

SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS

Attendance Manual



School success starts
with attendance

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SCHOOLS

Sumter Central High School

Shannon Miller , Principal
Email: smiller@sumter.k12.al.us
Address: 13878 US HWY 11, York, AL
Phone: 205-652-1501

Sumter Central High School

Christina Henderson , Principal (Grades 5-8)
Email: chenderson@sumter.k12.al.us
Address: 13878 US HWY 11, York, AL
Phone: 205-652-1501

Livingston Junior High School

Marcus West, Principal
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Address: 1351 N. Washington St, Livingston, AL
Phone: 205-652-2125

York West Junior School

Stacie Pritchett, Principal Email:
spritchett@sumter.k12.al.us
Address: 515 Lincoln St, York, AL
Phone: 205-392-5901

Daily Schedule

Sumter Central High School

Doors open for students 7:30
Breakfast served beginning 7:30
School Begins (Students in Class) 7:55
Tardy Bell 8:00

Student Dismissal

1st Wave and Car Drivers 3:05

Livingston Junior High School

Doors open for students 7:20
Breakfast served beginning 7:20
School Begins 7:45
Tardy Bell 7:50

Student Dismissal

1st Wave and Car Riders 2:45

York West End Junior High School

Doors open for students 7:20
Breakfast served beginning 7:20
School Begins 7:45
Tardy Bell 7:50

Student Dismissal

1st Wave 2:45

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Sumter County Schools Board of Education believes regular attendance is vital to all students and the school system. It is further believed that course content and grading procedures should be structured so that regular attendance is necessary to complete course requirements successfully.

Subject to parental guidance, each student must be responsible for his/her own attendance.

Administrators and teachers will make every effort to encourage students' regular attendance and solicit assistance from parents/guardians in accomplishing this objective. (**SCS Attendance Handbook located at www.sumter.k12.al.us**)

LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS OF EDUCATION ARE REQUIRED TO PUBLISH THE FOLLOWING ACT AND SECTION

Expectations of Parents Regarding Attendance and Behavior in Public Schools, Alabama Code §16-28-12

(a) Each parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of any child required to attend school or receive regular instruction by a private tutor who fails to have the child enrolled in school or who fails to send the child to school, or have him or her instructed by a private tutor during the time the child is required to attend a public school, private school, church school, denominational school, or parochial school, or be instructed by a private tutor, or fails to require the child to regularly attend the school or tutor, or fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in any public school in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education pursuant to this section and documented by the appropriate school official which conduct may result in the suspension of the pupil, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) and may also be sentenced to hard labor for the county for not more than 90 days.

The absence of a child without the consent of the principal teacher of the public school he or she attends or should attend, or of the tutor who instructs or should instruct the child, shall be prima facie evidence of the violation of this section."

(b) Each local public board of education shall adopt a written policy for its standards on school behavior. Each local public-school superintendent shall provide at the commencement of each academic year a copy of the written policy on school behavior to each parent, guardian, or other person having care or control of a child who is enrolled. Included in the written policy shall be a copy of this section. The signature of the student and the parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of the child shall document receipt of the policy."

(c) Any parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of any child enrolled in public school who fails to require the child to regularly attend the school or tutor, or fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education and documented by the appropriate school official which conduct may result in the suspension of the pupil, shall be reported by the principal to the superintendent of education of the school system in which the suspected violation occurred.

The Superintendent or his or her designee shall report suspected violations to the district attorney within 10 days. Any principal or superintendent or his or her designee intentionally failing to report a suspected violation shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

The district attorney shall vigorously enforce this section to ensure proper conduct and required attendance by any child enrolled in public school.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS OF STUDENTS IN SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS

- To enroll children between the ages of **six (6)** and **seventeen (17)** in either a public, private, or church school or have the child instructed by a private tutor;
- To require any child enrolled to regularly attend school or to be regularly instructed by a tutor;
- To compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil and;
- **To be responsible for giving accurate and up-to-date information regarding legal addresses and contact information to school officials. Giving false information to public officials in the performance of their duty is a violation of the Criminal Code of Alabama §13A-10-109(a).**
- To secure access to the **PowerSchool Parent Portal** for daily access to attendance and grades. Instructions are located on our website www.sumter.k12.al.us.

COMMUNICATIONS

Sumter County Schools communication platform **ThrillShare** is available through our **website** www.sumter.k12.al.us for the district and each school.

Types of communications to ensure your child's success and keep you informed about up-to-date information include:

- Daily Robo calls when your child is absent
- Robo calls for attendance information
- Robo calls for school information and announcements (such as school events and school closure due to inclement weather)
- SCS Student Code of Conduct (**Issued to students at the start of school**)
- SCS Attendance Manual (**Issued to students at the start of school**)
- Virtual Pre-Truancy Documentation
- PowerSchool Parent Portal (**for viewing attendance and grades daily**)
- Schoology (Teacher/Student/Parent) for class assignments, for On Campus student and Virtual Days if needed, and students who may be off campus for extended periods of time.
- Social Media - Facebook, X (formerly Twitter)
- School Status

Paper communications **sent home by the student** include:

- Attendance information (Attendance letters for 2, 3, and 5 unexcused absences Early Warning Referral).
- Other weekly information and events
- Progress Reports
- Report Cards

Truancy Early Warning Flow Chart

ALWAYS REMEMBER ATTENDANCE IS SIMPLE. When your child is absent for any reason or checks in or checks out of school, THEY MUST HAVE A WRITTEN EXCUSE WITHIN 3 DAYS. This will help to keep you out of truancy and court.

Child Absent

ThrillShare Automated ROBO calls to parent/guardian from the school reporting their child's absences that day and **requesting a written excuse for absences within 3 days.** Parents should gain access to the **Power School Parent Portal** to view their child's attendance and grades.

1st Letter – 2nd Unexcused Absences/Check-in/Check-out Early Dismissal

Written Notice to parent/guardian **to provide written excuses for absences within 3 days.**
(Sent home by student, documented in PowerSchool)

School Administrator/Parent-Guardian Meeting

2nd Letter 3rd Unexcused Absences/Check-in/Check-out Early Dismissal

The school administrator contacts parents for a pre-referral conference & acknowledgment form. Conference regarding absences and the lack of written excuses.

Early Warning Referral

3rd Letter 5th Unexcused Absences – 1st Juvenile Court Meeting with Attendance Officer. Date, place, and time of meeting will be mailed to the parent/guardian -THIS IS A MANDATORY MEETING

The parent/guardian and student will document the following:

- Correct student information
- Student Code of Conduct
- SCS Attendance Manual
- PowerSchool Parent Portal

Receive Robo calls the day your child is absent

The parent/guardian and student will view a Virtual Pre-Truancy PowerPoint presentation (**Attendance and the Law**) and submit this verification form at the end of this meeting.

Failure to participate in this meeting and completing the documentation will result in the filing of a complaint/petition against the parent under **Alabama Code** 1975, §16-28-12(c) (failure to cooperate), or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.

(Letter mailed to Parent/Guardian, Documented in PowerSchool)

Superintendent Reminders Concerning Attendance of **Non-Resident Students**

Repeated Unexcused Absences, Check-in and Check-out Unexcused Early Dismissal

When additional unexcused absences, check-in, and check-out unexcused early dismissals occur, a formal Truancy Petition (Affidavit) is filed with the Juvenile Court System. Court excuse is required in order for student to return to school.

