

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular attendance by all students is very important. In many cases, inconsistent attendance is a major reason for poor schoolwork.

However, there are situations that may cause a student to miss school. Parent or guardians are asked to notify the school, by phone, as early as possible on the day a student is absent. Also, a note from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence is required when the student returns to school.

Definitions of absences and excuses, both excused and unexcused, multiple tardies

- A. A student's absence may be excused for the following reasons:
1. Personal illness
 2. Illness in the family
 3. Quarantine of the home
 4. Death of a relative
 5. Medical or dental appointment
 6. Observance of a religious holiday
 7. College visit
 8. Traveling out of state to attend a Board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (applies to absences of up to four days)
 9. An emergency, or set of circumstances, which, in the judgment of the Superintendent/designee, is a good and sufficient cause for absence.

Examples: court appearance, out-of-school suspension.

- B. The first seven (7) days of absence in a school year may be excused, if the absence is for one of the above reasons, and if the parent or guardian provides a note when the student returns to school explaining the reason for the absence. Such notes are required to be submitted no more than THREE DAYS after the student's return. If documentation is not provided within this time period, the absence(s) will be deemed unexcused.
- C. If a student is absent more than seven (7) days in a school year, the additional days absent may still be excused; however, additional documentation may be required in some situations. In addition to the note from the parent or guardian required for any absence, the following situations may require this specified additional documentation:
1. Personal illness - doctor's note verifying illness
 2. Illness in the family - parental note explaining the relationship and illness
 3. Death of a relative - obituary noting family relationship
 4. Quarantine of the home - doctor's note
 5. College visit - school-authorized documentation of visit
 6. Court appearance - documentation from court verifying appearance

Such notes are required to be submitted no more than THREE DAYS after the student's return. If documentation is not provided within this time period, the absence(s) will be deemed unexcused.

- D. All other absences are unexcused.
- E. Any student who arrives after the designated starting time of a building's school day and before the one-half (1/2) day absence time for that building as defined herein will be considered tardy. Three (3) unexcused tardies equal one (1) unexcused absence.

Make-up Work

A student whose absence from school is unexcused shall be permitted to make up work, except for the student who voluntarily does not report for class as assigned or leaves school property without authorization by school officials. It is the student's responsibility to secure the work. The work, when satisfactorily completed and submitted in a timely manner according to established procedures, will be accepted for a minimum of passing credit.

Vacations or other Nonemergency Trips

The Board does not believe that students should be excused from school for vacations or other nonemergency trips out of the District. The responsibility for such absences resides with the parent(s), and they must not expect any work missed by their child to be re-taught by the teacher. If the school is notified in advance of such a trip, reasonable efforts are made to prepare a general list of assignments for the student to do while he/she is absent.

Absence due to Out of School Suspension

A student who is out of school due to suspension shall be permitted to make up work. This work, when submitted in a timely manner according to established procedures, will be accepted for a minimum of passing credit. The absence for out of school suspension will be an excused absence.

Sent Home by the School Nurse

Students who are sent home from school by the school nurse, due to illness, will not require a note for the day they are dismissed.

Absences and Truancy

A. Habitual Truant

A student with five (5) or more unexcused absences on consecutive school days, or seven (7) or more unexcused absences in one school month, or twelve (12) or more unexcused absences in one school year, may be considered a "habitual" truant, under Section 3321.191 of the Ohio Revised Code.

B. Chronic Truant

A student with seven (7) or more unexcused absences on consecutive school days, or ten (10) or more unexcused absences in one school month, or fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences in one school year, may be considered a “chronic” truant, under Section 3321.191 of the Ohio Revised Code.

C. Consequences

In the case of either “habitual” or “chronic” truants, the Fairfield City School District Board of Education may:

- * assign the student to an alternative school;
- * require the student to participate in a truancy intervention program;
- * require the student to receive appropriate counseling;
- * require the parent, guardian, or other persons having care of the student to attend a parental involvement program adopted under Section 3313.472 or 3313.663 of the Ohio Revised Code;
- * require the parent, guardian, or other person having care of the student to attend a truancy prevention mediation program;
- * notify the registrar of Motor Vehicles of a habitual truant under Section 3321.13 of the Ohio Revised Code; and/or
- * take legal action under Section 2919.222, 3321.20, or 3321.38 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Students who are “habitual” truants may receive a citation to the appropriate court. The student’s parent(s), guardian(s) or other person(s) having care of the student may also receive a citation to the appropriate court. Students who are “chronic” truants and their parents, guardian(s) or other person(s) having care of the student shall be cited to juvenile court as provided in Policy JEDA.

Under Section 3321.13(b)(2), the Board authorizes the Superintendent to establish a hearing and notification procedure for the purpose of denying a student’s driving privileges if that student of compulsory school age has ten (10) or more unexcused absences on consecutive days, or fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences in a term.

D. Retention of Truant Students

Under Section 3313.609 of the Ohio Revised Code the Board is required to adopt a policy on the retention of truant students. The Board shall prohibit the promotion of a student to the next grade level if the student has been truant (absent without excuse) for more than ten (10) percent of the required attendance days in the current school year, and has failed two or more of the required curriculum subject areas in the current grade. These provisions may be waived if the student’s principal and teacher agree, in writing, that the student is academically prepared to be promoted to the next grade level.

(Revised: January 23, 2004; revised: August 21, 2008; revised: May 20, 2010)

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3313.609
3319.16
3321.01; 3321.03; 3321.04; 3321.13; 3321.14; 3321.19; 3321.38
4510.32

CROSS REFS.: IGAC, Teaching About Religion
IKB, Homework
JEDB, Student Dismissal Precautions
JHC, Student Health Services and Requirements
JHCC, Communicable Diseases