

ATTENDANCE

Excused Absences for Classroom Based Attendance

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law or Board policy.

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness;
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer;
3. Medical, dental, ophthalmologic, or chiropractic appointments;
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family:
 - a. Excused absence in this instance shall be limited to one day if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state.
 - b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/ daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any relative living in the student's immediate household.
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law;
6. Justifiable personal reasons, when accompanied by a written request by the parent or guardian & approved by the Principal/Director or his/her designee, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Appearance in court
 - b. Attendance at a funeral service
 - c. Observance of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion
 - d. Attendance at religious retreats
 - e. Attendance at an employment conference
 - f. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization
7. Spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family, who is an active duty of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this section shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the Principal/Director.
8. Attending the pupil's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.
9. Authorized at the discretion of the Principal/Director.

Attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed four hours per semester.

Students absent for the reasons deemed "excused" shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence that can be reasonably provided and, upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time, shall be given full credit therefor. The teacher of the class from which a student is absent shall determine which tests and assignments shall be

reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the student missed during the absence.

Method of Verification

When students who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Written note from parent/guardian, parent representative, or student if 18 or older;
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
 - a. Name of student;
 - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative;
 - c. Name of verifying employee;
 - d. Date or dates of absence; and
 - e. Reason for absence.
3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method, which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. A written recording shall be made, including information outlined above.
4. Physician's verification
 - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, School staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
 - b. When a student has had 14 absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed in #1 – #3 above, any further absences for illness must be verified by a physician.

Insofar as class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

At the beginning of each academic year, notifications shall be sent to the parents/guardians of all students and to all students in grades 7 and 8, informing them that school authorities may excuse any student from school to obtain confidential medical services without the consent of the student's parent/guardian.

Students in grades K-6 should not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency. Students in grades 7-8 should not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency or confidential medical appointments.

Unexcused Absences/Truancy for Classroom Based Attendance

The Principal/Director, or designee, shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy. Students who are habitual truants or habitually insubordinate or disorderly during attendance at School may be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

When the student's attendance problems cannot be resolved or the student and parent/guardian have failed to respond to directives to correct the problem, a student who has been classified as truant may be referred to the district attorney or probation officer for truancy mediation. Further,

the School attendance review board or probation officer may request a juvenile court petition on behalf of the student.

A student's grades may be affected by excessive unexcused absences in accordance with Board policy.

1. Students shall be classified as truant if absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. Such students shall be reported to the Principal/Director or designee.

The parent/guardian of a student classified as a truant shall be notified of the following:

- a. The student is truant;
 - b. The parent/guardian is obligated to compel the student to attend school;
 - c. The parent/guardian who fails to meet this obligation may be guilty of an infraction of the law and subject to prosecution;
 - d. The parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the student's truancy;
 - e. Alternative educational programs are available through the School;
 - f. The student may be subject to arrest by Tribal Enforcement, a Sheriff, a school administrator, or his/her designee under Education Code section 48264 if found away from home and absent from school without a valid excuse;
 - g. The student may be subject to suspension or restriction of driving privileges; and
 - h. It is recommended that the parent/guardian accompany the student to school and attend classes with the student for one day.
2. Upon his/her first truancy, a student and, as appropriate, the parent or legal guardian, may be requested to attend a meeting with a school counselor or other school designee to discuss the root causes of the attendance issue and develop a joint plan to improve the pupil's attendance.
 3. Upon his/her second truancy within the same school year, a student may be given a written warning by Tribal Enforcement. A record of the written warning may be kept at the school for not less than two years or until the pupil graduates or transfers from the school. If the student transfers from that school, the record may be forwarded to the school receiving the student's school records. The student may also be assigned to an after-school or weekend study program within the county. If the student fails to successfully complete this study program, he/she shall be subject to item #4 below.
 4. Upon his/her third truancy within the same school year, the student will be classified as a habitual truant and may be referred to, and required to attend, an attendance review board or a truancy mediation program established by the district attorney or a comparable program deemed acceptable by the Principal/Director or designee. If the student does not successfully complete the truancy mediation program or other similar program, he/she shall be subject to item #5 below.
 5. Upon his/her fourth truancy within the same school year, the student may be within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court that may adjudge the pupil to be a ward of the court. If the student is adjudged a ward of the court, the student shall be required to do one of the following:

