

Walker County Attendance Protocol Procedures

Georgia compulsory attendance laws identify truancy as a Code of Conduct violation. To promote and encourage regular attendance, Walker County Schools will implement the following procedures:

Perfect Attendance Requirements: Present everyday with no tardies or dismissals.

Excellent Attendance Requirements: Present every day with no more than ten combined tardies/dismissals.

Excused (lawful) Absence: Any absence permitted by the policies and regulations of the local board of education in accordance with State Laws and State Department of Education policies and regulations.

Unexcused Absence: Any absence with no communication (note, call, or message) from the parent or guardian. Seven days can be excused by parent note, call, or message per school year. After the seventh day excused by the parent, a doctor's note will be required or the absence shall be unexcused.

1 to 4 unexcused absences: Teacher (or Principal's designee) should attempt personal contact with parent on day of absence; attempts and contacts should be documented and a record maintained.

5 unexcused absences: As required by law, the school will attempt to notify parent by telephone or letter, informing parent of five unexcused absences and stating law and possible consequences for continued unexcused absences. Parent/student meetings (in-house Truancy Treatment Team) with school staff (must include Principal or designee) will be required. This is an attempt to address student attendance. Parent/student will be informed that a referral will be made to the school social worker if attendance does not improve. Documentation of the meeting will be maintained. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of the student, Walker County Schools will send written notice via first class mail or via certified mail with return receipt requested. School will maintain documentation.

7 Unexcused Absences: Referral to the school social worker and all relevant correspondence and documentation must be attached. The school social worker will work with the student and family in order to address attendance problems. This outreach should include telephone calls, home visits or conferences at school. The school personnel will notify the school social worker if attendance has not improved.

Tardies: For truancy purposes, every three unexcused tardies, three early dismissals, or any combination of the two shall amount to one unexcused absence.

SCHOOL NOTIFICATION

Before admission to class upon returning to school following an absence, a student **should**

provide a written note from a parent, guardian, physician or legal authority stating the reason for the absence. These notes should be dated and give the date of the absence, state the reason for the absence and have the parent's/guardian's signature.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

In accordance with Georgia law, Walker County Schools will notify the parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the student when such student has **five unexcused absences**. The notice will outline the penalties and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense.

After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of the student, Walker County Schools will send written notice via first class or certified mail with return receipt requested.

Walker County Schools require that all of its schools provide 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 Walker County Schools, the parent guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student must sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age 10 or older by September 1 must sign a statement indicating receipt of a written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to this policy.

Walker County Schools Code of Conduct will be distributed to students/parents at the beginning of each year. Parent/student signatures are required, indicating receipt of the Code, which includes attendance and discipline policies.

Walker County Schools are authorized to withdraw a student who:

1. has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences,
2. is not subject to compulsory school attendance and
3. is not receiving instructional services from the Walker County Schools through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Walker County Schools shall use its best efforts, including, but not limited to, phone call or first class mail, to notify the parent/guardian, or other person who has charge of the student if the school system plans to withdraw the student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

The school system is authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance **if** the superintendent or designee determines that the student is no longer a resident of the school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program.

All absences must be verified in writing by a student's parent or guardian, medical doctor, or appropriate legal documents. This verification is due on the date that the student returns to school after the absence(s). The Board's school social workers and other staff are authorized to visit the home of a student to verify an illness or other hindering cause at the direction of the school principal.

Parents of elementary students who are tardy will sign students into school.