

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

The Governing Board believes that regular attendance plays a key role in student achievement. The Board recognizes its responsibility under the law to ensure that students attend school regularly. Parents/guardians of children aged six to 18 are obligated to send their children to school unless otherwise provided by law. 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 the problems of chronic absence or truancy.

(cf. 5112.1 - Exemptions from Attendance)

(cf. 5112.2 - Exclusions from Attendance)

(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)

Excused Absences

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)

(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

Insofar as class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during nonschool hours.

At the beginning of each academic year, the Superintendent or designee shall send notification to the parents/guardians of all students, and to all students in grades seven through 12, informing them that school authorities may excuse any student from school to obtain confidential medical services without the consent of the student's parent/guardian. (Education Code 46010.1)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

Students shall not be absent from school without their parents/guardians knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency or 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)

Effect of Absence on Grades/Credits

If a student's absence is excused under Education Code 48205, he/she shall be allowed to complete any missed assignment or test that can be reasonably given, as determined by the teacher of that class. The student shall be given full credit for the assignment or test if he/she

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satisfactorily completes the assignment or test within a reasonable period of time. (Education Code 48205)

A student's grades may be affected by excessive unexcused absences in accordance with Board policy.

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

(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

1740 Employment of personnel to supervise attendance (county superintendent)

2550-2558.6 Computation of revenue limits

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)

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

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

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. 244 (1983)

COURT DECISIONS

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

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Excused Absence

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

1. Personal illness. (Education Code 46010)
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. (Education Code 46010)
 - a. Excused absence in this instance 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)
 - b. "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 immediate household of the student. (Education Code 45194, 48205)
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law. (Education Code 48205)
6. The illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child to whom the student is the custodial parent (Education Code 48205)

(cf. 5146 - Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)
7. 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

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- d. Attendance at religious retreats not to exceed four hours per semester
 - e. Attendance at an employment conference
 - f. Attendance at an educational conference offered by a nonprofit organization on the legislative or judicial process
8. Service as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Elections Code 12302 (Education Code 48205)

(cf. 6142.3 - Civic Education)

9. To spend time with his/her 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)

10. Participation in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction in accordance with district policy (Education Code 46014)
- a. In such instances, the student shall attend at least the minimum school day.
 - b. The student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four days per school month.

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

Method of Verification

When students who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. Absences shall be verified by the student's parent/guardian, other person having control of the minor, or the student if age 18 or older. (Education Code 46012; 5 CCR 306)

The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

- 1. Written note, fax, email, or voice mail from parent/guardian or parent-representative.

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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:
 - a. Name of student.
 - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative.
 - c. Name of verifying employee.
 - d. Date or dates 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 actually absent for the reasons stated. The employee shall document the verification and include information outlined above in item number 2.
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 contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
 - b. When a student has had 14 absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed in #1-3 above, any further absences for illness shall be verified by a physician.