

**Sample Attendance Board Policy and Administrative Regulations
Including Administrative Regulation for Excessive Excused Absences**

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Section 5

Students

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES BP 5113(a) Compulsory Attendance

The Board of Trustees believes that regular attendance plays a key role in student achievement. The Board recognizes its responsibility under the law to ensure that students attend school regularly. Parents/guardians of children aged six (6) to eighteen (18) are obligated to send their children to school unless otherwise provided by law. The Board shall abide by all state attendance laws and may use appropriate legal means to correct problems of excessive absence or truancy (EC 48200). The Board recognizes that all excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, place students at risk of not graduating and will, therefore, make a concerted effort to keep students in school.

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law, Board Policy and administrative regulations. (EC 46010, 48216, 48205)

Insofar as class participation is an integral part of pupils' learning experience, parents/guardians and pupils shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during nonschool hours. Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, may affect a student's grades.

Pursuant to the Board of Education Policy 5113, corresponding Administrative Regulations 5113 will govern the operating procedures in regard to pupil absences and excuses.

Legal Reference: *Education Code*
46010-46015 Absences
48200-48231 Compulsory Education Law

Adopted by Board of Education: February 15, 2001

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ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

AR 5113(a)

In accordance with the Board of Education's Policy 5113, the following Administrative Regulations will be followed in reference to student absences and excuses:

Notification of Absences and Excuses Procedures Concerning Confidentiality

At the beginning of each academic year, notifications shall be sent to the parents/guardians of all pupils in grades 7 through 12, 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, according to Education Code Section 46010.1.

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 7-12 should not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency or confidential medical appointment.

Notification of Absences and Excuses Procedures Concerning Religious Purposes

At the beginning of each academic year, notifications shall be sent to parents or guardians of all K-12 pupils informing them of the administrative regulations regarding excuses and absences for religious purposes.

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

Student absences are no longer counted for purposes of state apportionment payments. Student attendance is monitored to ensure compliance with state attendance laws and to correct problems of excessive absence or truancy.

In accordance with state law, a student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness (*Education Code 46010*)
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer (*Education Code 46010*)

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3. Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments (*Education Code 46010*)
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family (*Education Code 46010*)
 - 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. (*Education Code 46010*)
 - b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/daughter-in-law, and brother, sister or any relative living in the student's immediate household. (*Education Code 46010*)
5. Jury duty as required by law for 18 year olds or older (*Education Code 46010*)
6. Exclusion from school to obtain required immunizations, if the absence is not more than five days (*Education Code 46010*)
7. Approved participation in a school co-curricular activity in which the student represents the school or district including athletic events, fine arts and/or vocational exhibits or performances, and academic competitions. (*Education Code 35330*)

A student's absence shall be excused for justifiable personal reasons, including but not limited to: (*Education Code 46010*)

1. Appearance in court either as a defendant or as a subpoenaed witnesses.
2. Observation of a holiday or a ceremony of the student's religion.
3. Attendance at a funeral services for a person other than a member of the student's immediate family.
4. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours during a semester.
5. Participation in an employment conference when requested in writing by the parent and approved in advance by the Principal.
6. Absences while the student is in Juvenile Hall, Children's Shelter, other shelter care or other custodial facilities.

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7. Classroom or school suspensions which have been made-up through assigned Saturday School or other institutionalized alternative.
8. Additional days, in excess of State authorized absences, to attend funeral services of an immediate family member, at the discretion of the principal or principal's designee.
9. Attendance at funeral services for someone other than immediate family only with a written request by the parent and approval of the principal or principal's designee.
10. Administrative summons or when detained by other classified or certified personnel.
11. Appointments, conferences or interviews with attorneys, law enforcement officers and probation officers.
12. Personal or family emergency requiring the student's absence, when approved at the discretion of the principal or the principal's designee. Such decision shall be made in advance of the student's absence and shall require prior consultation with the student's teachers.
13. Absence to care for an ill child when the student is the custodial parent of the child.
14. Attendance at a governmental or judicial function where the knowledge imparted would augment course curricula taught in at least one of the student's current academic classes or an organized visitation to a post-graduate institution, institute or technical training program which is related to the student's course of study, when approved in advance by the principal or the principal's designee. (The litmus test for excusing such an absence would be whether or not the activity would be appropriate for a class field trip to enhance and augment classroom instruction.)
15. For the purpose of spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family, who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Ed. Code Section 49701.

