

Absences and Excuses

Pupils are required to attend regularly and punctually the school in which they are enrolled.

Truancy Defined

Any student who has attained the age of six (6), but has not reached his/her eighteenth (18th) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) days or more, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) days or more, is a truant.

Any student enrolled in a public school who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years, but has not reached his/her twenty-first (21st) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) or more days, or whose tardiness accumulates to three (3) or more days without valid excuse, is a truant.

Any student who has been reported as a truant two (2) or more times is an habitual truant.

Excused Absences

An excused absence is one for which the work may be made up, such as:

- Illness of the student, documented by a note from the parent a maximum of three (3) days per semester*
- Illness of student documented by a doctor's statement a maximum of five (5) days per school year
- Death or severe illness in the student's immediate family
- Religious holidays and practices
- One (1) day for attendance at the Kentucky State Fair
- Other valid reasons as determined by the principal, including trips qualifying as educational enhancement opportunities.

Students shall be granted an excused absence for up to ten (10) school days to pursue an educational enhancement opportunity determined by the Principal to be of significant educational value. This opportunity may include, but not be limited to, participation in an in educational foreign exchange program or an intensive instructional, experiential, or performance program in one (1) of the core curriculum subjects of English, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Foreign Language, and the arts.

Unless the Principal determines that extenuating circumstances exist, requests for date(s) falling within State or District testing periods shall not be granted.

The Principal's determination may be appealed to the Superintendent/designee whose decision may then be appealed to the Board under its grievance policy and procedures.

Students receiving an excused absence under this section shall have the opportunity to make up schoolwork missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence.

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WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION

Written documentation from the student's parent/guardian or verification by a doctor, dentist or other appropriate health professional shall be required for all absences. Documentation is to be presented to the school in order to determine the status of the absence. The Principal or their designee shall determine the validity of all written excuses or statements.

*Parents' notes for student illness will be accepted for a maximum of three (3) absences per semester. This means one (1) illness that causes the student to miss three (3) days will use all of the parent notes that semester. Parents' notes for students signing in late to school or signing out before the instructional day is over will be accepted for a maximum of three (3) events per semester. An "Event" is defined as a student late to school or a student leaving before the instructional school day is over. These documents may be accepted for illness of the pupil, death or severe illness in the pupil's immediate family, religious holidays and/or family trips. Advanced written notice to the faculty and administration shall be required for family trips, and days missed will constitute a portion of the cumulative absence provision. Parents/guardians must accept the responsibility for helping the student make-up missed work.

All absences must be documented by notes from parents or guardians in order to be considered for excused status. All notes must be presented within 3 days of the student returning to school. Parents/guardians are encouraged to acquire verification from a doctor, dentist or appropriate health professional to help avoid exhausting the allotment of parent/guardian notes. Unless otherwise approved by the Principal, or designee, verification from a doctor/dentist/other appropriate health professional shall be required for absences in excess of the number of parent documents presented.

Doctor's Excuses

Chronic medical conditions that may require frequent visits to the doctor can be documented by a doctor's statement and will not count towards the five (5) allowed statements. Any doctor's statements for excused absences above five (5) will be considered by a review committee to determine if the information is adequate to justify an excused absence. It is not necessary to know the exact medical condition of the student, but simply that the doctor feels that the condition warranted absence from school. It is the parents/guardian's responsibility to obtain the necessary documentation.

The review committee will be made up of the Principal, DPP, guidance counselor, and one (1) of the student's teachers.

All doctor's statements for excused absences must be presented to the school within 3 days of the student returning to school. Statements not presented within that time frame will not be accepted.

OTHER ABSENCES

Treatment for Lice - The initial day a student is sent home for contracting lice (first occurrence) will be considered an excused absence. The student will be expected to attend school the next day and will be inspected by the school Principal, or designee upon return to school to assure the student is nit-free. Any further absence(s) will be unexcused.

Suspension: Suspensions are unexcused absences. However, students may submit assignments made before the suspension and due during the suspension at the first class meeting following the student's return to school. Tests and other major assignments or final projects made during the suspension and due after or during the suspension will be accepted on the due date.

Unexpected Illness - If the Principal or designee determines that a student should not be in school, this will be considered an excused absence for the remainder of that day and will not be counted against the parent and/or guardian absence notes.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

It is understood that the principal or designee will be faced with special circumstances and should use their professional judgment in these cases. The age of the student and normal childhood and adolescent illnesses and conditions (e.g., chicken pox, mononucleosis, pneumonia, etc.) must be taken into consideration. Upon the request of the Principal, the school attendance clerk, or the DPP the review committee will review any possible misuse/abuse of the attendance policy.

HOMEBOUND

For long-term illnesses of five (5) school days or more, the parent/guardian may request a doctor's verification for the student to participate in homebound instruction. Upon presentation of a completed homebound application, a committee will determine approval/denial of the physician's recommendation for homebound services.

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

At each school, the Principal will designate the person(s) responsible for coordinating contacts with parents and/or guardians and maintaining documentation of absence notification and student conferences. These actions will be taken prior to the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, whereby the DPP is notified that parents have received notification of the fifth (5th) unexcused absence.

GRADUATION

Any twelfth grade student, whose percentage of accumulated attendance for their twelfth grade year is below 92% for that year, will not be allowed to participate in any graduation activities. Example, on March 14th senior (Bobby) who has an accumulated percentage attendance on that day of a 93%, will be able to participate in graduation activities. On May 3 Bobby's (same senior) accumulated average attendance falls to 91%, he will not be able to participate in graduation activities. The eligibility of graduation participation will be determined, based on attendance percentages as of ten school days before the last day of school. The determination of graduation may be appealed to the Superintendent/designee whose decision may then be appealed to the Board under its grievance policy and procedures.

The DPP will be responsible for any possible court action. REFERENCES:

KRS 36.396, KRS 158.070, KRS 158.183, KRS 158.293,

KRS 159.035, KRS 159.150, KRS 159.180

702 KAR 7:125, 702 KAR 7:100, 704 KAR 7:100

GAG 76-566, GAG 77-514, GAG 79-68, GAG 79-539, GAG 91-79, GAG 96-28

RELATED POLICIES:

09.122 09.4281