be counted unexcused. School work cannot be made up if no doctor's excuse has been presented.

**DRIVER'S LICENSE**

High school students who miss school in order to apply for a driver's license shall be granted an excused absence for a two (2)-block class limit.

**REFERENCES:**

<sup>1</sup>702 KAR 7:125

KRS 36.396, KRS 38.470, KRS 40.366

KRS 158.070, KRS 158.183, KRS 158.293, KRS 158.294

KRS 159.035, KRS 159.140, KRS 159.150, KRS 159.180

OAG 76-566, OAG 79-68, OAG 79-539, OAG 91-79, OAG 96-28

**RELATED POLICIES:**

09.111, 09.122, 09.123109.4281

09.126 (re requirements/exceptions for students from military families)

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