

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

Code **JE** Issued **7/17**

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for student attendance.

State law requires all children from the school year in which the child is five years of age before September first until the child attains his seventeenth birthday or graduates from school must attend regularly a public or private school or kindergarten or be approved by the district or the South Carolina Independent Schools Association for home instruction. A parent/legal guardian whose child or ward is not six years old on or before September 1st of the school year may waive kindergarten attendance for his/her child.

As defined by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), a chronically absent student is absent a minimum of 10 percent of the enrollment period – for any reason (e.g., suspension, illness-excused or unexcused). According to the OCR, an absent student is one who misses 50 percent of the instructional day for any reason (excused or unexcused).

If a child, who is at least six but not yet 17 years old, accumulates three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences, that child is classified as a truant. Reg. 43-274(II)(A). Once a child is classified as a truant, the child's parents and school officials have additional responsibilities to improve the child's attendance.

Schools are required to develop a truancy team and must follow the truancy procedures outlined in the CCSD Attendance/Truancy Manual. Students who violate the CCSD attendance policy will be considered truant and the truancy process will be implemented. Parents are expected to be a part of the truancy intervention process and fully cooperate with the school. If parents do not adhere to the truancy guidelines, the student will be referred to the Department of Alternative Programs and Services. Upon the investigation by the Department of Alternative Programs and Services, one or more of the following may occur: a truancy hearing, referral to a district social worker, referral to the Department of Social Services, referral to family court, and/or request assistance from the Department of Juvenile Justice. Parents are expected to make every reasonable effort to have their child in school on time daily.

Cf. JH

Adopted 9/24/84; Revised 9/23/85, 11/28/05, 1/9/06, 7/22/17

Legal References:

- A. S. C. Code, 1976, as amended:
 - 1. Section 59-35-10 - Each district to provide a kindergarten program.
 - 2. Section 59-63-20(3) - Entrance age for kindergarten program.
 - 3. Section 59-63-20(4) - Entrance age for first grade.
 - 4. Section 59-63-20(6) - Four-year-olds may attend optional child development programs.
 - 5. Section 59-65-10, *et seq.* - Compulsory attendance age group in South Carolina includes children ages five through 17; parents may waive compulsory kindergarten attendance requirement.
- B. State Board of Education Regulations:
 - 1. R43-274 - Student attendance.