## ATTENDANCE POLICY (REGULATION)

The Tecumseh Board of Education believes that attendance in regularly scheduled classes is a key factor in student achievement. However, it is important for those students who are ill to stay home when sick. Students who have a fever or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit should not be at school or school activities. The board recognizes, however, that the cocurricular program of the school also has educational benefit. Therefore, it shall be the policy of this board to minimize absenteeism from regular classes while providing students the opportunity to participate in cocurricular activities.

## EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences will be granted for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness (with supporting medical documentation)
2. Medical appointments (with supporting medical documentation)
3. Legal matters, including service on a grand, multicounty grand, or petit jury *
4. Extenuating circumstances deemed necessary by the principal
5. Observance of holidays required by student's religious affiliation.

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school if a child is to be absent for one of the above reasons. The school will contact those students' parents who do not call. Doctor's notes for excused absences must be turned in to the site's office secretary within three weeks of the date of medical services in order for an absence to be marked excused.

The district will require medical documentation to support personal illness that results in an excused absence. Students will be required to make up any work that has been missed. Student absences due to a severe, chronic, or life-threatening physical or mental illness, injury, or trauma will be exempted from inclusion in the calculation of the chronic absenteeism indicator of the applicable school site so long as the determination of eligibility is made by the district's medical exemption review committee. The district's medical exemption review committee will be designated by the superintendent on a yearly basis and shall report student absences that are medically exempt to the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) Office of Accountability.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY (REGULATION) continued

A student will not be considered absent from school if:

1. $\mathrm{S} / \mathrm{He}$ is not physically present at school but is completing work in a distance learning program or virtual online program approved by the school district and is meeting the following attendance requirements:
a. The student has completed instructional activities to a satisfactory level as directed by his/her teacher during the time that services were provided in a virtual or distance learning format. A representative from the district will work with each student on an individual basis to determine the amount of work that must be completed based on the student's mental or physical condition during the time of virtual or distance learning. Instructional activities may include online logins to curriculum or programs, offline activities, completed assignments, testing, face-to-face communications or meetings with school personnel via teleconference, videoconference, email, text, or phone calls.
b. The student is on pace for on-time completion of the course as required by the school district,
c. The student has completed instructional activities within the time that services were provided in a virtual or distance learning format during the academic year; or
2. $\mathrm{S} / \mathrm{He}$ has a medical condition that incapacitates the student and precludes him/her from participating in instruction in a traditional school setting and the student is able to progress in instruction via alternative education delivery methods approved by the local board of education.

## TYPES OF ABSENCES

In Case of Sickness At Home
If your student has a fever, is vomiting, or has significant symptoms that would make it unsafe or unhealthy for him/her to attend school, then please call the school site to let them know that your child will not be at school that day. After the phone call, the school will mark your child's attendance with AA (absent parental contact) in our student information system. If no call is received, the school will mark your child's attendance with AP (absent pending) in our student information system. Please note that AA and AP absences cannot be counted as excused absences based on state requirements.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY, REGULATION continued

## In Case of Sickness While At School

If your student has fever and/or vomiting while at school, the primary contact for the child will be called. The district requests that someone who is on the student's approved list come to school to pick up the student as soon as possible. Your child's attendance for the remainder of that day and for the next 24 hours will be counted as AM (absent medical). Please note that AM absences are counted as excused absences based on state requirements.

In Case of Appointment with Medical Professional
If your student has a doctor's visit or appointment with a medical professional, whether scheduled or emergency, please obtain a note from the care provider and give a copy of the document to the office staff where your child attends within three weeks of the date of the absence. The day(s) and/or time(s) specified in the doctor's note will be posted as AM (absent medical) on our student information system. Please note that AM absences are counted as excused absences based on state requirements.

In Case of Funeral or Bereavement
If your student has to miss school due to attendance at a funeral or bereavement event, please provide the school with a copy of the funeral brochure given at the service. The day will be marked as AB (absent bereavement) in the student information system. Please note that AB absences are counted as excused absences based on state requirements.

In Case of Court Appearance or Legal Proceeding
If your student has to miss school due to attendance in court or a legal proceeding, please provide the school with a copy of a statement from your attorney or the judge. The day will be marked as AL (absent legal) in the student information system. Please note that AL absences are counted as excused absences based on state requirements.

