

StudentsAbsences and Excuses

The Governing Board believes that regular attendance plays an important role in student achievement. The Board shall work with parents/guardians and students to ensure their compliance with all state attendance laws and may use appropriate legal means to correct problems of chronic absence or truancy

(cf. 5112.1 – Exemptions from Attendance)
 (cf. 5112.2 – Exclusions from Attendance)
 (cf. 5113.1 – Truancy)
 (cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)
 (cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law, Board policy and administration regulations. (Education Code 48205)

Inasmuch as school attendance and class participation are integral to students' learning experiences, parents / guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical and other appointments during non-school hours.

Students shall not be absent from school without their parents / guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency or, as authorized pursuant to Education Code 46010.1, for a confidential medical appointment.

Student absence for religious instruction or participation in religious exercises away from school property may be considered excused subject to law and administrative regulations. (Education Code 46014)

The Board shall, by resolution entered into its minutes, approve reasonable methods that may be used to verify student absences due to illness or quarantine. (5 CCR 421)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

1740 Employment of personnel to supervise attendance (county superintendent)
 37201 School month
 37223 Weekend classes
 41601 Reports of average daily attendance
 42238-42250.1 Apportionments
 46000 Records (attendance)
 46010-46014 Absences
 46100-46119 Attendance in kindergarten and elementary schools
 46140-46147 Attendance in junior high and high schools
 48200-48208 Children ages 6-18 (compulsory full-time attendance)

Students (Con't)

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48210-48216 Exclusions from attendance
48240-48246 Supervisors of attendance
48260-48273 Truants
48292 Filing complaint against parent
48320-48324 School attendance review boards
48340-48341 Improvement of student attendance
48980 Parental notifications
49067 Unexcused absences as cause of failing grade
49701 Provisions of the interstate compact on educational opportunities for military children

ELECTIONS CODE

12302 Student participation on precinct boards

FAMILY CODE

6920-6929 Consent by minor for medical treatment

VEHICLE CODE

13202.7 Driving privileges; minors; suspension or delay for habitual truancy

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

601-601.4 Habitually truant minors

11253.5 Compulsory school attendance

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

306 Explanation of absence

420-421 Record of verification of absence due to illness and other causes

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS

87 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 168 (2004)

66 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen 245, 249 (1983)

COURT DECISIONS

American Academy of Pediatrics et al v. Lungren et al (1997) 16 Cal.4th 307

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Improving Student Achievement by Addressing Chronic Absence, Policy Brief, December 2010

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

StudentsAbsences and ExcusesExcused Absences

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness (Education Code 48205)
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer. (Education Code 48205) (cf. 5112.2 - Exclusions from Attendance)
3. Medical, dental, optometrical, or chiropractic appointments. (Education Code 48205)
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family, which shall be limited to one day if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state. (Education Code 48205)

Immediate family shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any relative living in the student's immediate household. (Education Code 45194,48205)

5. Upon advance written request by the parent/guardian and the approval of the principal or designee, justifiable personal reasons including but not limited to:(Education Code 48205)
 - a. Appearance in court.
 - b. Attendance at a funeral service.
 - c. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion.
 - d. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours per semester.
 - e. The absence will be of substantial educational benefit to the child.
6. To spend time with an immediate family member who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Education Code 49701, and has been called to duty for deployment to a combat zone or a combat support position or is on leave from or has immediately returned from such deployment (Education Code 48205)

(cf. 6173.2 - Education of Children of Military Families)
7. To attend his/her naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen. (Education Code 48205)
8. Participation in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction in accordance with district policy, subject to the following conditions: (Education Code 46014)
 - a. The student's parent/guardian shall provide written consent for the absence.
 - b. The student shall attend at least the minimum school day.
 - c. The student shall be excused from school for this purpose on no more than four days per school month.

(cf. 6141.2 - Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs)

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9. Absences for personal reasons, other than those in #5 above, will be unexcused for state funding purposes, but such absences will not be counted toward truancy calculations, when:
 - a. Pupils absence was requested in writing by parent/guardian for absences less than five (5) days, and;
 - b. The child must complete a Norris District Independent Study Contract in conjunction with the absence, for whatever number of days the student is absent.
 1. Independent Study work must be completed and turned in within 72 hours (3 school days) of returning to school;
 2. Failure to complete the Independent Study work or turning in work later than 72 hours (3 school days) will result in an unexcused absence for the school days missed;
 3. And approved by school Principal, Principal designee, or designated District representative.
 - c. Please note:
 1. Principal shall not approve as Justifiable Personal Reasons but not exclusively limited to: family vacations, trips to accompany parents, trips to theme parks or related activities, trips out of the country to visit family, or family reunions.
 2. Examples of Justifiable Personal Reasons, but not exclusively limited to: child to accompany family to a serious medical procedure out of area.

Method of Verification

When students who have been absent return to school, he/she shall present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. Absences shall be verified by the student's parents/guardian, other person having control of the minor. (Education Code 46012; 5 CCR 306)

Explanation must submit the explanation verification within 72 hours (3 school days) of returning to school. Failure to provide a satisfactory explanation on absence shall be recorded as unexcused.

The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Written note, fax, email, or voicemail from parent/guardian, parent representative.
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:

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- a. Name of student.
 - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative.
 - c. Name of verifying employee.
 - d. Date(s) of absence.
 - e. Reason for absence.
3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method, which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reason stated. The employee shall document the verification and the information specified in item #2 above.
 4. Physician's verification
 - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, district staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may request a note from the medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
 - b. When a student has had 10 absences in one school year for illness, verified by methods listed in #1-3 above, or if the Principal determines a need for a home contact prior to the 10 absences, the student will be referred to the District nurse. The nurse will contact the parent/guardian and determine whether a physician must verify any further absences for illness.
 - c. After 14 absences for illness in one school year, verified by methods listed in #1-3 above, any further absences must be verified by a physician.

Parental Notifications

At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent or designee shall:

Notify parents/guardians of the right to excuse a student from school in order to participate in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction at their places of worship, or at other suitable places away from school property designated by a religious group, church, or denomination (Education Code 46014, 48980)

Notify parents/guardians that a student shall not have his/her grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence if missed assignments and tests that can reasonably be provided are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time, and include the full text of Education Code 48205 in the notice (Education Code 48980)

(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

Students (Con't)Absences and Excuses

When a student enrolled in the Norris School District in the previous school year, who has not notified the school office in advance of the specific date the student will be in attendance, does not attend the first day of class for a new school year, he/she shall be dropped from attendance rolls at the end of the first day of classes. Students who have notified the District of late enrollment who will miss more than the first two weeks of school, the District will drop the students enrollment and register the student upon their return.

1. If the school is contacted and provided with written information that the student will be returning within the first ten (10) school days, the school may hold a grade level and class assignment for a student, providing the student actually resides within the school's attendance boundaries or has a current and approved Intra-District or Inter-District Agreement.
2. Returning students who return after the first ten (10) school days will be treated as a newly enrolling student and will be assigned to schools that have grade levels and class space available.
3. A student who has previously had an approved Inter-District or Intra-District Agreement, that does not attend the first day of classes in a new school year, or has not provided written information that the student will be returning within the first ten (10) days of school, will be dropped from enrollment at the end of the first day of classes. Should the student return at a later date he/she will be assigned to a school based upon space availability.

Regulation Adopted: November 2007

Revised: 05/18 (9/08)