

Louisiana School Attendance Law

According to the Louisiana Revised Statute 17:221 (A) (1), a child from his seventh (7th) birthday to the eighteenth (18th) **Must attend a public or private day school in regularly assigned classes during the regular school hours or participate in an approved home study or virtual school program. Any child below the age of seven (7) who is legally enrolled in school is subject to the compulsory school attendance laws.**

Louisiana Revised Statute 17:221 (A) (2) states whoever violates this (A) (1) shall be **FINED** not more than \$500.00 or **IMPRISONED** not more than 90 days or both. Minimum conditions of probation: 40 hour of court-approved community service A combination of 40 hours CACS and attendance at a court-approved family counseling program (parent and child)

Attendance Guidelines

Students shall be expected to attend every student activity day scheduled by the St. Martin Parish School Board. In order to be eligible to receive grades, high school students shall be in attendance **84** days and have no more than **6** excused or unexcused absences for full credit and no more than **3** excused or unexcused absences for a half credit in a semester; and primary, elementary, and junior high school students shall be in attendance **180** days and have no more than **13** excused or unexcused absences in a school year. (*Bulletin 741*)

Any elementary student missing **fourteen (14)** days, excused or unexcused, shall be denied credit. Any high school student missing **seven (7)** excused or unexcused days in a full credit class, will lose credit for that class.

If the child is chronically absent from school, the parent and/or child may be referred to Child Protection, Court, FINS, and/or the local District Attorney's Office by the Child Welfare & Attendance Office.

Types of Absences

Student absences shall include excused absences, unexcused absences, and suspensions.

1. Excused Absences: Students shall be considered excused from school for personal illness, serious illness in the family, death in the family (not to exceed one week), or for recognized religious holidays of the student's own faith. All original excuses must be submitted within three (3) school days, if not, absences shall be considered unexcused. Proper documentation includes original doctor excuses, subpoenas, obituaries, and health center excuses. Parental notes and phone calls are not acceptable documentation for absences. **Students who turn in proper documentation within the allotted time will be allowed to make-up work for full credit.**

2. Unexcused absences: Students shall not be excused for any absences other than those listed above. Students shall not be excused from school to work on any job including babysitting, agriculture, and domestic service, even in their own homes. **Students will be allowed to make-up work and earn eighty percent (80%) of the actual score earned. The absence (s) will still be considered unexcused.**

3. Suspensions: Student absences as a result of any out of school suspension shall be counted as unexcused and shall be given failing grades for those days suspended. Upon students return to school, students suspended shall be allowed to make-up work for days suspended only. **Students will earn seventy percent (70%) of the actual score earned for all make-up work.**

School-Based Health Centers can provide medical excuses for students who have been seen at one of the health centers and the student is sent home due to illness or injury. (refer to page 34 of Student/Parent

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES: Listed below are extenuating circumstances as established by state law and as adopted by the St. Martin Parish School Board.

1. Extended personal or emotional illness as **verified by a physician.**
2. Extended hospital stay as **verified by a physician.**
3. Extended recuperation from an accident as **verified by a physician**
4. Extended contagious disease within a family as **verified by a physician**
5. Prior school system approval travel for education.
6. Death in immediate family (**Obituary or written verification must be presented**).
7. Natural catastrophe and/or disaster.
8. Court subpoena (**copy of subpoena must be presented**)
9. Visitation with a parent who is a member of the armed forces/national guard (**not to exceed five school days per school year**)
10. For any other extenuating circumstances parents must make a formal appeal in accordance with the due pro-

It is the policy of St. Martin Parish School-Based Health Centers to assist in providing medical school excuses.

The St. Martin Parish School-Based Health Centers can provide up to six (6) medical excuses a year for student absences.

Excuses will be given if:

The student has a completed consent form for services at the SBHC.

The parent/guardian contacts the SBHC the day of the absence.

Excuses will be entered into the student's attendance record. The parent does not have to pick up the excuse.

Parents may request a work excuse if their child is receiving an excuse for the same day. The health center staff will have a handwritten excuse available to be faxed or picked-up by the parent. The same guidelines will be followed for parent excuses as for student excuses. Students leaving school with an illness should receive an excused absence from the school.