(Documented in PowerSchool)

On-going Truancy each year

Parent/guardian/student who have 5 or more unexcused absences, chronic absences (18 or more excused and unexcused absences), or in some cases Juvenile Court will continue in the Truancy Program under the District Watch SCS Truancy until the student is no longer in the Sumter County Schools School System.

(Documented in PowerSchool)

6 Step Protocol

Step 1

Attempted phone contact upon the occurrence of any school absence (teacher, counselor, attendance secretary, administration, **ThrillShare** automated calls). Use of **School Status** Program with documentation of all phone contacts.

Step 2

- * **1st Letter** - At 2 unexcused absences a letter will be sent home **by the student** to the parent/guardian informing them of the SCS attendance policy and the **lack of written excuses** (this policy will include the Alabama law) and will inform the parent/guardian of the potential issue.
- * Letter generated in PowerSchool and will be available to view under the student's truancy profile.
- * Any conversation had with the student and/or parent will be documented in PowerSchool and/or **School Status** as well.

Step 3

- * **2nd Letter** - At 3 unexcused absences a letter is sent to the parent/guardian informing them there is an attendance violation and **lack of written excuses**.
- * The parent/guardian will come in for a meeting with the designated site administrator.
- * Parents who do not call to re-schedule an appointment will be contacted (2 attempts) to re-schedule a meeting.
- * Letter generated in PowerSchool and will be available to view under the student's truancy profile.
- * Any conversation had with the student and/or parent will be documented in PowerSchool as well.
 - * Meeting Goals / Fact finding
 - * Parent/guardian and student will sign a truancy pre-referral form that will be completed by the building administrator
 - * The pre-referral form will be sent to the SCS Attendance Officer

Step 4

Early Warning Referral 3rd Letter 5th Unexcused Absences – 1st Juvenile Court Meeting with Attendance Officer – Date and time of meeting will be mailed to parent/guardian -THIS IS A MANDATORY MEETING

- * The parent/guardian and student will view a Virtual Pre-Truancy PowerPoint presentation (**Attendance and the Law**) and submit this verification form at the end of this meeting. Failure to participate in this meeting and completing the documentation will result in the filing of a complaint/petition against the parent under **Alabama Code** 1975, §16-28-12(c) (failure to cooperate), or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.
- * **The parent/guardian and student** will document the following:
 - Correct student information (procedures to correct)
 - Student Code of Conduct (given to students at the start of school)
 - SCS Attendance Manual (given to students at the start of school)
 - PowerSchool Parent Portal (information provided at schedule pickup, also located on website)
 - Non-Resident Students
 - **THE REAL REASON YOU ARE HERE – UNEXCUSED ABSENCES – NO WRITTEN EXCUSES**
 - Receiving Robo calls the day your child is absent. Contact number: _____.

Step 5

Repeated Unexcused Absences, Check-in and Check-out Unexcused Early Dismissal

When additional unexcused absences, check-in, and check-out unexcused early dismissals occur, a formal Truancy Petition (Affidavit) is filed with the Juvenile Court System. Court excuse is required in order for student to return to school.

Step 6

On-going Truancy each year

Parent/guardian/student who has 5 or more unexcused absences, Chronic absences (18 or more excused and unexcused absences), or in some cases Juvenile Court will continue in the Truancy Program under the District Watch SCS Truancy until the student is no longer in the Sumter County Schools School System.

- * The court system will receive a complete student profile (student data, parent/guardian contacts, discipline record, grades, attendance, and record of the attempts by SCS to remedy the attendance and Issue.
 - Students with an IEP - the school must hold a Manifestation Determination Review to determine whether the student's absences were related to the student's disability prior to making a referral to juvenile court. If the student's disability had a direct and substantial relationship to the absences, a truancy referral to juvenile court is not warranted.
 - Students with a 504 Plan - the school must hold a 504/parent meeting to determine whether the student's absences were related to the student's disability prior to making a referral to JVC.

Attendance Procedures: Remote Learning (should the need arise).

During remote learning, it is important for students to be engaged in instruction daily. The number of minutes and hours may vary by student depending on the grade-level and/or levels of proficiency.

Student attendance will be determined using the following criteria:

- **Progression on assignments and assessments,**
- **Attending scheduled sessions, and**
- **Daily activity in Schoology or other school assignment platform**

As long as students are meeting the above criteria, they will be counted present. If a student misses a scheduled session, assessment, or is unable to sign in Schoology, they will need a doctor's excuse or parent note. These excuses or notes can be emailed to the student's assigned instructors. Just like on campus students, virtual and remote learning students are allowed five (5) parent excuses per school year.

- If and when a teacher determines the above criteria is not being satisfied the parent/guardian will be contacted.
- After three parent/guardian contacts by the teacher, the student will be referred to the school administration to begin the early warning truancy process.
- The fourth attendance related contact will be a phone or virtual conference with the school administration.
- The fifth attendance related contact will result in a referral to the Sumter County Schools School System Truancy Officer.

ATTENDANCE CODE FOR SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS

Daily attendance is very important. Students learn and increase their knowledge by attending class each day. Students deserve every opportunity for academic success. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and courts are partners in developing good attendance. Every child living in the area served by the Sumter County Schools School System shall be required to attend school between the ages of 6 and 17 (**§16-28-3.1, Code of Alabama**, 1975). Attendance records for each pupil shall be maintained by a designated person in each school in accordance with the Alabama State Board of Education Resolutions and Regulations. The Sumter Board of Education believes that regular attendance is a cornerstone of an excellent education. It is the intent of the Board to encourage regular attendance through this policy.

Responsibilities of the Parent:

- A. Ensuring their child attends 95% of the day and 95% of the class periods and is on time for school. This requirement may be waived in the event of serious illness, accident, or other unusual circumstances at the discretion of the principal and school attendance committee.
WRITTEN EXCUSES MUST BE SUBMITTED WITHIN THREE DAYS OF THE ABSENCE.
- B. Discouraging their child from absences related to family trips and/or vacations during the school year, and appointments that could be better scheduled so as to not interfere with the school day.
- C. Refraining from asking the school to violate the check-out procedure approved by the SCBOE.
- D. Scheduling necessary appointments for their child outside the school day when possible.
- E. **Cooperating with the school in providing valid excuses for their child's absence.**
- F. Attending conferences arranged by the principal.
- G. Securing access to the **PowerSchool Parent Portal located on the schools website** for daily access to attendance and grades.

Responsibilities of the Student:

- A. To be informed of School Board policies and individual school rules regarding absenteeism and tardiness. **SCS Student Code of Conduct**
- B. To arrive at school prior to the opening time.
- C. To request and receive make-up assignments from teachers upon return to school, and to complete this work within the assigned length of time when there is an excused absence.
- D. To be seated and ready for instruction in each class before the tardy bell rings.
- E. To bring to each class those books and materials necessary to make attendance meaningful.
- F. To remain in class for the entire class period.
- G. The Sumter County Schools Board of Education and its employees may notify parents, guardians and students of information through written communications. Although the Board may elect to use various methods of providing those communications to parents and guardians, **it is the ultimate responsibility of each student to notify his or her parent or guardian of all written communications provided to him or her by the Board or a school.**

Responsibilities of the Teacher:

- A. Develop class incentives related to improved attendance.
- B. Establish contact with parents concerning their child's attendance patterns. **(Use of School Status Communication Program with Documentation)**
- C. Work with the guidance counselor in scheduling students in programs that meet their individual needs.
- D. Recognize the importance of each class period and schedule teacher request for students accordingly.
- E. **Demonstrate to the student that planned learning experiences will take place every day.**
- F. Develop and foster good relationships with parents to encourage and maintain good attendance.
- G. Encourage parent/guardian to gain access to the **Parent Portal** (for grades and attendance).