In Case of Approved School Activity
If your student has to miss school due to participation in a school-sponsored field trip or extracurricular activity, no action is needed on the part of the parent of guardian. The sponsor of the activity will provide a list of students who are eligible to attend the event. The day will be marked as EA (activity absence) in the student information system. Please note that students are allowed to have up to ten (10) activity absences per school year that can be counted as excused absences based on state requirements. If your child is active in many different activities and misses school for all of them, there may be other steps required to be able to extend the ten day activity absence limit for your student.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY, REGULATION continued

In Case of School Consequences
If your student has to miss school due to suspension or in-school detention placement, you will be notified by a school administrator of the date(s) that your child will be assigned that particular consequence. Suspension absences will be coded as AS (absent suspension). Inschool detention absences will be codes as ED (in-school detention). The day will be marked as AS or ED accordingly in the student information system. Please note that AS absences are not counted as excused absences based on state requirements. ED absences are excused absences based on state requirements.

## School Activity Absences

1. The student will be allowed to be absent from the classroom for a maximum of ten days per semester to participate in activities sponsored by the school per district policy.
2. The student will be allowed to make up any work missed while participating.

## Absences by Arrangement

These are absences in which the parents deem it necessary that a child miss school for reasons other than those that fall within an excused absence.

1. A student may take up to two (2) days of absences by arrangement during a semester.
2. During these pre-arranged days, a student may make up all work missed without penalty. It is up to the student, on the day of return, to make arrangements to see that the work is made up.
3. In order to take an absence by arrangement, the parent, or guardian, must submit, at least two days prior to the absence, a written request for the student to be absent. If the request is not made as required, the absence will be treated as an unexcused absence.
4. Absences by arrangement will count against a student's exemption from semester tests.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY, REGULATION continued

Make-Up Work

It is the responsibility of the student or parent to arrange with the teacher to make up work and/or take tests that have been missed during any days of absence. All make-up work is due within a period of time equal to the number of days missed plus one (1) extra day. For example, if a student is absent three (3) days, all assigned make-up work is due within four (4) days after the student returns to school unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher. In the event of an extended illness lasting more than two (2) weeks, arrangements may be made for homebound instruction through the school principal. Other requirements must also be met for homebound placement. If a student is absent more than three (3) consecutive days, a parent or guardian may request make-up work through the teacher or through the school office.

## Truancy

A student is considered truant when absent from the classroom without the knowledge of either the school or the parent or if the parent does not compel the student to attend school.

Tecumseh Public Schools is responsible for enforcing the compulsory attendance law of the State of Oklahoma as written in Title 10, Oklahoma Statutes Section 70-10-106 as follows, "If a child is absent without valid excuse four (4) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period or is absent without valid excuse for ten (10) or more days or parts of days within a semester, the attendance officer shall notify the parent, guardian or custodian of the child and immediately report such absences to the district attorney in the county wherein the school is located for juvenile proceedings pursuant to Title 10A of the Oklahoma Statutes."

If a student is absent from school for four (4) or more days or parts of days in a four week period or ten (10) or more days or parts of days in a semester, then the parent/guardian will receive a letter from the district's truancy officer with a summary of the student's attendance record. The letter will request that the parent/guardian speak with the truancy officer within five (5) days of receipt of the letter to discuss any needs of the family with regards to the student's attendance. If the parent/guardian has documentation for any of the unexcused absences, then it will be considered by the truancy officer at that time. As a reminder, it is district policy that all medical notes be provided to the school office within three weeks of the student's medical treatment to be considered for a student's attendance records. If a student qualifies under these guidelines to receive a letter from the truancy officer during both semesters of a school year, then the district may notify the county's district attorney for consideration of receiving a citation for truancy.

If a student is absent from school for ten consecutive days with no contact from a parent or guardian, then $\mathrm{s} /$ he will be withdrawn from school enrollment on the tenth day.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY, REGULATION continued

## Tardies

Instruction is expected to begin when the bell rings. Students who arrive after this time are considered tardy. A student who is more than $25 \%$ late during a given class period is counted absent for that period. Tardies are only excused for the same reasons that an absence would be excused. If a tardy is to be excused, documentation must be submitted within three school days of when the tardy was recorded. Three (3) unexcused tardies equal one (1) unexcused absence which will be calculated in truancy totals. Additional consequences may be assigned by school administration as appropriate to deter student tardiness. These consequences may include but are not limited to: parent/guardian contact, conferencing with the student and/or parent or guardian, detention, or in-school detention.

## Early Outs

An "early out" is defined as a time when a student leaves class or school before the instructional time for the day has ended. Early outs are only excused for the same reason an absence would be excused. Three (3) unexcused early outs will count as one (1) unexcused absence and will be calculated in truancy totals.

## Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism means that a student is absent 10 percent or more of the school days in the school year in which s/he was enrolled in a school exclusive of a significant medical condition, when the total number of days the student is absent is divided by the total number of days the student is enrolled, and school was actually taught in the regular schools of the district, exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY, REGULATION continued

When a student is identified as a chronic absentee, the Superintendent or designee shall communicate with the student and his/her parents/guardians to determine the reason(s) for the excessive absences, ensure the student and parents/guardians are aware of the adverse consequences of poor attendance, and jointly develop a plan for improving the student's school attendance using the measures described in the Prevention Efforts section of this policy.

A significant medical condition means a severe, chronic, or life-threatening physical or mental illness, infection, injury, disease, or emotional trauma.

Realizing that some absences might be beyond a student's control, the Board has adopted a policy requiring students to be in attendance a minimum of $90 \%$ of the time in grades Pre-Kindergarten through $12^{\text {th }}$ Grade each semester in order to receive credit for any course in which the student is enrolled. Exceptions to this requirement will be considered by the building principal on an individual, case-by-case basis.

If a student has 10 or more unexcused absences in a semester, then the student will be given an Incomplete instead of a grade for that class for the semester. In order to change the record of Incomplete and receive a grade and/or credit for the course, the student will: a) attend summer school to make up for the missed time, b) complete a virtual credit recovery course by the end of the next semester, or c) complete a program of study as designed by the site principal. The site principal will determine on a case-by-case basis the way(s) in which a student may change an Incomplete grade to a letter grade for credit.

## Prevention Efforts

Stopping attendance problems at the earliest point is essential. It is also important that the district extends an effort to work with families in an effort to make sure that a student's attendance problems are stopped at the earliest point possible.

School administration may follow these steps for a full-day absence, half-day absence, or a single period absence. Also, school administration may use any type of absence, whether excused or unexcused, and take the following actions.

Recommended Actions:

1. On the 4th day absence beyond a 4 -week period - A conference is held with the student and designated school staff and an email and phone call is made by a school counselor or other designated staff member to the parent/guardian. (Time of year dictates the tone and direction of the conversation.)

## ATTENDANCE POLICY, REGULATION continued

2. On the 7th day absence for the school year - A conference is held with the student and designated school staff and an email and phone call is made by a school counselor or other designated staff member to the parent/guardian. An academic intervention plan is developed to ensure that the student is not falling behind in academic learning. This learning plan may involve a change of schedule for the student and/or the use of dedicated intervention times.
3. On the 10th day absence for the school year - A school administrator sets a conference with the student and his/her parent or guardian to offer resources to the family and develop a plan to maximize school attendance. Additional academic interventions may also be developed to prevent the student from falling behind academically. A letter is sent by the site principal to the parent or guardian with official notification of the absences and explanation of possible intervention by the district attorney.
4. On the 15th day absence for the school year - A school administrator, counselor, teacher, and/or truancy officer will meet with the parent or guardian. A letter will be provided at the meeting documenting the student's absences and discussing potential intervention by the district attorney.
5. On the 18th day absence for the school year - At this point, the student will have missed $10 \%$ of the school year. The district attorney will be advised regarding the attendance of the student for consideration of citation to address truancy and/or chronic absenteeism.
6. Students who accumulate twenty (20) or more absences during a school year will be referred to the School Attendance Committee for a review of eligibility to promote to the next grade level.
A. If the School Attendance Committee determines it necessary to retain the student due to lack of attendance, a conference with the parent/guardian of the student will be set so that notification may occur. If the parent/guardian declines to meet with the committee, a written record of the attempt to initiate the conference will be maintained.
B. In the meeting with the School Attendance Committee, the parent/guardian will be provided the opportunity to provide documentation and discuss any circumstances regarding the student's attendance record.
C. If the parent/guardian declines to attend the conference with the School Attendance Committee, the meeting will be held, and if the decision is made to retain the student for the next school year, the parent will be notified by certified mail.
D. If the parent/guardian does not agree with the committee's decision, $s /$ he may appeal the decision to retain the student to the Superintendent by notifying him/her in writing within five (5) business days of receiving the certified letter from the School Attendance Committee.

## 6049

## ATTENDANCE POLICY, REGULATION continued

E. If an appeal is made to the Superintendent, a meeting between the site Principal, the parent/guardian and the Superintendent will be held to discuss the reason for the appeal. The Superintendent will make a decision to the appeal request within five (5) business days of said meeting and will notify the parent/guardian of the results of the appeal through certified mail.

\author{

* LEGAL REFERENCE: <br> 38 O.S. §37 <br> 70 O.S. § 10-105 <br> 70 O.S. § 3-145.8
}

