

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

The Governing Board believes that regular attendance plays an important role in student achievement. The Board shall work with parents/guardians and students to ensure their compliance with all state attendance laws and may use appropriate legal means to correct problems of chronic absence or truancy.

(cf. 5112.1 - Exemptions from Attendance)
(cf. 5112.2 - Exclusions from Attendance)
(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)
(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)
(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies, and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law, Board policy, and administrative regulation. (Education Code 48205)

Student absence for religious instruction or participation in religious exercises away from school property may be considered excused subject to law and administrative regulation. (Education Code 46014)

Inasmuch as school attendance and class participation are integral to students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical and other appointments during non-school hours.

Students shall not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent, except in cases of medical emergency or, as authorized pursuant to Education Code 46010.1, for a confidential medical appointment.

The Board shall, by resolution entered into its minutes, approve reasonable methods that may be used to verify student absences due to illness or quarantine. (5 CCR 421)

Effect of Absence on Grades/Credits

If a student's absence is excused under Education Code 48205, he/she shall be allowed to complete any missed assignment or test that can be reasonably given, as determined by the teacher of that class. The student shall be given full credit for the assignment or test if he/she satisfactorily completes the assignment or test within a reasonable period of time. (Education Code 48205)

Legal Reference: (see next page)

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (continued)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

- 1740 *Employment of personnel to supervise attendance (county superintendent)*
- 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 6-18 (compulsory full-time attendance)*
- 48210-48216 *Exclusions from attendance*
- 48240-48246 *Supervisors of attendance*
- 48260-48273 *Truants*
- 48292 *Filing complaint against parent*
- 48320-48324 *School attendance review boards*
- 48340-48341 *Improvement of student attendance*
- 48980 *Parental notifications*
- 49067 *Unexcused absences as cause of failing grade*
- 49701 *Provisions of the interstate compact on educational opportunities for military children*

ELECTIONS CODE

- 12302 *Student participation on precinct boards*

FAMILY CODE

- 6920-6929 *Consent by minor for medical treatment*

VEHICLE CODE

- 13202.7 *Driving privileges; minors; suspension or delay for habitual truancy*

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

- 601-601.4 *Habitually truant minors*
- 11253.5 *Compulsory school attendance*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

- 306 *Explanation of absence*
- 420-421 *Record of verification of absence due to illness and other causes*

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS

- 87 *Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 168 (2004)*
- 66 *Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 244 (1983)*

COURT DECISIONS

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

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

- Improving Student Achievement by Addressing Chronic Absence, Policy Brief, December 2010*

WEB SITES

- CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Excused Absences

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

1. Personal illness (Education Code 48205)
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer (Education Code 48205)

(cf. 5112.2 - Exclusions from Attendance)

3. Medical, dental, optometrical, or chiropractic appointment (Education Code 48205)
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family, which shall be limited to one day if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state (Education Code 48205)

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. (Education Code 45194, 48205)

5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law (Education Code 48205)
6. The illness or medical appointment of a child to whom the student is the custodial parent (Education Code 48205)

(cf. 5146 - Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)

7. Upon advance written request by the parent/guardian and the approval of the principal or designee, justifiable personal reasons including, but not limited to: (Education Code 48205)
 - a. Appearance in court
 - b. Attendance at a funeral service
 - c. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion
 - d. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours per semester
 - e. Attendance at an employment conference

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (continued)

- f. Attendance at an educational conference offered by a nonprofit organization on the legislative or judicial process
- 8. Service as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Elections Code 12302 (Education Code 48205)

(cf. 6142.3 - Civic Education)

- 9. To spend time with an immediate family member who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Education Code 49701, and has been called to duty for deployment to a combat zone or a combat support position or is on leave from or has immediately returned from such deployment (Education Code 48205)

(cf. 6173.2 - Education of Children of Military Families)

- 10. To attend his/her naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen. (Education Code 48205)

- 11. Participation in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction in accordance with district policy, subject to the following conditions: (Education Code 46014)

- a. The student's parent/guardian shall provide written consent for the absence.
- b. The student shall attend at least the minimum school day.
- c. The student shall be excused from school for this purpose on no more than four days per school month.

(cf. 6141.2 - Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs)

Method of Verification

When a student who has been absent returns to school, he/she shall present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. Absences shall be verified by the student's parent/guardian, other person having control of the minor, or the student if age 18 or older. (Education Code 46012; 5 CCR 306)

The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

- 1. Written note, fax, email, or voice mail from parent/guardian or parent representative.

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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(s) of absence
 - 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. The employee shall document the verification and include the information specified in item #2 above.
4. Physician's verification.
 - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, district staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may request a note from the medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
 - b. If a student shows a pattern of chronic absenteeism due to illness, district staff may require physician verification of any further student absences.

Parental Notifications

At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Notify parents/guardians of the right to excuse a student from school in order to participate in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction at their places of worship, or at other suitable places away from school property designated by a religious group, church, or denomination (Education Code 46014, 48980)
2. Notify students in grades 7-12 and the parents/guardians of all students that school authorities may excuse any student from school to obtain confidential medical services without the consent of the student's parent/guardian (Education Code 46010.1)

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3. Notify parents/guardians that a student shall not have his/her grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence if missed assignments and tests that can reasonably be provided are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time, and include the full text of Education Code 48205 in the notice (Education Code 48980)

(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)