

Cumberland County Board of Education

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: Attendance	Descriptor Code: 6.200	Issued Date: 05/27/10
		Rescinds: 6.200	Issued: 08/27/09

1 Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and therefore, students are expected to be present
2 each day school is in session.

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4 The attendance teacher shall oversee the entire attendance program which shall include:¹

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- 6 1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
- 7 2. All parent notification and hearing arrangements of truancy with parents;
- 8 3. Written recommendations for remediation will be developed at the truancy hearing;
- 9 4. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
- 10 5. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new or
- 11 reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
- 12 6. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license drops
- 13 out of school.²
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15 Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his/her
16 designee. Excused absences shall include:

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- 18 1. Personal illness;
- 19 2. Illness of immediate family member;
- 20 3. Death in the family;
- 21 4. Extreme weather conditions;
- 22 5. Recognized religious observances;³
- 23 6. Failure of school bus to make scheduled/snow routes;
- 24 7. Appointments with doctor or dentist;
- 25 8. A one day absence is provided for students when their parent or custodian is deployed into
- 26 active military service;⁴
- 27 9. A one day absence is provided for students when their parent or custodian returns from active
- 28 military service;⁴
- 29 10. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the
- 30 student has no control or which involve an educational opportunity not otherwise available
- 31 to the child. Absences in excess of 3 days shall require the approval of the principal or his/
32 her designee. The principal may clarify doubtful absences with the attendance teacher.
- 33 11. A maximum of five (5) days per semester will be recognized as excused absence with parent
34 notes. The notes must contain an excusable reason for the absence.
- 35 12. If a student is exempt from final exams per Board policy, the absence on the day of the exam
36 is excused.
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38 The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:⁵

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- 40 1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
- 41 2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets;
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3. All student absences are verified;
4. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness within ten (10) school days after student returns to school. Failure to submit an excuse will result in the absence or tardy being classified as unexcused;
5. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed; and
6. The Juvenile Court and parents are notified when any student accrues five unexcused absences and that a Truancy Board hearing is arranged.

Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.⁶

Request for students to attend school in adjoining counties shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.

TRUANCY

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 and early check-out from school.

Students participating in school-sanctioned/sponsored activities whether on- or off-campus shall not be counted absent. Mass exodus or early dismissal or late arrival of all students or any segment of students will not be permitted for any reason except for emergencies such as inclement weather or other unavoidable situations.⁷

All missed class work or tests (whether from excused or unexcused absence) may be made up if the student makes the request immediately upon returning to school and if class time is not taken from other students.

TARDIES

Unexcused Tardies - Late arrivals and/or early dismissal for any reason other than the previously stated excused absences.

Cumberland County Elementary Schools Tardy Policy —

1. Students are allowed three (3) unexcused tardies per 9 weeks period;
2. On 3rd unexcused tardy a written warning will go home to be signed;
3. The parent/guardian will be required to attend a conference with the school's attendance committee after unexcused tardy #4. If parent/guardian refuses to attend the conference, the student will be suspended until the parent conference is held. At the conference, a plan will be put in writing that must be followed. The plan will include, but is not limited to, the following: recommending that student ride the school bus or childcare van to and/or from school; (if the student is an out of zone student) requiring him/her to attend the school for which he/she is zoned on the next unexcused tardy (tardy #5) during that nine weeks period; and automatically assigning him/her to appear in truancy court on the next unexcused tardy (tardy #5) during that nine weeks period);

4. Truancy Court will be automatically assigned on tardy #5 and students attending an out of zone school will be required to attend the school for which they are zoned;
5. Five unexcused tardies will equal one day of unexcused absence for the purpose of Truancy Court referral.

(Tardies that occur between classes during the regular school day will be a student disciplinary matter and will be handled by individual schools at the building level.)

Cumberland County High Schools Tardy Policy —

1. Students are allowed three (3) free unexcused tardies per 9 weeks period;
2. Students will receive an after-school detention for each unexcused tardy occurring from #4 through #6;
3. On unexcused tardy #7 through #9 the results will be a suspension for a parent conference with punishment to be determined at the parent conference;
4. In-school suspension shall be assigned for unexcused tardies #10 through #12;
5. Truancy Court will be automatically assigned on tardy #13;
6. Five unexcused tardies will equal one day of unexcused absence for the purpose of Truancy Court referral; and
7. All students who obtain four (4) or more unexcused tardies in any class will be required to take the semester exam regardless of grade average or days absent.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ABSENCE POLICY

A total of twenty-five (25) absences, without extenuating circumstances, during any school year may render an elementary student ineligible for promotion to the next grade and to retain a driver's permit or license, or to obtain such if of age.² Written notification will be sent to parents of any student accruing five (5) absences and again at ten (10) absences. After fifteen (15) reported absences any year, a truancy board will be appointed by the principal who will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist and develop and sign a plan of action for remediation.⁸

After a total of twenty-five (25) absences during any year, an attendance committee appointed by the principal will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist or verify that the student has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course, be promoted or retain a driver's permit or license.

HIGH SCHOOL ABSENCE POLICY

Credit/Promotion Denial

Credit/promotion denial determinations may include student attendance, however, student attendance may not be the sole criterion.⁸ However, if attendance is a factor, prior to credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

Parents and students shall be advised if a student is in danger of credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism. Written notification will be sent to parents of any student accruing five (5) absences and again at ten (10) absences. Students who are absent from school run a risk of failure and must make up all work promptly and satisfactorily.

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Any decision regarding attendance, grades and make-up work may be appealed initially to the principal, director of schools and ultimately to the Board. The appeal shall be made in writing to the director of schools within five (5) days following the action or the report of the action, whichever is later.

Students will be excused from semester tests when they meet the following semester grade and semester absence criteria:

- A average and a maximum of 3 days excused absence.
- B average and a maximum of 2 days excused absence.
- C average and a maximum of 1 day excused absence.

All students who obtain four (4) or more unexcused tardies in any class will be required to take the semester exam regardless of grade average or days absent.

Students who are suspended from school or who are remanded to the Alternative School for cause shall forfeit all exam exemptions.

DRIVERS LICENSE REVOCATION²

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

In order to qualify for reclaiming a driver's permit or license, the student must have made a passing grade in at least fifty (50) percent of their unit subjects or their equivalency at the conclusion of a subsequent grading period. The student must also complete thirty (30) days of attendance without an unexcused absence if attendance was the reason for revoking the license.

For second or subsequent withdrawals, a student shall have all driving privileges suspended until the student attains eighteen (18) years of age. (TCA 49-6-3017)

Legal References:

1. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.08(1)(a); TCA 49-6-3006
2. TCA 49-6-3017
3. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.03(15); TCA 49-6-2904
4. Public Acts 2006, Chapter No. 552
5. TCA 49-6-3007
6. TCA 10-7-504; 20 U.S.C. § 1232g
7. Attendance Accounting Procedural Manual, Minimum Standards and Guidelines, State Department of Education
8. TCA 49-2-203(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