

School attendance is compulsory in Georgia between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16). Children enrolled in the public schools prior to their sixth birthday are subject to this law and the rules of the State Board of Education governing compulsory attendance, even though they have not attained six years of age. The professional staff has the responsibility to enforce the compulsory attendance law where applicable. School social workers have the authority and duty to file proceedings in court to enforce the compulsory attendance law.

During the day the students are the responsibility of the school. Parents expect the school to take proper care of their children and to protect them with proper supervision. In order that this may be done, no student is to leave school without following proper checkout procedures. Leaving school without following proper checkout procedures is a serious offense and any student guilty of this is subject to suspension.

Attendance has a vital bearing on the educational process. It should not be encouraged to the point of keeping children in school who are sick, but should be insisted upon to maintain interest and facilitate progress.

Students may be counted legally present:

- When actually present;
- When acting as an official page in the legislative assembly;
- When present for one-half day or more;
- When assigned in-school suspension;
- When representing the school at a school function;
- When students are served by the hospital/homebound teacher;
- Attending a school sponsored event/activity.

In addition, students in foster care shall be counted present when they attend court proceedings related to their foster care. The principal or designee may require appropriate documentation of attendance at these court proceedings. The State requires a daily record of attendance to be maintained. The attendance record must reflect whether each absence is lawful or unlawful in accordance with the law. Attendance is also recorded by class. All attendance requirements will be considered at the class level.

Before admission to class or returning to school following an absence, a student must report to the school principal or his/her designee with a written note from a parent, guardian, physician, or legal authority stating the reason for the absence. The principal or designee will determine whether an absence is lawful in accordance with policies and regulations of the Carroll County Board of Education that are based on the compulsory attendance law. Excuses not received within three days of the student's returning to school will not be accepted and the absence will be counted as an unlawful absence. The following are those excuses that can be defined as lawful:

- When a student is personally ill and when attendance in school would endanger his/her health or the health of others;

- When in a student's immediate family there is a serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;
- On special and recognized religious holidays observed by his/her faith;
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety;
- Registering to vote or voting in a public election, which shall not exceed one day;
- When mandated by order of governmental agencies;
- When a student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, a student shall be granted excused absences up to a maximum of five school days per school year for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave.
- Any other absence not explicitly defined herein but deemed by the local school board of education to have merit based on circumstances.

All other absences are considered unlawful.

### **Truant Students**

Truant is defined as any child subject to compulsory attendance who, during the school calendar year, has more than five days of unexcused absences. School days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension (OSS) shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining truancy.

Parents are urged to arrange doctor visits for well health issues outside of school hours. Students with doctor appointments will be excused only for the time of the visit and a reasonable time before and after the visit. The remaining portion of the day shall be counted unlawful. Excuses from medical facilities are required to specify the time the student was at the medical facility.

Any student who has a pattern or history of absences may be asked to provide doctors' excuses for each absence. Students with excessive absences due to medical reasons will be referred to the school nurse to facilitate school attendance.

### **Hospital/Homebound Services**

Students may be eligible for instruction through the hospital/homebound program if a doctor anticipates that the student will be out a minimum of ten consecutive days due to illness or accident. Students with chronic health conditions that cause intermittent periods of absence, that may be less than ten days on each occasion, may also be eligible for instruction through the hospital/homebound program. Such absences require medical documentation and must be approved by school personnel and the hospital/homebound program.

### **Tardies and Leaving School Before the End of the Instructional Day**

Students are required to arrive at school in time for them to be in their assigned classroom before the time set by the school administrators. Students not in their classrooms at that time will be counted tardy. The students may be counted absent from the class or classes missed if they are not present for the entire class period. Tardies at the elementary and middle school level will be handled by parent contact. Tardies at the high school level shall be handled as discipline issues.

Leaving school before the end of the instructional day may only be for lawful reasons. Students leaving before the end of the day may be counted absent from the class or classes missed if they are not present for the entire class.

### **Make-up Work Procedure for Absences**

Make-up work assignments must be arranged within three school days upon the student's return to school. The student or parent is responsible for making the arrangements for the make-up work.

### **Maximum Number of Absences**

Fifteen or more absences at the elementary and middle school level will result in consideration for retention.

Any middle or high school student having more than 7 absences (lawful and/or unlawful) in a class during a semester will receive no credit for the class unless a waiver is granted through the appeals process by the principal or the principal's designee. Students who have more than 7 absences must appeal in writing to the principal or the principal's designee to receive earned credit. If any absences are unlawful, the principal or designee shall determine whether there exist unusual conditions or extenuating circumstances relating to the student's personal life or family situation, which would require that the provisions of this policy be waived. If so, the student shall be allowed to make up missed work and shall not be denied credit for the semester based on excessive absences. All make-up work must be completed within two weeks after the end of the semester. If the student has any unexcused absences and there are no unusual conditions or extenuating circumstances relating to the student's personal life or family situation, the student shall not be allowed to receive credit for the semester, even if the student has passing grades.