Responsibilities of the Administration:

- A. Designing local school plans for improving attendance.
- B. Enforcing a check-out system consistent with administrative policy.
- C. Providing a **Perfect Attendance Award** to students who have been present every complete day of the school year with no tardies, checkouts, or early dismissals.
- D. Providing an **Exemplary Attendance Certificate** for those students who attend school each day of the school year. Excessive tardies, checkouts, and/or early dismissals resulting in a detention may prevent a student from earning this award.
- E. Developing a procedure whereby high school students may be exempted from all final exams the second semester.
- F. Considering many alternatives in an effort to reduce the number of suspensions and, thereby, absent days.
- G. Attempting to keep parents aware of each absence daily with the use of the **Parent Portal**.

Responsibilities of the Courts:

- A. Communicating with parents concerning attendance problems.
- B. Scheduling formal conferences with parents and/or students concerning attendance violations.
- C. Accepting CHINS, Delinquent, and Dependent complaints and/or petitions for program violators.
- D. Exerting every effort to protect the best interest of the juvenile by supporting the Attendance Program.

State Definition of Truancy & Laws Governing of School Attendance

In December, 2004, the State Department of Education adopted a uniform definition of truancy to be applied throughout the state. Under this definition, **it is the responsibility of a parent, guardian, or other person having charge of any child enrolled in an Alabama public school (K-12) to explain in writing the cause of any and every absence no later than three (3) school days following the student's return to school.** Failure to furnish such explanation shall be evidence of the child being truant each day she/he is absent. The child shall also be deemed truant for any absences determined by the principal to be unexcused based upon the State Department of Education's current school attendance Manual. As unexcused absences develop, the local school will communicate with the parent/guardian to bring awareness to the attendance concern.

Upon the fifth unexcused absence during each semester, a truancy referral will be made to the early warning program, with **mandatory** parent participation. **Five unexcused absences within a school year** constitute a student being truant for the purpose of filing a petition with the court.

Listed below are excerpts of pertinent statutes relating both directly and individually to school attendance:

- The law requires that every child between the ages of six and 17 years shall be required to attend school. (§ 16-28-3.1, **Code of Alabama, 1975**)
- *Effective July 1, 2000, §16-28-16 **of the Code of Alabama, 1975**, is amended to read as follows:
 - "(b)...Each child who is enrolled in a public school shall be subject to the attendance and truancy provisions of this article except that any parent or parents, guardian or guardians who voluntarily enroll their child in public school, who feels that it is in the best interest of that child shall have the right to withdraw the child at any time prior to the current compulsory attendance age."
- The law also gives the responsibility for attendance and control of the child to the parent. (§ 16-28-12, **Code of Alabama, 1975**) If the child is truant, there are several actions that can be filed against the parent and/or the child.

Actions Against Adults:

- A. A criminal action can be brought against any “parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of any child . . . who fails to have such child enrolled in school or who fails to compel such child to properly conduct himself as a pupil” and they “shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than \$100 and may also be sentenced to hard labor for the county for not more than 90 days . . .” (§16-28-12, **Code of Alabama, 1975**)
- B. “It shall be unlawful for any parent, guardian, or other person to willfully aid, encourage, or cause any child to become delinquent, dependent, or in need of supervision or by words, acts, threats, commands, or persuasions, to induce or endeavor to induce, aid, or encourage a child to do or perform any act or to follow any course of conduct which would cause or manifestly tend to cause such child to become or remain delinquent, dependent, or in need of supervision or by the neglect of any lawful duty or in other manner contribute to the delinquency, dependency, or need of a child. Failure on the part of any parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the child to cause such child to attend school as required by the compulsory attendance law shall be held to be encouraging, causing, and contributing to the delinquency, dependency, or need of supervision of such child.” (§12-15-111, **Code of Alabama 1975, Revised**)
 - “Whoever violates this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than \$500 or sentenced to hard labor for the county for a period not to exceed 12 months or both.” (§12-15-111, **Code of Alabama 1975, Revised**)
- C. Educational neglect: “Dependent child: A child whose parent(s), guardian, or custodian fails, refuses, or neglects to send such child to school in accordance with the terms of the compulsory school attendance laws of this state . . .” (§12-15-102 (8)(a)(4), **Code of Alabama 1975, Revised**)

Action Against the Alleged Truant Child:

“In case any child becomes a habitual truant, or because of irregular attendance or misconduct has become a menace to the best interest of the school ... and the parent ... files a written statement in court ... the attendance officer must file a complaint before the judge of the juvenile court ... whereupon such child must be proceeded against ... for the purpose of ascertaining whether such a child is a dependent, neglected, or delinquent child.” (§16-28-14, **Code of Alabama, 1975**). **Notice:** “In all cases investigated where no valid reason for non-enrollment or non-attendance is found, the **Attendance Officer** shall give written notice to the parent ... and **shall be required** to bring criminal prosecution against the parent.” (§16-28-16, **Code of Alabama, 1975**). Literal, not substantial, compliance is required of the notice provisions of this section. See, *Ex parte Hill*, 381 So.2d 94 (Ala. 1980)

Custody:

When a child is found away from home and not in the custody of the person having charge or control, “it shall be the duty of the attendance officer, probation officer, or other officer authorized to execute writs of arrest to take into custody **without warrant** any child required to attend school,” (§16-28-17, **Code of Alabama, 1975**)

Regulations Governing Attendance

A. Enrollment and Attendance

1. Compulsory enrollment and attendance are mandated by Alabama Law for any child between the ages of **6 and 17** years (§16-28-3.1, **Code of Alabama, 1975**). Compulsory enrollment and attendance are required each year for these ages unless the pupil is legally excused from enrollment by the Superintendent, Board of Education, or the courts. Only these officials have authority to excuse a child from enrollment and attendance.
2. All school personnel shall report known cases of non-enrollment and irregular attendance to the principal. The principal shall report cases of non-enrollment or irregular attendance to the System's attendance officer.

3. **Discharge of Compulsory Attendance** – Students who have reached their 17th birthday or older and who are consistently truant from school and fail to abide by (§16-28-3.1, **Code of Alabama, 1975**) may be withdrawn excused from compulsory attendance under the following circumstances:
 - a. The student significantly disrupts the learning of other students
 - b. The student's behavior requires consistent and significant discipline.
 - c. The student is not significantly benefitting from attending school.
 - d. The student continues to have attendance issues.

B. Absenteeism

Parents or guardians shall send a note of explanation, i.e., court notes, doctor's notes, or parent excuses to the school **the day the child returns to school.** Providing falsified (forged) doctor notes to explain a student's absence from school is a criminal offense, and is subject to prosecution in the courts. Failure of the parent or guardian to send a note will ordinarily result in the absence being marked unexcused.

Parent notes must: Be turned within 3 days

- Include the student's name
- Include dates of absences
- Include reason for absence
- Include parent's signature

Doctor's notes must: Be turned in within 3 days

- Be submitted on official practice letterhead/excuse or similar document.
- Be signed by the physician or authorized practice employee.
- List the date of treatment/exam, address, and phone number of the practice
- Request days to be excused while under the doctor's care.
- Excused days must reflect doctor's direction, not parent request.

