

RICHMOND COUNTY STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL

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.

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 policy.

ABSENCE(S)- DEFINITION

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.

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. Classwork missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up. 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.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The school shall not allow a student to participate in any extra-curricular, co-curricular activities or cooperative work experience, if the student was not counted present for the school day. For absences subsequent to the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, the student shall not be allowed extracurricular participation without a physician's note.

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 shall not have the opportunity to make up work. Missed tests or assignments that are not allowable for make up work shall be recorded as zeros.

(1) **Suspensions:** For purposes of the countywide attendance protocol, 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.

School Interventions:

Each school will use its staff and all available resources to monitor attendance and to intervene, as appropriate to encourage attendance, notify parents of attendance issues, have social workers organize home visits and conduct attendance meetings with parents through the schools attendance review panel. It is the hope of this attendance protocol that each school will encourage attendance, monitor attendance, notify families of unexcused absences and intervene to assist in the reduction in attendance referrals to the Department of Juvenile Justice. To carry out this component of the attendance protocol, school protocol guidelines for each school level, elementary, middle and high, are more fully contained in the matrixes which are hereafter set forth as a guide for schools at each level to monitor, notify and intervene with students who have unexcused absences and their families. A comprehensive training and overview will be conducted as necessary and the interventions will be reviewed from time to time to allow continuous improvement.