

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

Toccoa Elementary School

School Attendance & Excuse Information

School attendance is required for all children in the state of Georgia. Therefore, the expectation is that students are present at school every day, except for sickness or other extraordinary reasons. Excessive tardiness and early dismissals also interrupt the school day and can negatively impact student learning. Therefore, it is important for ANY absence from school to be excused with a school excuse, if possible.

Absences from school may be excused for the following reasons:

- The student is personally ill and attendance at school will endanger his/her health or the health of others.
- The student's immediate family has a serious illness or death, which would reasonably necessitate absence from school.
- A special and recognized religious holiday observed by the faith of the student occurs on a school day.
- A court order or an order by a governmental agency including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absences from school.
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
- The student has a special medical or dental appointment that cannot be made for after school hours.
- The student attends a funeral, which is approved at the discretion of the school administration.
- An educational trip, if approved by the school administrator, after the parent submits the required application.
- Visitation with a parent/guardian for up to five days for parent's/guardian's call to duty or leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting.

Please remember to send an excuse any time your child is absent. A note from a doctor will be required after 7 parent notes. If you are unsure of how many days your student has been absent, please check your parent portal account.

If a nurse sends a student home due to sickness, the early checkout should be excused. The school nurse may communicate to families when the student may return to school, and a consecutive absence (or absences) may be marked excused (EXC) based on that information.

Documentation that may be used to excuse a students' absence from school include:

- School Nurse excuse
- Doctor's excuse
- Parent/Guardian excuse (not to exceed more than 7 days in one school year)

- Subpoena/Court Order
- Obituary of an immediate family member
- Hospital intake form for an immediate family member
- Government document for pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces

This list is not all inclusive.

Attendance Protocol & Notifications

School Counselors are obligated to follow the [Stephens County School System's attendance protocol](#) when reviewing student attendance. A student is considered truant when he/she has reached 10 or more unexcused days from school in one year.

The Stephens County protocol consists of the following contacts/attempts to reach parents based on the following:

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- 3 unexcused days - Parent/Guardian will be contacted.
- 5 unexcused days - Parent/Guardian will be contacted.
- 10 unexcused days - Parent/Guardian will be contacted to schedule an Attendance Support Team meeting.
- 11+ unexcused days - School Counselor will refer to the School Social Worker for truancy. School Social Worker will schedule a meeting with the Stephens County Risk Reduction Committee.
- 15+ unexcused days - School Social Worker will complete referral to Juvenile Court for truancy. Parent/Guardian will be notified by local law enforcement of the date and time to appear in court.

TARDIES/EARLY CHECK-OUTS

- 20+ unexcused tardies/early check-outs - Parent/Guardian will be contacted to schedule an Attendance Support Team meeting.

COMMUNICATION

It is important to communicate with your child's school when your student is absent. For questions regarding make-up work or missing work, please contact your child's teachers. School excuses may be sent in with your child when he/she returns to school or you may send an excuse via email or ClassDojo to your child's teacher and/or school counselor. Excuses MUST be received within 3 days of the absence to be accepted.

If you have any questions about your child's attendance, please contact Becky Jameson, School Counselor (becky.jameson@stephenscountyschools.org, 706-886-3058).