1. Check-outs and check-ins shall be considered as an absence for the classes missed. Notes of explanation for the absence will be required as noted above.
2. Excused absence permits work to be made up. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher within three days of returning to arrange for make-up work.
3. Students will not be allowed to participate or attend a school function such as an athletic contest, prom, school dance, band trip, job training program, etc., if they are not in school for at least **51%** of the instructional day of the event, except for emergency situations approved by the principal.
4. **CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM** – Monitoring and reporting students in each school who are "chronically absent" is a directive from the Alabama State Department of Education, and is one of a public school's indicators upon which it is evaluated in the Alabama State Department of Education's school accountability report. A student is determined to be a chronic absentee when the student has accumulated 18 or more absences during the school year – inclusive of all types of absences, both excused and unexcused.
Building principals are expected to monitor and address incidents of student chronic absenteeism at their schools. **Students who accumulate ten (10) absences may also be required to attend Early Warning Truancy Program. This is a mandatory meeting held by the Sumter County Schools Attendance Officer and the Sumter County Juvenile Probation Officer. Both parent and student must be in attendance. If the student continues to be absent, an early warning hearing will be arranged with the Sumter County Juvenile Court. This action will require the approval of the principal.**

C. Number of Absences Allowed

The SCBOE recommends a 95% minimum attendance standard. For parents/students who submit a physician's letter to explain chronic issues that impact school attendance, a signed release of medical information form must be on file to verify specific attendance expectations with the medical provider.

According to the Alabama State Department of Education, **EXCUSED absences** are as follows:

- a) Illness
- b) Death in the immediate family
- c) Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child as determined by the principal
- d) Legal quarantine
- e) Emergency conditions as determined by the principal
- f) **Pre-Approved Absences** - If parents or guardians must take students out of school for any type of trip (business, vacation, college visits, etc.), **a written request** form (See Attachment) should be made to the principal **PRIOR** to the student's absence. (a parent's prior notification to the school does not automatically excuse the absence). If the principal approves such a trip, then any work missed may be DUE upon the student's first day back to school. Pre-arranged absences will count in the 5 parent notes allowed for the semester. Once the parent note limit (5 per semester) has been met, pre-arranged absences will not be approved by the administration. **Absences of this nature count against the exemption of exams.** If emergencies should occur in a family making it necessary to keep a student out of school, the parent should call the school and notify the principal.

An absence will be considered UNEXCUSED under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to provide a **written excuse** based on a reason described above **within three (3) days of return to school.** For purposes of this three (3) day period, the day the student returns to school will count as the first (1st) day.
- Absence for any reason other than the excusable absences as listed above except in special circumstances as determined by the principal, superintendent, or his or her designee.
- Absences for any reason as explained in a parent note after five (5) days have been excused by parent note **during the semester.** **Only five (5) days per semester may be excused by parent note.** Any absences thereafter will be unexcused unless excused by a physician's note or by permission of the principal. One parent note will only excuse up to (2) consecutive days of absence and not to exceed 6 days per semester.

Absences beyond 10 (excluding Doctor and Legal absences) must be documented with a doctor's or court excuse or permission of the principal. Parent-written notes excuse times missed from school after any combination of absences coded as **Parent Note, Principal's Permission, Over Five Parent Notes, and Unexcused absences** has exceeded **10 or more.**

- a. School sponsored or sanctioned activities are exempt and do not count toward the total absences allowed; however, arrangements must be made for making up work as required.
- b. A student who is suspended (**out of school suspension**) from school for disciplinary reasons for any number of days will have that number of days charged against the total number of absences allowed.

D. Notification and Reporting of Absences on Report Cards and Progress Reports.

Parents/guardians will be notified of the absences either by report cards, Robo calls (**ThrillShare**), letters, and through the online parent portal (**PowerSchool**) accessible to parents. The number of absences from a class or school will be reported on the report card for the particular grading period. The figure includes absences from class for all reasons except school related functions. For example, absences from class or school for illness, legal matters or other reasons are shown. Absences shown here may be excused or unexcused.

Absences for school related purposes will not be shown. Examples of school related absences could include athletic trips, band or choral trips, academic competitions, and other similar functions. Absences for school related activities will not appear on the student's cumulative record.

Students out of class for attendance in an alternative setting will be counted as present. Example of alternative placement would be a student attending SCS Alternate Placement 180 program or court appointed detention facilities.

E. Make-Up Work

The decision concerning make-up work will be the teachers as spelled out in the teacher syllabus in each subject area.

- a. **Excused Absences** - If a student is absent for any excused reason as defined above, the student **shall be allowed** to make up assignments and other work missed during said absence or absences at a time agreeable to the teachers. Students shall be given a reasonable opportunity to learn the lessons missed due to excused absences. Given the number of days missed due to excused absences, students shall be given an appropriate time period in which to complete the assignment(s). For assignments that were due on the day in which the student was absent, provided that the due date was previously communicated prior to the student's absence, the student should be prepared to turn-in the assignment upon returning to school. A teacher may require the student to make up work after school hours, in which case advanced notice will be given to allow to the student to arrange necessary transportation.
 - The parent or guardian shall be responsible for arranging necessary make-up work.
 - Time limit: Excuses for absences must be turned in within three (3) days of the student returning to school from an absence. Arrangements for make-up work should be made within three **(3) days** after returning to school from an excused absence.
- b. **Unexcused Absences at the middle and high school levels** – Students may not receive credit for make- up work resulting from an unexcused absence. Absences resulting from out of school suspension are considered excused; however, a suspended student will have the opportunity to make up and receive credit for major projects and tests (not daily assignments, homework, or quizzes).
- c. **Note:** The teacher is not responsible for reteaching the material. It is the student's responsibility to secure information for work missed. For unexcused absences teachers may enter a 0% for any work missed until that work is made up. Exceptions for unusual circumstances will be left up to the principal's discretion.
- d. **Unexcused Absences at the elementary level** - Parents of elementary students who are absent for unexcused reasons should consult with the teacher regarding makeup work.

F. FIELD TRIPS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ABSENCES - Any student who accumulates **10 or more absences in a school year will not be eligible to attend field trips and/or extra-curricular events that require missing school time.** It is the responsibility of the student to make up all work missed due to field trips or extra-curricular events. Arrangements for make-up work must be made in accordance with school procedures. Permission to go on school field trips will be allowed or disallowed based upon a student's grades and/ or attendance. **Students who are academically, attendance, or behaviorally at risk may be excluded from school related activities, i.e., field trips, etc.**

G. Check-Out/Check-In Procedure – Parents need to help reduce the number of unexcused check-ins. Please work with your student(s) to ensure that they are arriving to school on time. In order to excuse a check-in, the students must bring a note (with a qualifying reason) with them **when they check in at the attendance desk.** Occasionally, we make the decision to hold attendance due to wrecks, construction, extreme traffic, etc. We do this based on information from Livingston PD, York PD, Sumter County Sheriff's Department, and possibly the Alabama Highway Patrol.

- Students must attend **51%** of each class period to be present for that class.
- Students must attend **51%** of the day to be counted present for the day. Students must be present **51%** of the day to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Parent/legal guardian or designated responsible adult (**noted in PowerSchool**) will be required to show a picture ID when checking students in or out of school for identification purpose (**when necessary**).
- Students checking out of school must be signed out by the parent, legal guardian, legal custodian, or designated responsible adult.
- **Excuses must be in written form (notes, faxes, email) with specific information about absences and check-ins. Telephone calls will not be accepted.**
- The principal has the responsibility of deciding in the best interest of the student when emergency situations and unusual circumstances arise.

