



Student Attendance

Purpose

In view of the deleterious effects of excessive tardiness and absenteeism, the implementation of the ANCS Student Attendance Policy shall be in accordance with the provisions herein and shall be read in conjunction with the provisions and requirements of Board policies and administrative regulations.

Duration

This policy is permanent, but it is subject to changes based on updates to state law.

Policy

This policy is written pursuant to [Reg. § 160-5-1-.10](#).

SECTION 1. Definitions for Student Attendance Protocol

- a. **Tardy:** A student is tardy when he/she arrives to school after the beginning of the official school day or is not in the assigned class at the official beginning of the class period.
 - i. **Excused:** Late arrival to school or class as a result of reasons defined herein as excused absences or as a result of events physically out of one's control, such as inclement weather, documented transportation delays (MARTA delays, etc.), immediate family health-related emergencies, documented power outage, compliance with a court order, etc.
 - ii. **Unexcused:** Arriving late to school or class with or without the knowledge of parent/guardian as a result of events within one's control, such as oversleeping, parent errands, etc., unless it is an excused tardy.
- b. **Early Checkouts:** Being removed from classes and leaving the school prior to the official end of the school day by a parent or legal guardian.
 - i. To be considered "in attendance" for a school day (as it applies to early checkouts), a student must be present for at least one-half of the school day, excluding the lunch period. A student who leaves school before meeting that requirement will be considered absent for the day.
 - ii. Whenever a student is released from school prior to the end of the regular school day, the student shall bring a written note from his/her parent/legal guardian stating the reason for the early dismissal. The student shall be released only to his/her parent/legal guardian or to a person designated by the parent/legal guardian, as documented by school records, and upon presentation of proper identification or confirmation by telephone or fax.
- c. **Truant:** Any child who is subject to the Georgia School Compulsory Attendance Law who has more than 10 days of unexcused absences during a calendar school year.

Excused absences include the following:

- a. Personal illness of the student or when attendance in school would endanger the health of the student or the health of others. Upon the student's return to school following three (3) or more consecutive days of absence due to illness or other health-related reasons, appropriate documentation from a medical provider is required within three (3) days of the absence.
- b. Serious illness or death in student's immediate family necessitating the absence. In the case of serious illness, the student is required to present medical documentation to validate the absence as an excused absence within three (3) days of the student's return to school.



Student Attendance for Legal Review

- c. Court order by a governmental agency mandating the student's absence from school.
- d. Special or recognized religious holidays observed by the faith of the student.
- e. Weather or environmental condition rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to the student's health or safety.
- f. An absence not to exceed one (1) day for registering to vote.
- g. A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called for duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave. Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to require a local school system to revise any policies relating to maximum number of excused and unexcused absences for any purpose (O.C.G.A. 20-2-692.1).
- h. Students serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly as set forth in O.C.G.A. 20-2-692 shall be counted as present.
- i. Other absences to be determined by and at the discretion of the Principal.

Unexcused absences include the following:

- a. Failure to attend school, with or without the knowledge of the parent/legal guardian, for reasons other than those specifically outlined as excused absences.
- b. School days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension shall not be counted as unexcused for the purpose of determining truancy.

Attendance during Remote/Hybrid learning:

During remote/hybrid learning, a student is considered to be in attendance for each day he/she participates in live virtual instruction via video conferencing and/or submits assignments on designated asynchronous learning days (e.g., Wellness Wednesdays). Students are expected to participate in each learning period, and attendance may be taken in each learning period. Parents and students are expected to follow the expectations for online learning as published by the school. The provisions in this policy regarding excused and unexcused absences remain in effect during remote/hybrid learning.

SECTION 2. Parental/Student Notification

- a. ANCS will provide each student and his/her parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of the student with the Georgia School Compulsory Attendance Law and a written summary of the possible consequences and penalties for non-compliance at the beginning of each school year. Possible consequences and penalties for excessive absences or penalties are outlined in Section 4 below
- b. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 days of a student's enrollment at ANCS, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student must sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties.
- c. When a student reaches ten (10) or more unexcused absences, tardies, and/or early checkouts greater than or equal to 15% of school days to date, the school will notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of the student. The notice will outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense.
- d. After two reasonable attempts (including but not limited to phone calls to the parent/guardian, letters to the parent/guardian either through U.S. mail or sent home with the child or both, home visits, etc.) to notify the parent/guardian or other person who has charge or control of the student, ANCS shall send written notice via certified mail with the return receipt requested.