- a. Performance at court-approved community services sponsored by either a public or private nonprofit agency for not less than 20 hours but not more than 40 hours over a period not to exceed 90 days, during a time other than the student's hours of school attendance or employment. The probation officer shall report to the court the failure of the student to comply with this paragraph.
- b. Payment of a fine by the student of not more than fifty dollars (\$50) for which a parent or legal guardian of the student may be jointly liable.
- c. Attendance of a court-approved truancy prevention program.
- d. Suspension or revocation of driving privileges. This subdivision shall apply only to a student who has attended a school attendance review board program, a program operated by a probation department acting as a school attendance review board, or a truancy mediation program pursuant to subdivision (c).

Reports

The Principal/Director, or designee, shall gather and transmit to the Board the number of referrals and types of referrals made to the school attendance review board and the number of requests for petitions made to the juvenile court.

Non-Classroom Based Programs

All attendance for non-classroom-based programs shall be in accordance with current law and regulations.

Attendance Supervision

Pursuant to EC Section 48200, every child from the age of six to eighteen in the district is required to attend school regularly in order to make a successful transition to the next grade level and to graduate with a high school diploma. All enrolled students, regardless of age, will be held to the same district school attendance rules.

The Governing Board recognizes that a vigilant supervision of attendance to improve attendance rates and graduation rates and to reduce truancy rates, chronic absenteeism rates, and dropout rates is vital to the learning and achievement of children on the margins of the educational system. Reducing chronic absenteeism rates and reducing the dropout rates while improving graduation rates are district priorities reflected in the district LCAP.

Because supervision of attendance is an essential component of an effective school attendance program, the Principal/Director will supervise attendance. The Principal/Director will be responsible for managing an attendance program that reaches every student, is conducted in collaboration with local resources, uses chronic absenteeism and dropout data by grade level and pupil subgroup to modify interventions, and shares outcomes with the County Superintendent, all SAR representatives, and the Governing Board.

Among other duties that may be required by the Board shall be those specific duties related to compulsory full-time education, truancy, work permits, compulsory continuation education, and opportunity schools; classes; and programs. (EC 48240)

It is the intent of the Governing Board that the Principal/Director shall promote a culture of attendance and establish a system to accurately track pupil attendance in order to achieve all of the following:

- Raise the awareness of school personnel, parents/guardians/caregivers, community partners, and local businesses of the effects of chronic absenteeism, truancy, and other challenges associated with poor attendance.
- Identify and respond to grade level or pupil subgroup patterns of chronic absenteeism and truancy.
- Identify and address factors contributing to chronic absenteeism and habitual truancy, including suspension and expulsion.
- Ensure that pupils with attendance problems are identified as early as possible to provide applicable support services and interventions.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies implemented to reduce chronic absenteeism rates and truancy rates.

Limiting Excused Absences & Eliminating Unexcused Absences

The Principal/Director must ensure that the attendance program limits excused absences to those that are necessary and decrease unexcused absences. EC 48205 and EC 48225.5 enumerate the reasons for absences that shall be excused. The Principal/Director or the SARB may require verification by a school official or physician if absences for health reasons appear excessive. A prior notice may be required from parents/guardians/caregivers for absences excused for justifiable personal reasons, such as non-emergency appointments or permitted religious instruction/retreats. (EC 46014 and 48205)

A school administrator may include other reasons for excusing absences that are within the discretion of school administrators based on the facts of the pupil's circumstances. (EC 48260[c])

The Governing Board believes that chronic absenteeism and tardiness, whether caused by excused or unexcused absences, may be an early warning sign of poor academic achievement and may put students at risk of dropping out. Therefore, chronic absenteeism as defined in EC 60901(c)(1) should be monitored to identify students at risk.

