

Absences and Excuses

Attendance is a student-parent/guardian responsibility. The progress of a student depends upon the punctuality and regularity of attendance. Recording of absences and tardies shall be made in compliance with the requirements of 702 KAR 7:125.¹

TRUANCY POLICY

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.

REPORTING ABSENCES

When a student must be absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the school on the day of absence and report why their child is absent. It is important to understand that the *primary purpose* for calling is to make the school aware that the parent/guardian is aware that their child is not in school. The telephone call alone *does not mean* the student will receive an excused absence. In order for the absence to be considered excused, it needs to meet one of the criteria listed under the heading "Examples of Excused Absences."

- After the sixth (6th) absence (whether previous absences have been excused or unexcused) all subsequent absences for a student will be unexcused unless the child presents a doctor's note and/or appropriate legal documentation.

EXAMPLES OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

1. Student illness, including mental or behavioral health – doctor's note required after the 6th absence
2. Family emergencies – administrator needs to be notified
3. Death or severe illness in the student's immediate family
4. Religious holidays and practices
5. **Court appearances**
6. **Driver's license exam**
7. **College day (seniors only)**
8. **Prearranged absences approved by the Principal**
9. Documented military leave
- 10.

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EXCUSED ABSENCES (CONTINUED)

10. One (1) day prior to departure of parent/guardian called to active military duty
11. One (1) day upon the return of parent/guardian from active military duty
12. 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
13. Ten (10) days for students attending basic training required by a branch of the United States Armed Forces
14. Students participating in any of the page programs of the General Assembly²
15. Other valid reasons as determined by the Principal, including trips qualifying as educational enhancement opportunities.
16. Parents and students have a five (5) day window to provide proof of an excused absence upon their return to school from an absence. The day of return is considered DAY-1. For a parent note to be excused it should contain the following:
 - a) The date(s) of absence
 - b) The reason for the absence(s)
 - c) The parent/guardian(s) signature
 - d) The parent/guardian phone number

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.

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.

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EXAMPLES OF UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

1. Truancy
2. Working
3. Missed Ride
4. Missed or suspended from bus
5. Overslept
6. Out-of-town

EARLY VACATION/EXTENDED TIME

The school calendar is published early enough that parents are expected not to remove their children during school or school days preceding vacation. Parents also need to be aware of the dates which mark the end of each non-week grading period for these are test days. If a parent must remove a student for a vacation on school days or for an extended period of time, a written request from the parent must be submitted at least a week prior to the vacation. Excused absence will occur only if a written request has been submitted and approved by the Principal.

HOME VISIT

The Director of Pupil Personnel will make a home visit to any student whose name is turned over to him by the school to ascertain reasons for absences. If attendance does not improve after a home visit, court proceeding will be initiated.

APPEALS PROCEDURES

Once a student has exceeded the allowed number of absences and been notified of disciplinary action, the student and/or parent may appeal to the Attendance Appeals Committee. The Committee holds an informal hearing and decides if the absences are satisfactorily justified. If the student and/or parent are not satisfied with the result of the hearing, they may request a second hearing with the presence of a designee from the Central Office.

The best approach to address an appeal is for the student and parent to first meet with the Principal to resolve the attendance issue. If this is not successful, the school Attendance Appeals Committee will be assembled.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE

This Committee may be established at the school level for the purpose of hearing student appeals as they relate to attendance. In establishing a Committee, the Principal will take the lead role. The school Attendance Appeals Committee is made up of the Principal, guidance counselor and a teacher.

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REFERENCES:

1702 KAR 7:125

~~3~~KRS 159.035

KRS 36.396; KRS 38.470; KRS 40.366

KRS 158.070; KRS 158.183; KRS 158.293; KRS 158.294

KRS 159.140; KRS 159.150; KRS 159.180

OAG 76566; OAG 7968; OAG 79539; OAG 9179; OAG 96-28

RELATED POLICIES:

09.111; 09.122; 09.1231; 09.4281

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