Any student missing 7 consecutive days without contacting the school will be notified by school personnel that he/she will be withdrawn within five working days if the school is not notified as to the reason for absence. This applies only to those students not affected by the compulsory attendance law.

To promote attendance and encourage parental involvement, parental contact will be attempted on the date of absence. Additionally, the following contacts as specified in GADOE Board Rule 160-5-5-.10 and in accordance with Carroll County Student Attendance Protocol will be made to the parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the student:

1. When a student has five unexcused absences, notices of penalties and consequences for these and subsequent absences.
2. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the school system, a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failure to comply with compulsory attendance.

### **GOAL Evening Program**

Due to the organizational structure of the GOAL Evening Program, only four absences per mini-semester will be allowed. Only one of these absences may be unlawful. Students missing over three days will follow the appeals procedure outlined above or will be denied credit.

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**Policy Reference Disclaimer:** These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

| <b>State Reference</b>               | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 15-11-0720</a>   | <a href="#">Conditions under which emancipation may occur</a>                                                                                                    |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 15-11-0721</a>   | <a href="#">Emancipation petition requirements</a>                                                                                                               |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0150</a>   | <a href="#">Eligibility for enrollment</a>                                                                                                                       |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0690</a>   | <a href="#">Requirements for private schools and home study programs</a>                                                                                         |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0690.1</a> | <a href="#">Mandatory education for children between 6 and 16</a>                                                                                                |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0690.2</a> | <a href="#">Establishment of student attendance and school climate committee; membership; penalties for failure to comply; review and policy recommendations</a> |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0691</a>   | <a href="#">Minimum Annual Attendance Required</a>                                                                                                               |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0692</a>   | <a href="#">General Assembly pages granted excused absences</a>                                                                                                  |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0692.1</a> | <a href="#">Excused absences for days missed to visit with military parent prior to deployment or on leave; attendance at military affairs sponsored events</a>  |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0692.2</a> | <a href="#">Foster care student attending court proceedings related to that student's foster care to be credited as present at school</a>                        |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0693</a>   | <a href="#">Exemptions</a>                                                                                                                                       |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0694</a>   | <a href="#">Administration/enforcement of attendance reqts.</a>                                                                                                  |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0695</a>   | <a href="#">Employing attendance officers in addition to visiting teachers</a>                                                                                   |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0696</a>   | <a href="#">Duties of Visiting Teachers and Attendance Officers</a>                                                                                              |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0697</a>   | <a href="#">Cooperation of principals and teachers with attendance officers and visiting teachers</a>                                                            |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0698</a>   | <a href="#">Assumption of temporary custody of truant children by peace officers</a>                                                                             |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0699</a>   | <a href="#">Disposition of Children Taken Into Custody</a>                                                                                                       |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0700</a>   | <a href="#">Reports by Peace Officers to School Authorities</a>                                                                                                  |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02-0701</a>   | <a href="#">Mandatory reporting of truants to juvenile or other courts</a>                                                                                       |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-02A-0002</a>  | <a href="#">Requirements for student scholarship organizations</a>                                                                                               |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 20-17-0002</a>   | <a href="#">Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children</a>                                                                              |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 21-02-0092</a>   | <a href="#">Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) program</a>                                                                                                 |
| <a href="#">O.C.G.A 40-05-0022</a>   | <a href="#">Requirements for licensure; school attendance requirements</a>                                                                                       |

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| Rule 160-4-2-31 | <a href="#"><u>Hospital/Homebound Instruction</u></a>                                                                                                                   |
| Rule 160-4-2-48 | <a href="#"><u>High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 School Year and Subsequent Years</u></a> |
| Rule 160-4-8-12 | <a href="#"><u>Alternative Education Programs</u></a>                                                                                                                   |
| Rule 160-5-1-02 | <a href="#"><u>School Day and School Year for Students and Employees</u></a>                                                                                            |
| Rule 160-5-1-10 | <a href="#"><u>Student Attendance</u></a>                                                                                                                               |
| Rule 160-5-1-24 | <a href="#"><u>Procedure for Requesting Student Social Security Numbers</u></a>                                                                                         |
| Rule 160-5-1-28 | <a href="#"><u>Student Enrollment and Withdrawal</u></a>                                                                                                                |
| Rule 160-5-4-09 | <a href="#"><u>Limited Public School Choice</u></a>                                                                                                                     |