**Elementary School Attendance Policy**

**C. Attendance/Referral Procedures**

School Code 1003.26 states that it is responsibility of the superintendent to enforce school attendance and that schools must respond in a timely manner to every unexcused absence or absences for which the reason is unknown.

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures and guidelines to be utilized by parents, students and school and district staff.

**General Procedures**

* 1. All questions relating to the attendance policy are to be directed to the school. The concerned party should contact the school’s attendance officer for clarification first and then the school principal or his/her designee.
  2. Each of the schools will document attempts to notify parents of each absence for which the reasons are unknown.
  3. The teacher’s grade book or other approved school attendance records at the school will be the final authority in determining the number of absences for each student.
  4. The school shall provide opportunities for the student to make up assigned work and not receive an academic penalty unless the work is not made up within a reasonable time (five days).
  5. School day attendance definition – An absence defined as missing more than one-half of the school day.

**Tardies and Checkouts**

1. A student who arrives to school after the scheduled beginning time will be recorded as tardy for that day.
2. A student who is checked out before the class or school day is officially over will be declared a “checkout”. Checkouts are recorded in the school office. However, the school principal has the authority to excuse or determine the consequence arising from recorded checkouts.
3. Four (4) unexcused tardies or four (4) unexcused checkouts in a nine (9) week period will be considered as one (1) unexcused absence for the purposes of contacting parents and referring to the district office.

**Absences**

Parents/guardians are to sign in/out their child when missing school for the excusable appointments or emergencies and are to comply with the individual school procedures established with the school’s attendance officer.

1. **Excused Absence**

Excused absences will be given for the following reasons:

Religious instruction and/or religious holidays

Sickness, injury or other medical condition

School leave-school approved trips such as instructional field trips, club events, athletics, etc. These are not counted as absences.

Other academic classes or programs

Educational trips – when requested by parents (five (5) days in advance), for educational purposes may be granted

Pre-approved absences – absences from school approved by the administration prior to occurrence

Funerals (documentation must be provided)

Legal reason (documentation must be provided)

Other absences as approved by the principal/designee.

Parents or guardians are required to justify each absence. A parent note for reasons as listed above will be accepted for each absence up to four (4) during a nine (9) week period. Any other absences, after the fourth absence, will only be excused with a note from a doctor or dentist, funeral program of immediate family member, religious holiday, documentation for a legal reason or principal’s/designee’s excuse. Students must turn in excuse notes to the teacher within two (2) days after an absence.If the appropriate documentation is not provided, the absence(s) will be unexcused.

1. **Unexcused Absence**

If a student has four (4) or more unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a nine (9) week period or ten (10) unexcused absences at any time during the school year, the student’s primary teacher shall report to the school principal or his/her designee that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance.

**Principal Referral to Child Study Team**

The principal shall, unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, refer the case to the school’s child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies.

If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the child study team shall implement interventions that best address the problem. The interventions may include, but need not be limited to:

Frequent communication between the teacher and the family;

Changes in the learning environment;

Mentoring;

Student counseling;

Tutoring, including peer tutoring;

Placement into different classes;

Evaluation for alternative education programs;

Attendance contracts;

Referral to other agencies for family services; or

Other interventions- including but not limited to a truancy petition

Pursuant to s. 984.151

The child study team shall work diligently in facilitating the intervention services, however, if a parent refuses to attend the child study team meeting, the child/parent may be referred to Truancy Court.

If a student accumulates 15 unexcused absences, the principal or his/her designee shall notify the district office contact and the child/parent will be referred to truancy court.

**Parent Appeal to School Board**

If the parent, guardian, or other person in charge of the child refuses to participate in the intervention strategies because he or she believes that those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent, guardian, or other person in charge of the child may appeal to the school board. The school board may provide a hearing officer, and the hearing officer shall make a recommendation for final action to the board. If the board’s final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate, and the parent, guardian, or other person in charge of the child still refuses to participate or cooperate,the superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance**.**

**Criminal Prosecution/Truancy Petition**

The superintendent or his or her designee shall give written notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent, guardian, or other person in charge of the child that criminal prosecution is being sought for nonattendance. The superintendent may file a truancy petition, as defined in s. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in s. 984.151

**Make Up Work**

When a student is absent he/she is expected to make up all work missed. The procedures are:

1. Thestudent must contact the teacher on the first day backin school (or on the first day back in the course or class in which the absence occurred) in order to make arrangements to make up the work.

1. It will be the student’s responsibility to make-up the work within five (5) school days**.**
2. All assignments announced in advance of the student’s absence must be made up on the day the student returns to class.
3. The teacher and / or the principal may grant additional time for making up work if warranted by the individual situation.