



SSD Parents Attendance Guidelines

Policies and Procedures: SC Compulsory School Attendance Law requires students to attend a minimum of 170 of the 180 school calendar days. High school students must attend 42 days of a 45-day class, 85 days of a 90-day course, and 170 days of a 180-day course to receive credit. The board may approve excessive absences following board policy. Students who do not meet this attendance requirement are in jeopardy of not receiving credit and may instead be assigned a "Failure due to Absence - FA."

SC State Board of Education Regulation, R-43-279: The regulation defines "truancy" as a child (ages 6 to 17) who misses three (3) consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five (5) or more unlawful absences during the school year.

Any student who misses school must present a written statement signed by a parent/guardian or a medical statement. The absences will be coded unexcused/unlawful if the statement is not turned in within 3 days of the student's return to school.

An absence is considered excused/lawful absence when:

- They are **ill** and their attendance in school would endanger the health of others. Provide documentation upon the student's return.
- There is a **death in the immediate family** - with proper documentation (i.e., bulletin, death notice, obituary, etc).
- There is a **recognized religious holiday** of their faith.
- They are participating in sanctioned **school activities**.
- There is a **medical or legal appointment**. Submit documentation.

An absence is unexcused/unlawful when:

- A student is absent **without acceptable cause** with or without parental knowledge.
- They and/or the family are out of town on trips or **vacations**.
- A student missed the bus, overslept, or skipped school.

The maximum number of acceptable parent notes is ten (10). Unexcused parent notes and valid parent notes submitted beyond the allotted amount are treated as unexcused/unlawful absences.

Truancy and Attendance Intervention Plans (AIPs): If a student meets the definition of truant, by law, the school is required to make efforts to contact the parent/guardian to complete an **Attendance Intervention Plan (AIP)**. The purpose of the intervention plan is to state the reason for the absences and develop a corrective plan taken by the student, parent, and the school to resolve the issue. If the student continues to have unexcused/unlawful absences, the student and parent may face court intervention and/or referral to the Department of Social Services for educational neglect.

Chronic Absenteeism: Any student who misses 50% or more of the instructional day for any reason for 10 percent or more of the enrollment period. **A student in elementary or middle school must be in attendance at least half of the school day to be counted as present. High school students must attend at least half of a block (45 minutes) to be counted as present.**

Chronic Absenteeism vs Truancy:

	Chronic Absenteeism	Truancy
Definition	Any student in K-12 who misses 50% or more of the instructional day for any reason for 10% (or more) of the enrollment period.	A student between the ages of 6-17 who has accumulated 3 consecutive or a total of 5 or more unexcused/unlawful absences.
Types of Absences Included	All absences contribute to chronic absenteeism. This includes days in which a student is not present 50% of the day. This includes excused absences, unexcused absences, suspensions, tardy arrivals, and early dismissals.	Only full-day unexcused/unlawful absences contribute to a truancy designation for the academic year. Excused/lawful absences and suspensions do not affect truancy.