



## **Darlington County School District Attendance Guidelines**

The Darlington County Board of Education believes classroom attendance is crucial to educational success.

**ABSENCES ARE DEFINED AS “LAWFUL” OR “UNLAWFUL.”** The district no longer recognizes “excused” or “unexcused” absences.

**IF A STUDENT HAS MORE THAN TEN ABSENCES IN A YEAR LONG COURSE, THE STUDENT MAY LOSE COURSE CREDIT OR PROMOTION.** It doesn't matter if the absences are lawful or unlawful: Ten is the limit.

**IF A STUDENT HAS MORE THAN FIVE ABSENCES IN A SEMESTER-LONG BLOCK COURSE, THE STUDENT MAY LOSE COURSE CREDIT OR PROMOTION.** It doesn't matter if the absences are lawful or unlawful: Five is the limit.

**IF A STUDENT HAS MORE THAN THREE ABSENCES IN A QUARTER-LONG BLOCK COURSE, THE STUDENT MAY LOSE COURSE CREDIT OR PROMOTION.** It doesn't matter if the absences are lawful or unlawful: Three is the limit.

**SUSPENSIONS NOW COUNT TOWARD ABSENCES.** Student absences due to suspension will be treated as an absence for course credit and Chronic Absenteeism only. Days absent awaiting an expulsion hearing or appeal hearing will not count toward the limit, nor will the absences count toward truancy.

**STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO MAKE UP WORK THEY MISSED DURING AN ABSENCE.** Within five days of returning to school, students must make arrangements with the teacher to make up missed work.

**SCHOOLS WILL CONTACT PARENTS AFTER EACH UNLAWFUL ABSENCE.** After three unlawful absences, further intervention will take place.

**STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN TEN (FIVE IN A BLOCK OR QUARTER-LONG CLASS) ABSENCES HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL TO THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESIGNEE.**

**STUDENTS (BOTH MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL) MUST BE IN ATTENDANCE 120 HOURS TO EARN COURSE CREDIT, NO MATTER HOW MANY DAYS MISSED OR WHY .** Students earning units can make up no more than four absences per class for semester courses, two absences for quarter courses. Students can make up “seat time” through Saturday classes or extended days. A fee may be levied. Students that make up “seat time” can recover the credit for the course but the absence will remain on their attendance record.

**ALL ABSENCES REQUIRE OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION EXPLAINING WHY THE STUDENT WAS ABSENT.** This documentation must be turned in within five days of the student's return to school.

**A STUDENT MAY RECEIVE FOUR WRITTEN EXCUSED PARENT NOTES PER SCHOOL YEAR.** This only applies to the student being ill and unable to attend school and may not be used for students to care for an ill family member. The written parent note must be submitted to the school within five days of the student's return to school; after five days the parent note will be coded unexcused.

**THE SCHOOL NURSE (OR DESIGNEE ACTING IN THE NURSE'S ABSENCE) MAY SEND A STUDENT HOME DUE TO ILLNESS AND OR FEVER OF 100 DEGREES OR GREATER.** The attendance will be coded appropriately and will not count against the student for Truancy purposes.

**STUDENTS WHO ENROLL AFTER THE SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS ARE CONSIDERED ABSENT.** Students must provide documentation about why they were absent. This must be presented to the Principal for approval.

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## **South Carolina Compulsory School Attendance Law**

**SECTION 59-65-10: Responsibility of parent or guardian; notification by school district of availability of kindergarten; transportation for kindergarten pupils.**

**(A)** All parents or guardians shall cause their children or wards to attend regularly a public or private school or kindergarten of this State which has been approved by the State Board of Education or a member school of the South Carolina Independent Schools' Association or some similar organization, or a parochial, denominational, or church-related school, or other programs which have been approved by the State Board of Education from the school year in which the child or ward is five years of age before September first until the child or ward attains his seventeenth birthday or graduates from high school. A parent or guardian whose child or ward is not six years of age on or before the first day of September of a particular school year may elect for their child or ward not to attend kindergarten. For this purpose, the parent or guardian shall sign a written document making the election with the governing body of the school district in which the parent or guardian resides. The form of this written document must be prescribed by regulation of the Department of Education. Upon the written election being executed, that child or ward may not be required to attend kindergarten.

**(B)** Each school district shall provide transportation to and from public school for all pupils enrolled in public kindergarten classes who request the transportation. Regulations of the State Board of Education governing the operation of school buses shall apply.

**SECTION 59-65-20: Penalty for failure to enroll or cause child to attend school.**

Any parent or guardian who neglects to enroll his child or ward or refuses to make such child or ward attend school shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than fifty dollars or be imprisoned not more than thirty days; each day's absence shall constitute a separate offense; provided, the court may in its discretion suspend the sentence of anyone convicted of the provisions of this article.