The "chronic absenteeism rate" as defined in California Code of Regulations Title 5, Section 157497.5 appendix also should be monitored for different significant pupil subgroups as well as for each grade level.

Students who are eighteen years of age or older or who are emancipated may provide their own excuses for absences, and the Principal/Director may require verification from a physician or designated school official when necessary. (EC 46012)

Providing Support Services and Interventions

The Principal/Director shall refer chronic absentees and truants to critical support services and interventions which will help them get back on track with their education. The support services and interventions may include, but are not limited to, any or all of the following:

- A conference between staff, the pupil's parents/guardians/caregivers, and the pupil.
- Promoting co-curricular and extracurricular activities that increase pupil connectedness to school, such as tutoring, mentoring, the arts, service learning, or athletics.
- Recognizing pupils who achieve excellent attendance or demonstrate significant improvement in attendance.
- Referral to a school nurse, school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker, and other pupil support personnel for case management and counseling.

- Collaborating with child welfare services, law enforcement, courts, public health care agencies, government agencies, or medical; mental; and oral health care providers to receive necessary services.
- Collaborating with school study teams, guidance teams, school attendance review teams, or other intervention-related teams to assess the attendance or behavior problem in partnership with the pupil and his or her parents/guardians/caregivers.
- Identifying barriers to attendance that may require schoolwide strategies instead of case management in schools with significantly higher rates of chronic absenteeism.
- Referral for a comprehensive psychosocial or psychoeducational assessment.
- Referral to a SARB.
- Referral to a county truancy mediation program.

Legal References

California Education Code Sections

1740 Employment of personnel to supervise attendance (county superintendent)	2550–2558.6 Computation of revenue limits
37201 School month	37223 Weekend classes
41601 Reports of average daily attendance	42238–42250.1 Apportionments
46000 Records (attendance)	46010–46014 Absences
46100–46119 Attendance in kindergarten and elementary schools	46140–46147 Attendance in junior high and high schools
48200–48208 Children ages six to eighteen (compulsory full-time attendance)	48210–48216 Exclusions from attendance
48240–48246 Supervisors of attendance	48260–48273 Truants
48291 Criminal complaint against parent	48292 Filing complaint against parent
48293 Relating to truants, fine for non-attendance	48320–48324 School attendance review boards
48340–48341 Improvement of student attendance	49067 Unexcused absences as cause of failing grade

California Elections Code- 12302 Student participation on precinct boards

California Family Code- 6920–6929 Consent by minor

California Vehicle Code- 13202.7 Driving privileges; minors; suspension or delay for habitual truancy

California Welfare & Institutions Code- 601–601.4 Habitually truant minors
11253.5 Compulsory school attendance

California Code of Regulations, Title 5- 306 Explanation of absence
420–421 Record of verification of absence due to illness and other causes

California Attorney General Opinions- 66 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen 245, 249 (1983)

California Court Decisions- American Academy of Pediatrics et al v. Lungren et al (1997) 16 Cal.4th 307

Resources

California Department of Education- *School Attendance Review Board Handbook 2015*
[State SARB Handbook](#) (PDF)

California School Boards Association- California School Boards Association website
[California School Boards Association](#)

Administrative Regulation for Student Policy #2- ATTENDANCE

Attendance Supervision

Parents/guardians/caregivers of children are welcomed partners in improving the school attendance of their children. Trust and collaboration should be the objective in communicating and interacting with parents/guardians/caregivers about school attendance problems. The Principal/Director and other staff responsible for supervising attendance shall use appropriate formal and informal school attendance notifications and shall facilitate open, honest, and blame-free discussions about school attendance before designating students as "habitual truants."

The Principal/Director will conduct full and impartial investigations of all school attendance complaints or referrals and may forward cases of persistent irregular attendance or habitual truancy to the SARB for a proper disposition. (EC 48262, 48263, 48290)

Prior to referral to the SARB, the Principal/Director may provide support services and interventions which may include, but are not limited to, any or all of the services and interventions identified in EC 48240(c).

