

## Policy JH Student Absences and Excuses

Issued 6/15

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for allowing and excusing student absences.

The board believes that attendance is a key factor in student achievement. Any absence from school represents an educational loss to the student. However, the board recognizes that some absences are unavoidable.

In order to receive one Carnegie unit of credit, a student must be in attendance at least 120 hours, per unit, regardless of the number of days missed. The board may grant approval of excessive absences in accordance with board policy.

The district will utilize a written intervention plan for improving student attendance. The purpose of the plan will be to link students with attendance problems and their families to all appropriate school and community resources.

The board recognizes that truancy is primarily an educational issue and will take all reasonable, educationally sound and corrective actions prior to resorting to the juvenile justice system.

Any student who misses school must present a written excuse, signed by his/her parent/legal guardian. The excuse will contain such other information as directed by the administration. The school administration will keep all excuses confidential.

If a student fails to bring a valid excuse to school, he/she will automatically receive an unexcused absence. If a student brings a false (or forged) excuse, the teacher will refer the student to the school administration for appropriate action.

The district will consider students **lawfully** absent under the following circumstances.

- They are ill and their attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others.
- There is a death or serious illness in their immediate family.
- There is a recognized religious holiday of their faith.
- Prearranged absences for other reasons and/or extreme hardships at the discretion of the principal.
- A child in foster care who must be absent due to a certified court appearance or related court ordered activity including, but not limited to, court ordered treatment services.

The district will consider students **unlawfully** absent under the following circumstances.

- They are willfully absent from school without the knowledge of their parent/legal guardian.
- They are absent without acceptable cause with the knowledge of their parent/legal guardian.

Suspension is not to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes.

The principal will be responsible for implementing and expediting medical homebound instruction for students experiencing a prolonged illness or injury requiring them to be absent from school.

Adopted 2/25/03; Revised 8/23/06, 6/16/15

Legal references:

Federal Law:

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, [42 U.S.C.A. Section 11431](#) *et seq.*

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, [Pub. L. No 107-110](#), 115 Stat. 1425, Section 4155.

S. C. Code, 1976, as amended:

[Section 59-38](#)-10 - South Carolina Education Bill of Rights for Children in Foster Care.

[Section 59-46](#)-50 - Interstate compact on educational opportunity for military children

[Section 59-65](#)-50 - Nonattendance reported to court having jurisdiction of juveniles.

State Board of Education Regulations:

[R-43-274](#) - Student attendance.