H. Notification of Parent or Guardian

- a. Attendance letters will be sent home by the student to parents in grades K-8 after the **2, 3, and 5 unexcused absences early warning referral** unexcused absence that is not documented by court, doctor, excused parent note, or principal's permission during the school year. In grades 9-12 attendance letters will be sent home by the student after the **2, 3, and 5 unexcused absences early warning referral** absence that is not documented by court, doctor, excused parent note, or principal's permission each semester.
- b. Tardies, check-ins and check-outs will be closely monitored Disciplinary action specified in the **Student Code of Conduct** will be followed as well as attendance letters sent home by the student to parents of students in grades K-8 after the **2, 3, and 5 unexcused absences early warning referral.** Unexcused check-in or check-out that is not documented by court, doctor, excused parent note, or principal's permission during the school year. In grades 9-12 discipline action specified in the **Student Code of Conduct** as well as attendance letters sent home by the student after the **2, 3, and 5 unexcused absences early warning referral**) unexcused check-in or check-out that is not documented by court, doctor, excused parent note, or principal's permission each semester.

Students with consistent tardies to school and/or excessive unexcused check-ins and check-outs will be summoned to the Early Warning Program.

- c. While check-outs from school are discouraged by the Board, necessary check-outs must be processed through the school's office by the parent. The Board encourages that appointments not of a critical nature be scheduled for times and days when school is not in session. Check-outs are considered excused for the same reasons as excused absences. An unexcused checkout will be treated as a tardy. A student may not make up work that is missed due to an unexcused tardy, check-in or check-out.
- d. In keeping with the procedures of the Early Warning Program, maximum flexibility is allowed. The principals and teachers determine if absences are truancy cases before mailing the first notification to parent or guardian. **All excuses must be documented in writing by the parent or guardian.** The attendance officer or principal reserves the right, despite submission of such written excuse, to evaluate each case on its individual merits to determine if referral to the Early Warning Program is appropriate. Reasons for non-referral after the requisite number of absences shall be documented by the principal or his designee. Only those names listed on the Request for Early Warning Referral will be sent a letter from District Pre-Truancy/Juvenile Court Services to report to Early Warning session.

Early Warning and Referral to the Sumter County Juvenile Court

The Board of Education would prefer to address attendance issues without court intervention, but it is sometimes unavoidable and is required by law. Under Alabama law, **(Alabama Administrative Code, §290-3-1-.02(7) (c)**, seven (7) unexcused absences within a school semester results in the student being considered truant for purposes of filing a petition with the court.

Prior to the filing of a petition against a student or parent/ custodian, the student is referred to the Early Warning Program **(5 unexcused absences)**. Early Warning is a joint effort between the Sumter County Juvenile Court Truancy Intervention Program and the Sumter County Schools Board of Education to inform and advise parents and their children of the attendance laws in the state of Alabama and the manner in which they will be enforced in Sumter County.

Should attendance issues continue when a student has already been referred to Early Warning at any time in any year, whether or not the family attended the session, the next step in court is the filing of a petition against either the student or parent(s)/ custodian(s).

The Sumter County Juvenile Court takes the filing of a petition for truancy seriously and is committed to holding parents and students accountable for school attendance. If a petition is filed, the student and parent will have a court date set and the judge will determine what conditions or consequences are to be given. Among other consequences, the court may place a student or parent on probation and may require drug screening, a curfew for the student, attendance at parenting classes, a fine or jail for the parent, or any other consequence the judge believes is appropriate.

CHILD UNDER PROBATION

- A. The school attendance officer should be notified by the juvenile probation officer of all children in the school system under probation supervision by the juvenile court as consistent with state statute, **Code of Alabama** (1975) § 12-15-100 and 105.
- B. Where a child under probation is truant (continued absences), the school attendance officer should immediately notify the juvenile probation officer.

Attendance and Driver's License

For any student between the ages of fifteen (15) and nineteen (19), the local school must complete an enrollment form for the student to obtain a driver's license. The school will not complete the enrollment form for any student who has ten (10) or more consecutive unexcused absences or fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences during the semester. Additionally, the school will notify the Department of Public Safety as required by state law (**Code of Alabama**, 1975 §16-28-40 through §16-28-45) in the event that a student, who has been issued a driver's license, is absent to the same extent resulting in the suspension of the student's driver's license.

Noncompliance Attendance (NCA)

A student who has been retained or lost credit because of noncompliance with attendance policies shall receive a **Noncompliance Attendance (NCA)** on the report card and all other records for that semester for that year. NCA loss of grades will be made up in the same manner other failures and retentions are made up.

Students age 18 or older – Students 18 years of age or older, who accumulate more than 10 consecutive days or 15 days total unexcused absences during a single semester may be withdrawn from school.

1. The parent/guardian will be notified via certified mail of the Student Exit Interview Referral form by the school principal along with a scheduled time to appear at the school.
2. The parent/guardian will have one week to appear before the principal to show cause as to why the student should not be withdrawn.
3. If the student has not returned to school after all measures are documented above, they will be withdrawn.

The guidance counselor's office will provide this data to the State Department of Education

