

Board Policy JB: Student Attendance

Status: ADOPTED

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All children who are between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays and who reside in the Lanier County School District shall enter school on the opening date and attend regularly thereafter or be enrolled in a private school or home-study program which meets the requirements of state law.

If the school system is made aware that a child between the ages of six and sixteen is not enrolled in a public school, private school, or home-study program, the Superintendent has the authority and responsibility to file proceedings in court to enforce the mandatory school attendance law.

However, educational experiences may be permitted without penalty provided arrangements for make-up work were made prior to the absence. Off campus activities during school hours, such as student performances or competitions where the students are representing the school or the school system, shall not be counted as absences, and the students will be allowed to make up any class work missed.

Students who become ill or injured while at school shall be dismissed from school only after parents or guardians have been notified. Exceptions to this policy shall be made only in cases of emergency.

A student shall be dismissed before the school day officially ends only when a parent or guardian appears in person requesting the student's dismissal. With the approval of the principal, a note from a parent or guardian shall serve as parental permission to leave the school campus. Students shall not leave the school grounds during school hours without permission from the principal. Principals may require verification of anyone requesting early dismissal of a student.

Lanier County Schools shall provide to the parents, guardians, or other persons having control or charge of each student enrolled in school a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of student's enrollment in the school system, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1 shall sign a statement indicating receipt of written statement of possible consequences of non-compliance to the local system's policy.

1. The school and the home have a joint obligation in seeing that students attend school regularly. Each school will ensure that a local procedure is in place to account for absentees and/or notify parents of student absences.
2. A student returning to school after being absent shall bring an excuse statement within three days from a parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Failure to bring an excuse will automatically result in an unexcused absence for each day absent.
3. Any student leaving school for personal reasons must be picked up and signed out by the parent. Any student leaving shall be marked absent in the classes missed.

Excused Absences

Children may be temporarily excused from school who are:

- (1) personally ill and whose attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others;
- (2) in whose immediate family there is a serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;
- (3) on special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith;
- (4) serving as pages of the General Assembly during the school year. (Pages shall be credited as present by the school in which enrolled);
- (5) registering to vote or voting for a period not to exceed one day;
- (6) conditions render school attendance impossible or hazardous to the student's health or safety;

- (7) mandated by order of governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for services in the armed forces and court orders;
- (8) have a parent or guardian in the military service and such parent or guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat supporting post up to a maximum of five school days;
- (9) other absences not specifically defined in this policy but deemed to have merit based on circumstances as determined by the superintendent or his/her designee;
- (10) students in foster care are counted present when attending proceedings related to their foster care;
- (11) students who participate in an activity or program sponsored by 4-H shall be counted present in the same manner as an educational field trip. Participation in a program or activity sponsored by 4-H shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused, for any day, portion of a day, or days missed from school.
- (12) student taking tests and physical exams for military service in the armed forces of the United States and the National Guard shall be credited as present by the school and shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused, for any day, portion of a day, or days missed from school.

Unlawful Absences

Any absences which are not permitted under the compulsory school attendance law and by policies and regulations of the school system Board of Education will be considered unlawful and therefore unexcused. Up to five parent notes will be accepted for student absences and tardies before they are considered unexcused. Tardies and early check-outs will be calculated for each class. Students who leave a class early or who are tardy to a class risk missing the acceptable number of days in classes missed. -The following consequences will apply for all unexcused absences and tardies:

| Unexcused Absences |
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| 1 day-automatic phone call out |
| 3 days-Parent contact by a school designee and notified in writing with board policy attached |
| 5 days-Visit by SRO and notified in writing with board policy attached and next steps by certified mail, return receipt requested |
| 6 days-Referral to DJJ |

NOTE: Students are considered tardy if they arrive to class after the scheduled starting time. An unexcused late check-in or early check-out is defined as any time a student arrives late to school or leaves school early for a reason other than those defined as an excused absence.

Tardies. Late Check-ins and Early Checkouts

If a student accumulates five (5) or more unexcused tardies, late check-ins and/or early checkouts, a school administrator and/or designee will contact the student's parent/guardian.

If a student accumulates seven (7) or more unexcused tardies, late check-ins and/or early checkouts, a school administrator and/or designee will contact the student's parent/guardian advising them of the number of tardies, late check-ins and early checkouts attributed to their child and the school's concern.

Upon accumulating ten (10) or more unexcused tardies, late check-ins and/or early checkouts, a school administrator and/or designee will make the appropriate referral to the school social worker or district designee to ensure and document the parent/guardian has been contacted regarding the school's concern. A referral may also be made to the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Make-up Work

Students who have an excused absence will be allowed five (5) days from the day they return to school to make up

work. It is the responsibility of the student to check with teachers about make-up work. Students with an unexcused absence will not be allowed to make up work unless approved by the Principal prior to the unexcused absence.

Hospital Homebound Services

Students who become seriously ill or who will be hospitalized for an extended period may be eligible for Hospital Homebound instruction. Parents should contact the child's Guidance Office for information as soon as the problem is known. Students enrolled in the Hospital Homebound program are not considered absent because they receive services from a certified teacher for a specified number of hours each week.

Administration of Attendance Policy

The attendance policy will be administered by the Social Worker and the principal of the child's school. The homeroom teacher will accept a reason, written and signed by a parent or guardian, along with proper documentation, for the student's absence(s) from either the parent or guardian. All notes are to be turned into the office for collection.

All written reasons or excuses must be presented no later than the third day after the student returns to school. Once the documentation is accepted and provided the excuse presented by the student is valid, the absences(s) will be recorded on the student's record as excused. The documentation will be dated and filed with the appropriate school official. Without documentation the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

Attendance and School Climate Committee

Lanier County Schools will participate in an attendance and school climate committee to plan, implement, and evaluate activities. The superintendent, a school-level administrator, a local school board member from each public school system in the county, and a certificated school social worker from each public school system, shall serve on the student attendance and school climate committee.

Withdrawing Students

Local schools are authorized to withdraw a student who:

1. Has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences;
2. Is not subject to the compulsory school attendance
3. Is not receiving instructional services from the local system through hospital homebound program or instructional services required by the federal Individual Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
4. A sixteen or seventeen-year-old student who wishes to withdraw from school must have written permission from a parent or guardian prior to withdrawing. Prior to accepting such permission, the principal or designee will make a reasonable attempt to hold a conference with the student and/or parents to explain the educational options available and the consequences of not receiving a high school diploma. The superintendent or designee shall use their best efforts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of a student if the school plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

The school is authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance if the superintendent or designee has determined that the student is no longer a resident of Lanier County or home study program.

Schools shall withdraw students retroactive to the first day of consecutive absences.

No student shall be expelled due solely to absenteeism.

Home School Requirements

Parents who choose to Home School their child(ren) must submit the appropriate notification and attendance reports to the Georgia Department of Education.