School attendance is a community concern, and the Principal/Director must collaborate with all appropriate agencies, including law enforcement agencies, as partners in the SARB process to meet the special needs of pupils with school attendance or school behavior problems. (EC 48262, 48263, 48291, and 48321)

Duties of the Principal/Director for Student Attendance

The Principal/Director or designee shall have the following duties of monitoring attendance, developing strategies for truancy reduction, and coordinating the SARB:

Attendance Monitoring

1. Act as a resource to school or district staff regarding attendance issues, and provide necessary training related to record keeping for student attendance, early identification of truancy and chronic absenteeism, and data collection for chronic absenteeism rates, truancy rates, graduation rates, and dropout rates.
2. Collect, analyze, and report truancy data, chronic absenteeism data, graduation-rate data, and dropout data as ongoing activities for appropriate school, district, and county personnel to inform decisions about site-level, district-level, and county-level attendance and behavior interventions.
3. Maintain data on the successful transfer of students to and from alternative school programs, charter schools, and other schools in the district and out of the district.
4. Provide an opportunity for parents/guardians/caregivers to challenge the accuracy of attendance records that could impact the determination of grades, attendance awards, or involuntary transfers. (EC 49070)

Developing and Coordinating Strategies for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism Rates

1. Coordinate truancy-prevention and chronic absenteeism-prevention strategies based on the early identification of truancy or chronic absenteeism, such as prompt notification of absences in the parents' native language, selective approval of work permits, assignments of weekend school instruction, and counseling for truants or chronic absentees.
2. Assist school or district staff to develop site attendance plans by providing youth development strategies, resources, and referral procedures. Explain district and county policies, regulations, and procedures.

3. Maintain an inventory of local alternative educational programs and community resources, and employ those programs and resources to meet the differential needs of students with school attendance or school behavior problems. Inform parents/guardians/caregivers of truant students about alternative educational programs in the district to which the student may be assigned. (*EC 48322*)
4. Encourage and coordinate the adoption of attendance-incentive programs at school sites and in individual classrooms that reward and celebrate good attendance and significant improvements in attendance.
5. Coordinate site-level Student Success Teams or School Attendance Review Teams to reduce truancy and collect data on the outcomes of those meetings at each grade level.

SARB Chairperson Responsibilities for Dropout Prevention

1. Review the school attendance record and other documentation to determine the adequacy of all cases referred to the SARB and to determine if special arrangements or experts will be needed for the meeting. If the case warrants the resources of the SARB panel, schedule a SARB meeting with the parents/guardians/caregivers and the student. If the referral contains inadequate information or if appropriate school-level intervention has not been attempted, remand the case to the school for further work.
2. Ensure that SARB meetings maintain high expectations for all students, and ensure that families and youth are involved in selecting resources and services.
3. Refer students with attendance or behavior problems that cannot be resolved by the SARB to the appropriate agency, including law enforcement agencies when necessary. Also, refer parents/guardians/caregivers who continually and willfully fail to respond to SARB directives or services provided to the appropriate agencies, including law enforcement agencies. (*EC 48290*)
4. Develop and submit follow-up reports to the SARB on all directives and agreements made at the SARB meetings, especially student agreements to attend school or improve school behavior.
5. Consider use of age-appropriate habitual-truancy petitions to the courts when necessary and allowed in the county, such as petitions to suspend or delay the driving privilege for students from thirteen to eighteen years of age. (*Vehicle Code Section 13202.7*)
6. Collect data and report outcomes on SARB referrals as needed for the annual report to the County Superintendent of Schools, with copies forwarded to the LUSD District Superintendent and the Governing Board. (*EC 48273*)

Reporting Severance of Attendance

The Principal/Director reports the severance of attendance or the denial of admission of any child who is an individual with exceptional needs, as that term is defined in EC 56026, or who is a qualified handicapped person, as that term is defined in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. (*EC 48203*)

Adopted: November 15, 2021