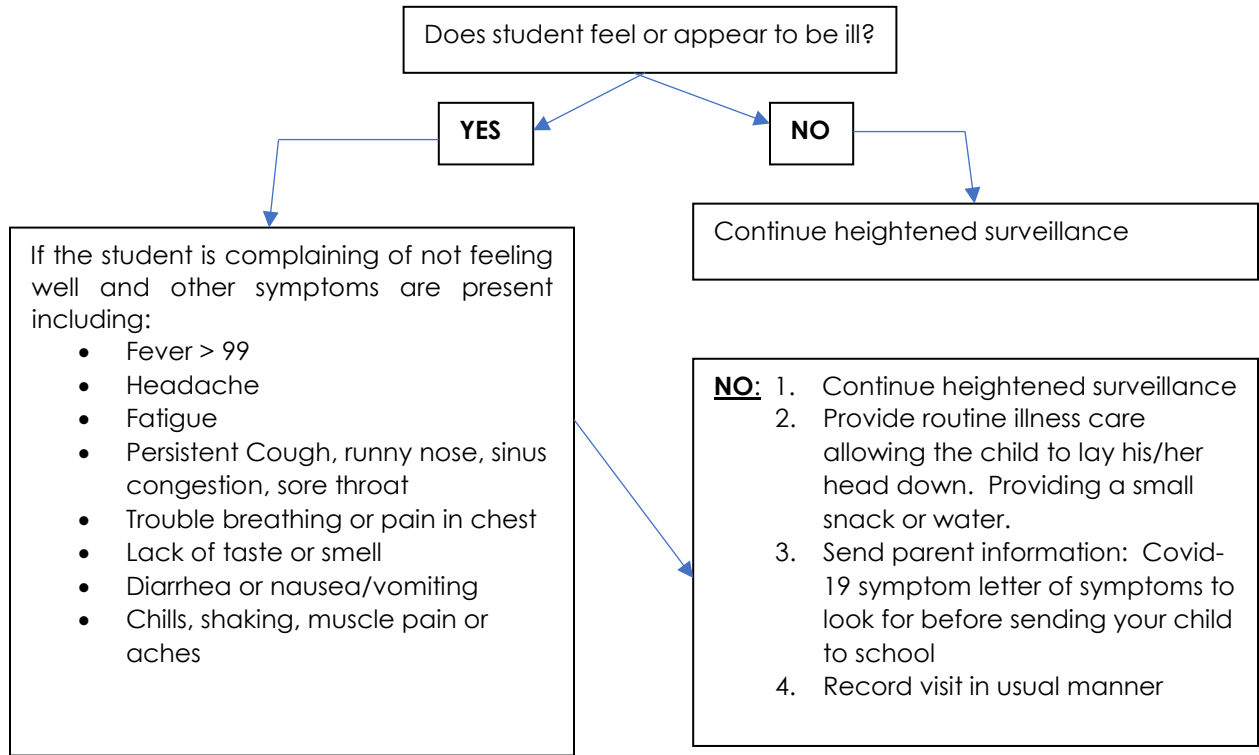
J. Due Process Procedures

- The parent, guardian, or student may request a hearing with the principal in writing, signed and dated, within five days from the date of the notification of the loss of credit or retention.
- The failure of the parent, guardian, or student to request a hearing shall be sufficient evidence to sustain the loss of credit or retention.
- The decision of the principal at the local school to deny credit or to retain a student may be appealed to the superintendent in writing within five days after the hearing at the local school has taken place.

ALWAYS REMEMBER ATTENDANCE IS SIMPLE. WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT FOR ANY REASON OR IS CHECKED-IN OR CHECKED-OUT OF SCHOOL, THEY MUST HAVE A WRITTEN EXCUSE WITHIN 3 DAYS. THIS WILL KEEP YOU OUT OF TRUANCY AND COURT.

APPENDIX A

Student Assessment Guidelines for Influenza-like Illness or COVID Virus



YES:
 Ensure child has a mask on if mask does not worsen medical condition.
 Call nurse to inform her you are sending a child to the quarantine room due to suspected Covid symptoms.
 Send child directly to the quarantine room.
 Please do not send a child suspected of having Covid to the nurse's office.
 *The child may need to be escorted to quarantine room if he/she appears to be severely ill. Please do not send with another student.
 *Only send students who are showing symptoms of Covid to the quarantine room. Students with non-related illness, injuries and scheduled nurse visits should continue to come straight to the nurse's office.

List of Covid symptoms based on CDC guidance:

- Fever greater than 100.4
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Congestion or runny nose
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing/shortness of breath
- Muscle or body aches
- Fatigue
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell

School Nurse to assess:

Influenza or COVID like illness with onset of symptoms, provide the following care:

- Utilize PPE
- Meet the child at the quarantine room and place a mask on student if he/she doesn't already have one on and if the mask does not worsen the medical condition.
- Review the student's health history in PowerSchool
- Assess student's temperature
- Utilize pulse oximeter or assessment for other respiratory issues and provide care for other symptoms.
- Question student about his/her symptoms such as onset and severity.
- Monitor other unusual symptoms

***Contact parent of any student sent to quarantine room even if they do not meet the criteria for being sent home.**

Does the student meet any of the following criteria?

- Student's temp is 100.4 or above
- Student's temp is 99 or greater with one other listed symptom of Covid-19
- Two listed symptoms of Covid-19
- 1 listed symptom of Covid-19 that presents as being severe such as uncontrollable coughing or a major headache. (This is where our nursing judgement comes in).
- We will continue as always to send home students having diarrhea, vomiting and trouble breathing.

NO. School nurse will:

1. Continue heightened surveillance
2. Provide routine illness care
3. Contact student's guardian
4. Send parent information: Covid-19 symptom letter of symptoms to look for before sending your child to school.
5. Have student return to class
6. Record visit in usual manner

YES. School nurse will:

- Contact parent/guardian to pick up student
- Refer the parent/guardian to the child's Health Care Provider
- Give parent letter describing why we are sending their child home and our policy letter as to when the child can return to school.
- Notify building principal
- Record visit in usual manner

***Notify building principal if child is not picked up within an hour**

Sumter County Schools

Protocol for Confirmed Covid or Risk of Contact Exposure for Student

Positive Confirmed Case of COVID

With symptoms: Must quarantine for 10 days from onset of symptoms and at least 1 day after recovery. (Recovery)- defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications with progressive improvement or resolution of other symptoms.

Positive Confirmed Case of COVID

Without symptoms: Student can return to school after period of isolation for 10 days after test date or produce a negative standard test result (not rapid).

Contact Exposure to COVID Case

“Close Contact” is defined as:

- Being within approximately 6 feet of a confirmed COVID case for a total of 15 minutes or longer, or
- Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID case (e.g., being coughed on) by a confirmed COVID case.

Parents of students with the risk of contact exposure due to being in “close contact” with a student confirmed COVID positive will be notified by the school or school district representative.

Parents will be advised to contact their student's healthcare provider by calling ahead or telemedicine visit with the MD to be assessed and to be given further directives.

Before Returning to School:

Student's parent or guardian must provide to Sumter County Schools in writing one of the following statements:

Confirmed Positive COVID:

- the student that tested positive for COVID was in isolation at least 10 days from onset of symptoms and fever-free without fever-reducing medications for at least 1 day

Contact Exposure:

If a student is experiencing symptoms, they do not need to report to school and should consult a physician.

If they were in close contact with a confirmed positive case (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer), and they do not have symptoms...

- they need to quarantine for 14 days before returning to school

After close contact, if a student tests positive for COVID, then refer to the procedure above for **Positive Confirmed Case of COVID**

Sumter County Schools

Employee Protocol for Confirmed Covid or Risk of Contact Exposure

Positive Confirmed Case of COVID

With symptoms: must quarantine for 10 days from onset of symptoms and at least 1 day after recovery or produce a negative standard test result (not rapid).
(Recovery)- Defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications with progressive improvement or resolution of other symptoms.

Positive Confirmed Case of COVID

Without symptoms: Isolation can discontinue 10 days after test date or produce a negative standard test result (not rapid).

Contact Exposure

“Close Contact” is defined as:

- Being within approximately 6 feet of a confirmed COVID case for a total of 15 minutes or longer, or
- Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID case (e.g., being coughed on) by a confirmed COVID case.

Employees with the risk of contact exposure due to being in “close contact” with a confirmed COVID-19 positive case will be notified by the school or school district representative.

The employee will be advised to contact their healthcare provider by calling ahead or telemedicine visit with the MD to be assessed and to be given further directives.

If an employee is experiencing symptoms, then they do not need to report to work until consulting a physician.

Before Returning to Work:

Employee must provide to Sumter County Schools (their immediate supervisor) in writing one of the following statements:

Confirmed Positive COVID:

- the employee that tested positive for COVID was in isolation at least 10 days from onset of symptoms and fever-free without fever-reducing medications for at least 1 day, or
- a negative standard test result (not rapid).

Contact Exposure:

If an employee is experiencing symptoms, they do not need to report to work and should consult a physician.

If they were in close contact with a confirmed positive case (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer), and they do not have symptoms...

- they need to quarantine for 14 days before returning to work, or
- after 10 days, produce a negative standard test result.