When a student is absent for personal reasons, the parent or guardian should write the principal to ask that the expected absence be excused. The principal or designee shall approve or disapprove the request pursuant to items 1-13 above. The principal or designee may deny the request if he or she believes the absence would be educationally harmful to the student or set a poor example in matters of school attendance for the student or other pupils. If the request is denied, reasons will be given.

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A student absent from school with an excused absence 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. The teacher of any 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 pupil missed during the absence. (*Education Code 48205*)

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES/TRUANCY

The Superintendent or designee shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy, such as communication with parents/guardians and the use of student study teams.

The following conditions or actions will result in unexcused absences:

1. The missing of class or school without an excused or warranted reason, whether the absence is student or parent initiated.
2. Any absence which has not been verified as to reason within five school days of the absence and no later than the close of the school attendance office of the fifth day.
3. Absences for which advanced approval is necessary and approval was not obtained before the absence.
4. Time out of class or school while in temporary custody under the jurisdiction of the _____ Police Department Truancy Sweep Program, unless otherwise indicated by the department.
5. A tardy to the assigned classroom/locker room of over 30 minutes shall be considered to be an unexcused absence from class.
6. Lateness to Saturday School or other District truancy abatement program constitutes an unexcused absence.

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METHOD OF VERIFICATION :

When pupils, who have not been cleared for an absence prior to being absent, return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods will be accepted as verification of student absences.

1. A written note from the parent/guardian or parent representative. (*Education Code 46012*)
2. A Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The school district 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
 - e. Reason for absence
3. A visit to the student's home by the verifying school or District employee.
4. Any other reasonable method that establishes the fact that the student was actually absent for the reasons stated. A written record shall be made, including the information outlined above.
5. A physician's verification.
 - a. Absence for a confidential medical appointment may require verification by the student's physician. When excusing pupils for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, district staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments. Staff may contact a doctor or medical office only to verify the time of the appointment.
6. The District 10% Policy

To be implemented at a date designated by the superintendent or designee but not prior to the District's 20th day of instruction.

When a student has accrued absences due to illness verified by the methods listed in paragraphs one (1) through five (5) above, equal to or surpassing ten percent (10%) of the school days during which the student was enrolled, from the date of enrollment to the current date, subsequent absences must be verified by a physician, health professional, school nurse, or other school personnel.

Absences must be cleared daily, unless other arrangements are made with the school principal or designee. Failure to provide verification from a physician, health professional, school nurse or other school personnel, will result in said additional absences being recorded as unexcused.

When a student has absences equal to or surpassing the 10% limit as described above, for excusable reasons other than illness, the student and parent may be referred to a student study team or a School Attendance Review Board for a case review.

Placing a student under the requirement of the ten percent (10%) policy or removing a student from said requirements and procedures prior to the end of the current academic year, shall be left to the discretion of the school site principal.

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- a. Placing a student under the requirement of the ten percent (10percent) policy or removing a student from said requirements prior to the end of the current academic year, will be left to the discretion of the school site principal.

VERIFICATION OF ABSENCE BY 18-YEAR-OLDS

No pupils, including those 18 years old and older, may verify their own absence, except for legally emancipated youth.

It is acceptable for 18-year-old pupils to document their reasons for absences, either in the form of a note or phone call: however, said absences must be verified by any of the following persons:

- a. A School or Public Health Nurse
- b. An Attendance Clerk
- c. An Attendance Supervisor
- d. A Physician
- e. A Principal
- f. A Teacher
- g. Any other qualified employee of the district assigned to make such verification or a substitute for such employee.

Absences for all pupils must be cleared within five (5) school days, from the date of the absence. After five (5) school days, an uncleared absence will be recorded as unexcused.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement whatever steps are deemed appropriate to keep pupils in school, including communication with parents/guardians and the use of attendance review boards and/or student study teams.

The District shall maintain a School Attendance Review Board as allowed by law in order to meet the special needs of pupils with school attendance and/or school behavior problems. 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.