

# RCSS Code of Student Conduct and Discipline 2016-2017

## Rule 10: Attendance Policy

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### RCSS Attendance Policy: INTRODUCTION

**Students who are absent from school are required to bring a written excuse for the absence their first day back at school.** An absence is either excused or unexcused. Absences which are lawful and therefore excusable shall be governed in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia and the rules and regulations of the State Department of Education and Local Board policy.

### ABSENCE(S): DEFINITIONS

#### Excused Absence

An absence shall be declared excused for:

- A. Personal illness.
- B. Family death and funeral.
- C. Medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours.
- D. Attendance of non-school activities or functions authorized by the Superintendent or designee.
- E. Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith.
- F. Mandate or order of government agency.
- G. Extreme circumstances that cannot be resolved outside school hours; parent or guardian must request and receive approval from the Principal or designated representative.
- H. Any other absence not explicitly defined herein, but deemed by the local school board of education to have merit based on the circumstances.

(Note: A foster care student, who attends Court proceedings relating to the student's foster care, shall be counted as present by the school.)

#### Unexcused Absence

Any absence not covered in (A)-(G) above, shall be declared unexcused. It is the policy of the Richmond County Board of Education that no unexcused absences are allowed. If parents keep their child out for other reasons, such absence shall be deemed unlawful and therefore unexcused. **For any absence beyond five (5), the parent shall be required to provide a physician's note or other excuse from an acceptable or official third party justifying the absence.**

#### Truant

For the purposes of this protocol, truant is defined as any child who has more than five days of unexcused absences during the academic year.

#### Full School Day

For a student to be marked present for a full school day, a student must be in attendance for one half or more of the school day. However, **a student will not be recognized for perfect attendance after ten (10) tardies.**

#### Make-Up Work

- (a) **Excused Absence:** Students who miss assignments or tests due to an excused absence shall be allowed to make up such assignments or tests. It shall be the student's responsibility to get the make-up work from the teacher(s) and complete the work within one week after returning to school. It shall be the teacher's duty to promptly and courteously allow these students the opportunity to make up missed assignments and tests.
- (b) **Unexcused Absence:** Students, who miss assignments or tests due to an unexcused absence may in the sound discretion of the Principal or designee, be given the opportunity to make up work. Missed tests or assignments that are not allowable for make-up work shall be recorded as provided in the grading policy for the school system.

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- (c) **Suspensions:** For purposes of the countywide attendance protocol, short-term suspensions shall not be considered unexcused absences. Any student who serves a short term suspension out of school shall be allowed to make up missed assignments and tests. It shall be the student's responsibility to obtain the missed work from the teacher(s) and complete the work within one week of returning to school. It shall be the teacher's duty to promptly and courteously allow these students the opportunity to make up missed assignments and tests.

### Other consequences:

- (1) **Compliance with State Compulsory Law.** By Georgia Law, it is mandatory for children between ages 6 and 16 to attend school. Therefore, in addition to all other provisions of this policy, failure of a parent, guardian or other person residing within the state having control or charge of any child or children between their 6th and 16th birthdays, to enroll and send such child or children to school as defined in O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1 shall be a violation of the Student Code of Conduct & Discipline.
- (2) **Notification of Parents.** Schools will notify parents by certified mail when a student has his or her fifth unexcused absence that each unexcused absence thereafter is a separate offense, is a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction, provides for a fine of not less than \$25.00 and not more than \$100.00; imprisonment not to exceed thirty (30) days, community service or any combination of such penalties. In addition, parents will also be notified that the Juvenile Court has the authority to incarcerate truant juveniles for up to thirty (30) days.
- (3) **Notification of Juvenile Court.** The Juvenile Court and the School System will cooperate when school interventions have not been effective, to refer students and their parents or guardian for a hearing.
- (4) **Notification of Students.** By September 1 of each school year, **parents and students over 10 years of age on September 1, of that school year will receive a copy of Georgia's compulsory school attendance law. They will also sign a receipt of written notice of consequences and penalties for violating attendance laws as a part of the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline Receipt. Schools will keep these signatures on file for the entire school year.**

Note: Failure to comply with compulsory attendance laws may result in possible denial of a driver's license.

### **AUTHORITY OF SUPERINTENDENT**

In addition to not being allowed to make-up missed work, tests or assignments, students who have unexcused absences may not receive credit or grades for the school year in which the absences occurred. Provided, however, that the Superintendent or designee shall have the right to review the facts and circumstances surrounding the absence of any student for more than the designated absentee days or the period of time designated to make up work; and in those special instances where the facts and circumstances support an exception, the Superintendent or designee may allow such student to complete make-up work and possibly receive a grade for the period.

### **FULL DAY ATTENDANCE REQUIRED**

A student who wishes to leave school early must bring a written request to school stating the reason for early dismissal. Leaving school for unauthorized purposes before the end of the instructional day will be counted as a tardy. Parents should not pick up students before the end of the school day except where there is a legitimate emergency.