

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGES

Children in Rhode Island must attend school from the age of six until the age of 18 with only those exemptions permitted by state law and regulations. RI General Law 16-2-28 states: "Every child who has completed or will have completed six (6) years of life on or before September 1st of any school year, shall be eligible to attend first grade during all the days that the public schools are in session during the school year. Every child shall be eligible to attend first grade only upon completion of a state recognized or accredited kindergarten program."

In accordance with RI 16-19-1, a waiver to this compulsory attendance requirement may be granted by the superintendent only upon proof that the pupil is sixteen (16) years of age or older and has an alternative learning plan for obtaining either a high school diploma or its equivalent.

(1) Alternative learning plans shall include age-appropriate academic rigor and the flexibility to incorporate the pupil's interests and manner of learning. These plans may include, but are not limited to, such components or combination of components of extended learning opportunities as independent study, private instruction, performing groups, internships, community service, apprenticeships, and online courses that are currently funded and available to the school department and/or the community.

(2) Alternative learning plans shall be developed, and amended if necessary, in consultation with the pupil, a school guidance counselor, the school principal and at least one parent or guardian of the pupil, and submitted to the superintendent for approval.

(3) If the superintendent does not approve the alternative learning plan, the parent or guardian of the pupil may appeal such decision to the school committee. A parent or guardian may appeal the decision of the school committee to the commissioner of education pursuant to chapter 39 of title 16.

ADOPTED: January 24, 1994

REVISED: November 23, 2015

LEGAL REF.: 16-19-1, 16-19-2, 16-2-28