SECTION 3. Student Attendance Procedures

Accurate student attendance recordkeeping is the responsibility of all staff members at the school. All Elementary Campus classroom teachers and Middle Campus advisors are responsible for taking daily attendance of students in their classes. All staff members are responsible for checking the daily attendance report and reporting any errors to the Main Office.

Daily:

- a. Each Elementary Campus classroom teacher and Middle Campus advisor completes attendance in Infinite Campus immediately following start of school. Any student arriving after the start time of each campus should be marked tardy.
- b. Office Assistant alerts advisor if attendance has not been completed.
- c. Office Assistant calls/emails parents/guardians of students listed as absent to confirm absence and reason for absence.
- d. By 9:15 a.m., Office Assistant generates attendance report that gets emailed out to all staff (hard copies to substitutes) with any notes about late arrivals or early dismissals that are already known from notes, voicemails, etc.
- e. All staff check attendance report and alert Office Assistant to any possible errors or omissions.
- f. Office Assistant follows up with staff regarding any possible errors or omissions and alerts all staff if necessary.
- g. Students who arrive to school after the start time must sign in. The Office Assistant writes late passes for students arriving after morning meeting or after advisory has ended. Late notices/passes are given starting at 8:31 a.m. Office Assistant records absences and tardies as excused/unexcused.
- h. If a teacher or advisor is absent, Office Assistant provides substitute with attendance sheet to be turned in to the Main Office.

SECTION 4. Interventions and Consequences for Truancy

The school will identify separate, formal, written interventions and consequences for truancy for the Elementary Campus and the Middle Campus.

Prior to Court Involvement

Before any court referral is considered, school officials must detail efforts made by the school to intervene with students and their families, including a minimum of three (3) calls, letters, and/or home visits to the parent/legal guardian.

After Ten (10) Unexcused Absences:

- a. A letter will be sent from a school administrator to the parent/guardian regarding attendance. For a student aged 14–18 whose ten (10) unexcused absences are within one semester or two quarters, the letter shall state that the student's eligibility to obtain or retain a driver's permit or license may be impacted.
- b. A referral shall be made to the school counselor, along with all relevant correspondence and documentation. The school counselor will work with the student and family in order to address the attendance problems. The school counselor will take any of the following actions that he/she deems appropriate:
 - i. Function as a child advocate to promote good school attendance for all students.



Student Attendance for Legal Review

- ii. Consult with all school personnel to encourage early identification of students with a pattern of irregular or poor school attendance.
- iii. Conference with students at school to identify factors that may cause or contribute to poor school attendance.
- iv. Inform students and parents/guardians of their individual and collective responsibility in regards to the Georgia School Compulsory Attendance Law.
- v. If necessary, provide direct social services to students and families during home visitations.
- vi. Collaborate with parents/guardians to identify problems at the home and school levels that may contribute to poor school attendance.
- vii. When appropriate, provide parents/guardians with a list of community resources that provide a variety of services to families (physical and mental health, financial, etc.).
- viii. Identify personnel and programs within the school that can provide additional support for students (psychological services, guidance and counseling, etc.).
- ix. Monitor the student's attendance on a weekly basis.
- x. Provide ongoing written correspondence to parents/guardians regarding the student's school attendance (Pre-legal, First, and Final legal notices).

c. Consistent with these policies and existing law, consequences for excessive unexcused absences, tardiness, and missed learning periods may include, but are not limited to, a compulsory parent conference with the appropriate school administrators, submission of student's status to Atlanta Public Schools Truancy Center for investigative purposes, and/or expulsion.

When administrative actions taken to correct truancy have proven ineffective, the school may file proceedings with the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services and/or juvenile court and furnish evidence for the conviction of parents/guardians and/or child for non-compliance with compulsory attendance laws.

Approval

Policy approval date:

Policy effective date:

Policy review date:

04/11

04/11

08/17