APPENDIX B

ATTENDANCE CODES WITH CATEGORIES AND DESCRIPTIONS

The following information is provided to you concerning the codes for absences which will be on your child's attendance record:

Description	State Code Symbol	Presence Status In PowerSchool	Unexcused - Excused	Categories		Description
				Chronic Absenteeism Contributor	Chronic Absenteeism Exempt	
Present	(blank)	Present		N/A	N/A	On campus \geq 51% of the day
504/IEP	SP	Present	E		X	Absence specifically related to 504/Individualized Education Plan with documentation. (Surgical, accident, other health, mental, behavioral issue as the plans dictate)
Administrator Approved	AA	Absent	E	X		Principal's discretion for excusing absences (be very cautious in this area because it is a Chronic Absenteeism Contributor). (Anticipated absence utilizing parent notes for documentation.)
Alternative Placement	AP	Present	E		X	Student being placed in alternative school/setting in the local LEA and documenting number of days anticipated for placement. (Alternative to suspension, therapeutic, etc.)
Doctor/ Nurse Excused	DE	Absent	E	X		An excuse provided by a medical professional, i.e., doctor, therapist, chiropractor, Teladoc, (Note from doctor, "please excuse the following days.")
Delayed Start	DS	Present	E		X	Delay the start of school as determined by the LEA/Superintendent. (Can involve safety, security, severe weather that the Governor has not already declared, water or electric outage at a school, etc.)
Early Dismissal	EDL	Present	E		X	Early dismissal as determined by the LEA/Superintendent. Can involve safety, security, severe weather that the Governor has not already declared, water or electric outage at a school, etc.
Emergency School Closure	X	Present	E		X	As determined by the Governor of Alabama. (Severe weather, tornadoes, snow, and ice, pandemic, etc.)
Exemption	EXE	Present	E		X	Day a student is not at school because they are exempt from exams or testing. (Semester Exams, etc.)

Description	State Code Symbol	Presence Status In PowerSchool	Unexcused - Excused	Categories		Description
				Chronic Absenteeism Contributor	Chronic Absenteeism Exempt	
Present	(blank)	Present		N/A	N/A	On campus \geq 51% of the day
Expulsion	EX	Absent	E		X	When a student is officially expelled from school. Student no longer allowed on campus, but due to Individualized Educational Plan, services must be provided.
Field Trip	FT	Present	E		X	A school event that is supervised LEA for curriculum associated trip, school club, athletics, etc.
In-School Suspension	ISS	Present	E		X	Determined at local level by school administration and the district's student code of conduct. (Student is placed in assigned area in the assigned school to serve out their ISS.)
Legal	LG	Absent	E	X		Required appearance as ordered by a government agency. (DHR documentation, court documentation, and immigration documentation.)
Out-of-School Suspension	OSS	Absent	E	X		The temporary removal of a student from the regular education setting for a violation of school policies or rules. (Students awaiting alternative placement could be placed OSS temporarily while waiting for expulsion hearing or alternative placement.)
Parent Excuse, Written	PE	Absent	E	X		An excuse from a parent falling within the LEA allowable number or other excusable reasons as defined by the LEA. Reference Policies on Illness, Death Immediate Family, Legal, Quarantine, emergency conditions determined by principal/superintendent, permission of principal and consent of parent, passport, DMV (documented), student required to attend legal event with a parent for translation services, etc.
Religious Instruction	RI	Absent	E		X	A period during the school day when a student can participate in and elective course in religious instruction.
School Activity	SA	Present	E		X	School Event not supervised by a school employee. An activity that is school related, representing the school/district. (College visit, military induction, military funeral, etc.)

Description	State Code Symbol	Presence Status In PowerSchool	Unexcused - Excused	Categories		Description
				Chronic Absenteeism Contributor	Chronic Absenteeism Exempt	
Present	(blank)	Present		N/A	N/A	On campus \geq 51% of the day
Skipping	SK	Absent	U	X		Student is not where they are scheduled to be. (Student present for all periods but 2nd period.)
Unexcused Absence	UA	Absent	U	X		Unexplained absence, not an excusable absence. (Exceeded parent notes, no note received, etc.)
Tardy Excused	TE	Present	E	N/A	N/A	Tardy creating a student check-in and out. A tardy is determined by a set percentage or number of minutes a student misses in the school day.
Tardy Unexcused	TU	Present	U	N/A	N/A	Tardy is used when creating a student check-in and out. A tardy is determined by a set percentage or number of minutes a student misses in the school day.
COVID Quarantine Exposure	COVQE	Present	E		X	Students who have been exposed to a COVID positive situation. Students will be counted as present. If the student becomes COVID positive, the LEA will have the discretion to change the code to COVID Quarantine Positive (COVQP).
COVID Quarantine Positive	COVQP	Present	E		X	Students who test positive for COVID and require medical attention. Students will be counted as present.
Homebound	HB	Present	E			Determined by 504, IEP, or supporting documentation. (student has a medical condition that requires them to remain at home, IEP changes their LRE to be at home, etc.
New Code Requested						

APPENDIX C

GREAT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What reasons does the Sumter County Schools Board except for absences? The state of Alabama recognizes the following excused reasons for a student's absence:

- a) Illness
- b) Death in the immediate family
- c) Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child as determined by the principal
- d) Legal quarantine (**COVID Exposure and/or COVID Positive**)
- e) Emergency conditions as determined by the principal
- f) Prior permission of the principal and consent of the custodial parent or legal guardian (a parent's prior notification to the school does not automatically excuse the absence).

WHAT SHOULD I DO, IN CASE...

Attendance

... I wake up sick some morning? When you miss school because of illness, your parent/guardian should first inform the school by calling the attendance clerk.

Then when you come back to school you **MUST** bring in a note from your parent or health professional telling of your illness. An excuse must be returned within two (3) days of the absence. A doctor's excuse will be required when students demonstrate excessive absenteeism.

...I have to go see the Doctor/Dentist during school hours?

Your parent/guardian (or designated person on your check-out list) will have to check you out in person. When you come back from your appointment, you must present a note from the doctor.

...I don't have a valid excuse for my absence(s)?

Then the absences are considered unexcused, meaning you may forfeit the right to earning credit for grades when you appeal for credit later. In addition, you may find yourself in trouble with the Department of Motor Vehicles, who requires that you have good attendance in order to drive in Alabama.

2. How long do I have to turn in an excuse upon my child returning from an absence?

Students have **three (3) days to submit a written excuse for an absence**. After that time period, an unexcused absence remains coded as such even if an excuse is submitted.

3. How long does my child have to make up any assignments he or she missed?

- a. If a student is absent for any excused reason as defined above, the student **shall be allowed** the opportunity (**3 days**) to make up all assignments missed during said absence or absences at a time agreeable to the teacher(s).
- b. Given the number of days missed due to excused absences, students shall be given an appropriate time period in which to complete the assignment(s).
- c. For assignments that were due on the day in which the student was absent, provided that the due date was previously communicated prior to the student's absence, the student should be prepared to turn-in the assignment upon returning to school.
- d. Work missed on days that are unexcused shall not be made up for credit.

4. Is there a limit on the number of parent excuses a child may have?

When a student in grades K-12 has accumulated more than **5** absences in a class during the year, the principal shall evaluate the attendance record and may recommend loss of credit. A student who has **4 unexcused absences** out of a total of **5 or more** absences during a semester shall be denied academic credit for excessive absences. A maximum of **five (5)** parent notes will be accepted per year. All absences beyond that will require a doctor's note.

5. If I check my child in or out and sign the check in/out log, do I still need to provide a written excuse?

Yes, signing the log sheet simply creates a record that you or your designee was the one to pick your child up. He or she still needs to supply a written excuse in order for that time to be excused.

What are the consequences on my child's grade for unexcused absences?

- a. Students will receive a zero for any assignments they miss for an unexcused absence. This has a tremendously negative effect on students with multiple unexcused absences.
- b. Furthermore, students who accumulate **5 or more** unexcused absences in a year will be referred to truancy court.

