

(1)Definitions

- (a) Truant-any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences.
- (b) Student Attendance Protocol-procedures to be used in identifying, reporting, investigating and prosecuting cases of alleged violations of O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1, relating to mandatory school attendance and appropriately addressing the issue with parents and guardians. The protocol shall also include recommendations for policies relating to tardiness.
- (c) Student Attendance Protocol Committee-a committee established by the chief judge of the superior court each county for the purpose of ensuring coordination and cooperation among officials, agencies and programs involved in compulsory attendance issues, to reduce the number of unexcused absences from school, and to increase the percentage of students present to take tests which are required to be administered under the laws of this state.

(2)Requirements

- (a) School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.
- (b) It is the policy of the Board to excuse students from school under the following circumstances, as a minimum:
 - 1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others. The principal is authorized to require students to present appropriate medical documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused. With proper verification a student may be eligible for hospital/homebound instruction as outlined in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31, Hospital Homebound Instruction.
 - 2. A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school. The principal is authorized to require students to present appropriate medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused.
 - 3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
 - 4. Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
 - 5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health and safety.
 - 6. The Board authorizes high school administrators to allow for eligible students a period not to exceed one day for registering to vote or voting in a public election.

7. A student whose parent or legal guardian is a military service in the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard, and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted up to 5 days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the parent's leave. The principal is authorized to require students to present appropriate documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused.
8. A student who participates in an activity or program sponsored by 4-H shall be counted present in the same manner as an educational field trip. Participation in an activity or program 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.

(c) Students shall be counted present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly. A foster care student who attends court proceedings relating to the student's foster care shall be counted as present by the school and shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused, for any day.

(d) Final course grades of students shall not be penalized because of absences if the following conditions are met.

1. Absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons.
2. Make up work for excused absences were completed satisfactorily.

(e) For the purpose of accurately measuring the academic performance of students continuously enrolled in public schools, the Board adopts the following uniform criteria for withdrawing students:

1. Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student who:
 - i. Has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences;
 - ii. Is not subject to compulsory school attendance;
 - iii. Is not receiving instructional services through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the Federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
 - iv. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall use his or her best efforts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of a student if the school system plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.
2. Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance if the superintendent or superintendent's designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program.

3. Appropriate school personnel shall withdraw students retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

(f) Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.2, appropriate school system personnel shall participate in a student attendance protocol committee.

1. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall fully and actively assist in the planning, implementation and evaluation activities of the student attendance protocol committee.
2. The superintendent, a certificated employee, a school board member, and a certificated school social worker, if one is employed by the school system, shall serve on the student attendance protocol committee. The committee may appoint such additional members as necessary and proper to accomplish the purposes of the committee.
3. The Board shall consider and publicly announce its decisions regarding the recommendations of the student attendance protocol committee.
4. The Board shall report annual student attendance rates to the student attendance protocol committee and the State Board of Education by September 1 following each school year.

(g) In accordance with state law and State Board Rule 160-5-1, Student Attendance, and in conjunction with the responsibilities assigned to the student attendance protocol committee, the Board adopts the following provisions that will go into effect upon the official adoption of the student attendance protocol, or on July 1, 2005, whichever occurs first. Similarly, paragraphs (h), (i), and (j) follow the same timeline for implementation.

1. Requiring appropriate personnel to notify the parent, guardian or other person or other person who has control or charge of the student when each student has five unexcused absences. The absences and that each subsequent absences shall constitute a separate offense. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian or other person who has charge of the student, the school system shall send written notice via certified mail with return receipt requested; and
2. Requiring appropriate personnel to provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in public 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 a 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 for non-compliance to the local board policy.

(h) Appropriate system or school personnel shall implement a progressive discipline process and a parental involvement process for truant students before referring the students to the juvenile or other court having jurisdiction.

(i) Grades 9-12 will be subject to attendance requirements afforded in the policies, rules and regulations of the Tri-County High School for the 2006-2007 school year; Grades 11-12 for the 2007-2008 school year; Grade 12 for the 2008-2009 school year. Upon return of all high school students Grade 9-12 to Webster County High School in the 2009-2010 school year this paragraph will be voided.

(j) The student codes of conduct developed pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-735 shall contain a definition of truancy that contains the minimum standards established by State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10, Student Attendance, and a summary of possible consequences and penalties for truancy. The summary of possible consequences for students shall include possible dispositions for unruly children in accordance with O.C.G.A. 15-11-67, including the possible denial of or suspension of a driver's license for a child.

O.C.G.A. 20-2-0699 Disposition of Children Taken Into Custody
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0700 Reports by Peace Officers to School Authorities
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0690.2 Establishment of Student Attendance Protocol Committee
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0691 Minimum Annual Attendance Required
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0696 Duties of Visiting Teachers and Attendance Officers
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0690.1 Mandatory Education for Children Between 6 and 16
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0692 General Assembly Pages Granted Excused Absences
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0693 Exemptions
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0694 Administration/Enforcement of Attendance Reqts.
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0695 Employing Attendance Officers in Addition to Visiting Teachers
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0697 Cooperation of Principals and Teachers with Attendance Officers and Visiting Teachers
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0698 Assumption of Temporary Custody of Truant Children by Peace Officers
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0701 Mandatory Reporting of Truants to Juvenile or Other Courts
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0692.1 Excused Absences for Children of Military
O.C.G.A. 20-2-0692.3 Participation in 4-H Activities; Attendance Credit

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Webster County School District