FAQ

Attendance Policy Updates

Frequently Asked Questions

8/29/2022

The Fulton County School Board recently approved two policies regarding attendance:

JB Student Attendance: *A new FCS policy takes a proactive stance about student attendance and provides a tiered framework for identifying supports to improve student attendance.*

JBD Absences and Excuses: *Updated and revised policy with changes that include parent absence notification thresholds; added opportunity to use participation in remote learning to substitute for absence; added to the list of excused absences; and removed driver's license revocation based on updated laws.*

What does this mean for parents/guardians?

Parents/Guardians will be notified more often based on all absences regardless of whether a student is excused or unexcused. Preventive strategies and interventions will be put in place to encourage all students to engage in learning.

How is attendance determined for students?

Elementary School students' attendance is taken within the first hour of the instructional day to record who is physically present. Students must be present for half of the instructional day to be marked present for the day.

Middle and High School students' attendance is taken each period. Students must be present for 50% or more of the day to be marked present.

How is attendance determined for remote participation?

Students need to meet the following guidelines to receive credit:

- Elementary School (Daily Attendance):
  - Participation in synchronous Reading/Language Arts and Math instruction remotely or participates asynchronously as defined by the teacher
- Middle & High School (Period Attendance)
  - Must participate in at least 50% of the school day to be given credit for attendance
  - Participation in synchronous instruction remotely or participates asynchronously as defined by the teacher

How does my child get attendance credit for participating remotely?

- Students can substitute up to 5 absences per semester (a max of 10 per year) with a remote learning day by meeting the remote learning participation benchmarks listed in policy. This would result in the student being counted as present for the day(s) they participate remotely.
- To be marked present, work must be submitted within 2 days of absence.
- Students may not use a remote learning day on a test day.
- Parent/guardian or student must notify teacher in advance to the start of the instructional day to utilize the participation benchmark rule.
- Schools will make their best effort to provide instruction given early notice.

What do I do if I think my child is going to be absent?

Notify your child's school as soon as possible. Please refer to your child's school about how to send in the excusal note. Notes/emails explaining why a child is absent should be given as soon as possible to the school either before an absence or within 5 days of the absence.

The following must be included:

- Student Name
- Student FCS ID Number (lunch number)
- Parent/Guardian Name
- Parent/Guardian Email & Phone Number
- Reason for excuse

When may additional documentation be required?

- After 3 consecutive ill absences, a doctor's note may be required
- After 10 late arrivals or early checkouts, a doctor's note may be required
- Preapproval of absences due to family events or other reasons must be sent 5 days in advance.
- Any student who accumulates 7 or more days for any reason (This excludes days accumulated during an Assigned Remote designation)

What absences are excused?

- Personal illness or when attendance in school would be detrimental to the health of the student or others
- A serious illness in the student's immediate family necessitating absence from school
- A death in the student's family necessitating absence from school
    - Student are excused for up to 4 days due to a death in immediate family
    - Students are excused for up to 2 days due to a death in non-immediate family
- Observance of religious holidays necessitating absence from school
- Compliance with a court order or an order issued by a governmental agency mandating an absence from school
- Visitation with an immediate family member who is on leave from or is being deployed to military service
- Important family events/celebrations for an immediate family member (graduation, wedding, religious ceremony, etc.)

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- Compliance with an order for a pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces
- An absence for registering to vote or participating as an active voter in a local, state, or federal election
- A verified interview for college admission or a documented college visit
- A specialized, supplemental, or extracurricular program/event
- Other absences pre-approved by the principal

How does my child get an absence pre-approved?

Students/families must formally request for students to be absent for family events or other pre-approved absences. These requests should be made five school days in advance of the absence. Please refer to your child's school for procedures to collect and approve requests.

When will a parent/guardian be notified about absences?

- Parents will be notified daily if a child is marked absent through the school messenger system
- Three unexcused absences in a row without notification from parents
- Five total unexcused absences
- Seven total absences (excused and unexcused)
- Ten late arrivals or early checkouts

How can I monitor my child's attendance?

Parents/Guardians can monitor their child's attendance using Infinite Campus.

How does my child make up any missed work?

Student will have an equal number of days as they were absent to complete any late/missing work for full credit. After the deadline pf an equal number of days a student was absent, teachers may begin deducting points (maximum 25%). If a student fails to turn in a late/missing assignment, then a zero may be given.

Can a student be exempt from final exams for good attendance?

Attendance will no longer be used as an exam exemption requirement for students.

When might a social worker contact a parent or guardian about my child's attendance?

- Students who do not attend the first two days of school
- Missing 3 days in a row or more days of school without documentation
- Any student who has missed 10% or more of the school year at any given time
- 15 or more late arrivals or early checkouts
- Excessive attendance record and little improvement in attendance

For more information, please reach out to your child's school.