

Cherokee County School District is required to report all levels of Truancy to the South Carolina State Department of Education.

*Attendance Policies apply to all 5K through 12th grade students.*

Levels of Truancy are defined as:

**Truant**-(Ages 5K and 5-17) who miss three (3) consecutive unlawful days or five (5) total unlawful days.

**Habitual Truant**-(Ages 12-17) who miss more than seven (7) unlawful days and are not following the guidelines of the Attendance Improvement Plan

**Chronic Truant**-(Ages 12-17) who miss ten (10) days of unlawful absence or more; **Will be referred to Family Court or Department of Social Services (DSS)**

**Parents/Guardians Responsibilities for student attendance:**

- Parents/Guardians should submit to the school their **medical excuses** within (3/5) days of the students absence **(or return to school)**.
- Medical excuses may be required for all absences after a total of five (5 total) days of unlawful absences. (These excuses include the maximum of five (5) parent note excuses).
- Parents/Guardians who are concerned about attendance should contact the school principal, guidance counselor or attendance clerk for a conference.

**Tardies to School/Class**

All students grades 4K through 12th are expected to arrive at school and be in their first class of the day on time. Attendance and being prompt is so important to each student attending school.

**Learning is our goal for each student in every school, every day!** Tardies at the Middle and High School level will result in discipline issues at their respective schools. **Excessive tardiness** for all students may jeopardize a student's effort to maintain perfect attendance. **Excessive tardiness in elementary grades may lead to discipline issues and may result in the family being referred to the Cherokee County Department of Social Services.**

## CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOLS

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

B.D. LEE	206-6432
BLACKSBURG ELEMENTARY	206-6518
BLACKSBURG PRIMARY	206-6936
CORINTH	206-6600
DRAYTONVILLE	206-6783
GRASSY POND	206-6671
LIMESTONE CENTRAL	206-6620
LUTHER VAUGHAN	206-6054
NORTHWEST	206-6727

### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

BLACKSBURG	206-6829
EWING	206-2449
GAFFNEY	206-6129

### HIGH SCHOOLS

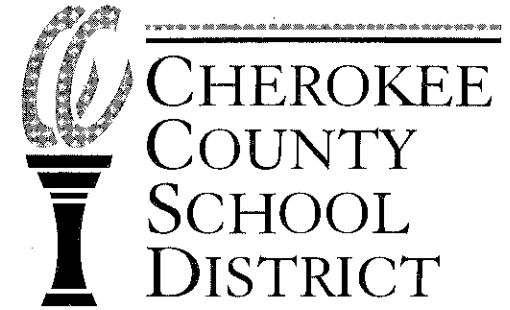
BLACKSBURG	206-2378
GAFFNEY	206-2000
INSTITUTE OF INNOVATION	206-2576

### OLA H. COPELAND COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

COPELAND ACADEMY	206-6992
ADULT EDUCATION	206-6992

### OFFICE OF ATTENDANCE, TRUANCY, AND DISCIPLINE

206-6194 OR 206-2219



*Preparing Today's Students to Become Tomorrow's Leaders.*

## **Attendance and Truancy Information**

**Cherokee County School District**

**PO Box 460**

**Gaffney, SC 29342**

**Office of Attendance, Truancy, and Discipline**

**Phone: (864) 206-6194**

**Fax: (864) 902-3696**

[www.cherokee1.org](http://www.cherokee1.org)

**Students enrolled in the Schools of Cherokee County are expected to attend school each day of the 180 day school year. Any student who is absent from school must present an excuse in compliance with the criteria established by this policy if the absence is to be considered lawful (Board Policy—JA/JE/JH/JH-R).**

Under the guidance of the federal Office of Civil Rights, the South Carolina Department of Education is now requiring all SC school districts to report students who are “chronically absent.”

**As part of these new requirements, South Carolina elementary students will now be considered “absent” if they miss 50% of their instructional day for ANY reason, regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused.**

### Lawful Absences

Students will be considered **lawfully** absent under the following circumstances:

- They are ill and their attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others. (Dr. diagnosis or Dept. of Health)
- There is a death in the **immediate** family (lawful absences limited to three (3) days per occurrence). Immediate family is defined to include father, mother, brother, sister, grandparents, in-laws of the same degree or a resident of the household.
- They have chronic illness certified, upon diagnosis and at the beginning of every new year by a physician. Students must submit a chronic illness form completed and signed by the physician who diagnoses or is treating the condition. **Periodic updates, at least every semester, of the chronic illness forms are required. Parents must still write notes referring absence due to the chronic illness diagnosis.**
- Periods of hospitalization or extended medical care by a physician which are not sufficient duration to warrant homebound instruction, as approved by the principal.
- Absences due to health related conditions (i.e. medical, dental, etc...). Appointments must be verified by physician or clinic personnel.

- Recognized Religious Holiday of their faith. (Notification prior to the absence is required.)
- Other absences not covered above must be approved in advance by the principal.

### Unexcused (Unlawful) Absences

Students will be considered unlawfully absent under the following circumstances:

- They are absent without acceptable cause **with or without** the knowledge of their parents/legal guardians.
- They are suspended from school for violations of the school discipline policy.
- Any absences not considered as lawful in the preceding section are judged to be unlawful or unexcused for purposes of implementation of this policy.

### Lawful Excuses

- An excuse written and signed by the parent/legal guardian is required for all absences. The excuse must include the reason for absence and the dates of the absences. **Parent/legal guardian’s notes will be accepted without physician confirmation for up to five (5) absences in a school year. A sixth (6) or more parent note will be recorded in attendance as an unexcused parent note.**
- A physician’s verification of absences due to illness is required for any absences above five (5) unlawful days in a school year.
- A physician or clinic staff verification of absences due to medical , dental, or clinic appointments is required in all instances.
- **All excuses** must be presented within (3/5) days of the absence from school and the students return to school. The principal may make an exception to the (3/5) day limit for cause.
- The principal is appointed as the board’s designee to review all absences after a student has been absent five (5) days per semester or ten (10) days per year.

- A high school student may be denied credit if they accumulate eleven (11) or more unlawful absences in a full year course or six (6) or more unlawful absences in a **block** course.
- The student is absent lawfully or unlawfully for a combined total of sixteen (16) or more days from a year-long course or eight (8) or more days from a **block** course.
- **\*\*Exception to absence and course credit**  
Lawful absences in excess of up to ten (10) days for a block class or twenty-one (21) days for a full year class may be approved by the principal and credit granted if the student has shown acceptable mastery of the course content as demonstrated by a grade for C or above **only** for the following reasons:
  - **Documented chronic illness** (chronic illness must be diagnosed by a physician-excuses for absences must still be written). Updated– Every Year and again each semester.
  - **Medical or hospital care** of insufficient duration to require medical homebound instruction.

### Attendance Intervention (AIP)

When a student is unlawfully absent for three (3) consecutive days or a total of five (5) unlawful days, the building administration will take steps to intervene in order to prevent truant behavior and to improve future attendance. **Days absent due to suspension are not considered a part of the total for a truancy referral.** When a student is unlawfully absent for four (4) consecutive days or six (6) total days, the school will contact the parent/ guardian. If a student and family fail to respond and participate in the student’s intervention plan, then the student and family may be referred to the Department of Juvenile Justice and/or the Department of Social Services for violation of the compulsory school attendance law. The student will be referred to the Coordinator of Attendance, Truancy, and Discipline and subsequently to the appropriate county or state agency when the student has been **unlawfully** absent from school for ten (10) total days.