6. What are the consequences on my child for excused absences?

Students whose absences are excused will be allowed to make their work up. However, research suggests that students with poor attendance (whether excused or unexcused) have a significantly lower graduation rate. One study looked only at total absences for freshman year. 87% of students with four or fewer absences during their freshman year successfully graduated from high school. However, only 59% of freshman with 10 or more absences successfully graduated from high school. In short, even excused absences have a negative impact on student performance. There is no substitute for being in class.

7. If my child misses' school, can he or she still attend extracurricular practices and events?

Students must be present for one-half (51%) of the school day in order to participate or attend any extracurricular events.

8. What constitutes truancy?

Students with **five (5) or more** unexcused absences are considered truant from school and will be referred to truancy court. Parents are required to attend with the students.

9. What are the positive consequences for regular attendance at school?

Students who regularly attend school benefit in many ways including but not limited to the following:

- a. A better understanding of class material having the benefit of hearing the presentations and explanations first hand.
- b. Opportunities to ask the teacher questions as new material is being presented and hear other students' questions which may help clarify new concepts.
- c. Opportunities to work with peers in groups, which may help the student grasp concepts quicker.
- d. Encourage a greater sense of belonging among peers and within school organizations (clubs, teams, etc.).

10. Are there any special recognitions or awards provided for student attendance?

The Sumter County Schools County Board of Education recognizes the following two distinctions each year:

The **Perfect Attendance Award** will be given to students who have been present every complete day of the school year with no tardies, checkouts, or early dismissals.

The **Exemplary Attendance Certificate** will be given for those students who attend school each day of the school year. Excessive tardies, checkouts, and/or early dismissals resulting in a detention may prevent a student from earning this award.

Furthermore, Sumter Central High School will recognize monthly the following three groups. These students will have group pictures taken and displayed in the lunchroom on our Attendance Awards board.

Perfect Attendance for students who have no check-ins or check-outs, no absences, and no tardies for the month.

Exemplary Attendance for students who have no unexcused absences and no more than two excused absence in a month. Students must have no tardies and no check-ins or check-outs.

**ATTENDANCE IS NOT DIFFICULT. KEEP IT SIMPLE.
ANYTIME YOUR CHILD MISSES SCHOOL YOU MUST
HAVE A WRITTEN EXCUSE.**

APPENDIX D

GUIDELINES FOR NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS AND STUDENTS OF NON-RESIDENT EMPLOYEES TO MAINTAIN ENROLLMENT IN SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS

The following guidelines shall be followed by the local school administrators when accepting and removing nonresident students and students of non-resident employees for Sumter County Schools.

Definitions:

Non-Resident Students: Those students whose parents or legal custodians live outside the limits of Sumter County.

Students of Non-Resident Employees: Those students whose parents or legal custodians are employees of Sumter County Schools Board of Education and live outside the limits of Sumter County, Alabama.

Legal Custodian: That person or persons appointed or approved as legal custodians by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Residence: The principle domicile of the parent/guardian and the student.

Proof of Residency: The following are examples of documents that help establish residency of Sumter County.

1. Electricity bill in parent or legal custodian's name of a residence located in appropriate in Sumter County, AL.
2. Current Alabama Driver's License of parent or legal custodian with address on license being located in Sumter County, Alabama.
3. Document from parent or legal custodian that shows ownership of property in Sumter County, Alabama that is claimed as their legal residence.
4. Notarized letter from a property owner verifying that the parent or legal custodian is authorized to reside in the owner's Sumter County, Alabama property. Presenting a minimum of two of these items to a school system administrator will establish residency in Sumter, Alabama; however, the school system administrator may request additional documentation to establish residency if, in his/her sole discretion, deemed necessary.

ACADEMICS, ATTENDANCE AND DISCIPLINE STANDARDS FOR NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS AND STUDENTS OF NON-RESIDENT EMPLOYEES:

1. Non-resident students and parents/guardians must meet with the school principal prior to enrolling in the Sumter County Schools School System.
2. **Non-resident students must maintain a 95% attendance rate, pass all core subjects, and have limited discipline infractions, and in good standing with the SCS Attendance Codes.** Non-resident student enrollment is contingent upon available space in programs or classes.
3. Attendance, grades, and discipline will be monitored and reviewed regularly. The superintendent reserves the right to withdraw the student at any time in which attendance, grades, or discipline become an issue.
4. The Sumter County Schools School System is **not responsible for providing transportation** for non-resident students.

APPENDIX E

Sumter County Schools Board of Education

716 Country Club Road
Post Office Box 10
Livingston, Alabama 35470
www.sumter.k12.al.us

Marcy Burroughs
Superintendent

Phone:(205)652-9605
Fax: (205)652-9641

Release of Information Authorization & Consent Physician Confirmation of Medical Diagnosis

Name: _____ DOB _____ School _____

This authorizes only _____ to release to _____ and only
(Agency/Facility/Person) (School-Designee)

_____ to release to _____
(School-Designee) (Agency/Facility/Person)

Requested Information:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Summary/Diagnosis | <input type="checkbox"/> Medications Prescribed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Recommendations/Orders | <input type="checkbox"/> Dates of Treatment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Treatment Plan/Goal | <input type="checkbox"/> Cumulative-Record-Info |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Records
(Including eligibility and most recent IEP) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

This information will be used for the purpose(s) of:

- Attendance/ Absences/ Tardies
- IEP/Development/Educational Planning and or Placement
- Educational Plan related to Academic/Behavioral Plan
- Other Specify _____

This authorization and request is fully made on a voluntary basis and **I understand that Sumter County Schools will be monitoring attendance reports to verify Attendance.** This release of information will expire one year from date of signature. This release may be canceled at any time by giving written notice to Sumter County Schools except to the extent that action has been taken in response to authorization.

Notice: This information has been disclosed to you from records whose confidentiality is protected by federal and state laws which prohibit making any further disclosure without the specific written consent of the person to whom it pertains, or as otherwise permitted by such regulations. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is not sufficient for this purpose. Information released will become part of the education record. Only requested information should be sent. This form meets the requirements of Federal Regulation (42CFR, Part). Revised 11/2003.

Date _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Student Signature (14 years and older) _____

_____ School Designee Signature

.....
Physician Statement- - Please complete and return to the school

- Medical Diagnosis _____ Anticipated Absences/Tardies _____
Are parent excused absences exceeding the system limit of 10 per semester acceptable?
 YES NO

Date _____ Physician Signature _____

APPENDIX F
Sumter County Schools
Parent Request Form for Excused Absence
(Form to be completed and returned to your child's principal)

Completing this form and presenting it to Administration does not guarantee automatic approval

Date(s) of planned absence: _____ Homeroom Teacher _____

Number of school days to be missed _____

Name of student(s):

Student name	School	Grade	Absences to date

Are siblings at other Sumter County Schools also included in the request? _____

Name of student(s):

Student name	School	Grade	Absences to date

Numbers of days requested for excused absences this year: _____

Briefly explain the purpose / reason for this request:

NOTE: Pending administrator approval of this request, the student(s) will be responsible for securing and completing all academic assignments that are missed as a result of this absence.

 Parent/Guardian Signature

 Date

For School Office Use Only:

Decision regarding this parent request: Approved Denied
 Follow-up with other local school Administrators

 Administrator Signature

 Date

Reminder for Administrators – Prior to Approval, check with neighboring schools that may have siblings.