

Absences and Excuses

Pupils are required to attend regularly and punctually the school in which they are enrolled. Recording of absences and tardies shall be made in compliance with the requirements of 702 KAR 7:125.¹

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 tardy without valid excuse on three (3) or more days, is a truant.

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

For the purposes of establishing a student's status as a truant, a student's attendance record is cumulative for an entire school year. When students transfer from one Kentucky district to another, attendance information from the previous district shall become part of their official attendance record for that school year.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Reasons for excused absences or tardiness include:

1. Illness of the pupil,
2. Death or severe illness in the pupil's immediate family,
3. Orders of the court,
4. Religious holidays and practices,
5. Permit or license for drivers (only 1/2 day),
6. One (1) day for attendance at the Kentucky State Fair,
7. Documented military leave,
8. One (1) day prior to departure of parent/guardian called to active military duty,
9. One (1) day upon the return of parent/guardian from active military duty,
10. Visitation for up to ten (10) days with the student's parent, de facto custodian, or person with legal custody who, while on active military duty stationed outside of the country, is granted rest and recuperation leave,
11. Ten (10) days for students attending basic training required by a branch of the United States Armed Forces, or
12. 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 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.

Absences and Excuses**EXCUSED ABSENCES (CONTINUED)**

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 school work missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

All other absences shall be considered unexcused.

TARDINESS

Three (3) unexcused tardies to any class shall count as one (1) unexcused absence.

DETERMINATION OF ABSENCES

The Principal shall determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused immediately upon the pupil's return to school. The Principal shall accept written certification by a parent or guardian of a student's illness or severe illness in the family for as many as five (5) absences per year. All absences beyond five (5) shall be documented, in writing, by a statement from a doctor, dentist, or the Health Department in order for the absence to be excused. Documented statements must specify the time period if more than the interval of the office visit is to be considered.

MAKE-UP WORK

Pupils shall be permitted to make up work missed during an excused absence. All work missed during an excused absence shall be made up as follows: for every day the student misses, s/he shall receive the same amount of days to complete make-up work.

Work may be made up for unexcused absences at the discretion of the teacher involved. Pupils with unexcused absences will not be permitted to make up work.

EXTENDED ABSENCE

When an extended absence is anticipated, arrangements with the Principal/counselor should be made through a parental conference in advance of the absence, if possible.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the Principal immediately if the child is going to be out of school for an undetermined period of time due to a physical, mental, or emotional condition. Home instruction will be provided in these cases.

NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS

After three (3) unexcused absences in any one (1) year a letter shall be mailed to the pupil's parents/guardian informing them of the consequence of further absences.

After five (5) unexcused absence in any one (1) year, a letter shall be delivered to the pupils' parents/guardian requesting that the parent(s) attend an Attendance Committee hearing to discuss their child's poor attendance record and the consequences of further absences. The Attendance Committee shall be composed of the Principal, Counselor and teacher or teachers in question.

Absences and Excuses**NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS (CONTINUED)**

The Attendance Committee, in an effort to formulate a plan to improve the student's attendance, may recommend one or more of the following options to be administered by the Principal:

1. Imposing restrictions on future absences and tardiness;
2. Changing the student's schedule of classes;
3. Placing the student in an alternative education program;
4. Placing the student in an after school detention program;
5. Referring the student to the Director of Pupil Personnel/Social Worker for home visit;
6. Referring the student to an outside agency;
7. Referring the student to the Director of Pupil Personnel for Juvenile Court action; and/or
8. Other appropriate disciplinary response options according to the Student Discipline Code.

If a student is referred for court action, the Principal in writing shall notify the Director of Pupil Personnel to initiate court proceedings.

The Director of Pupil Personnel shall send a final notice by certified mail (or personal visit) to the parent/guardian in accordance with KRS 159.180.

If the unexcused absences continue, the Director of Pupil Personnel may sign a petition with Juvenile Court using a charge of habitual truancy (KRS 159.150.)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In cases which involve students with disabilities, procedures mandated by federal and state law shall be followed.²

REFERENCES:

¹702 KAR 7:125

KRS 36.396, KRS 38.470, KRS 40.366

KRS 158.070, KRS 158.183, KRS 158.293, KRS 158.294

KRS 159.035, KRS 159.140, KRS 159.150, KRS 159.180

OAG 76-566, OAG 79-68, OAG 79-539, OAG 91-79, OAG 96-28

RELATED POLICIES:

09.111, 09.122, 09.4281, 09.4341, 09.438 (Student Discipline Code)

09.126 (re requirements/exceptions for students from military families)