

REGULATIONS FOR SCHOOL AND CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in school, in class, and ready for instruction. Daily and punctual attendance is essential to each student's academic success. Absence from school is detrimental to student achievement. The value of the experiences and benefits of classroom instruction may not be measured completely by tests and assignments. Therefore, students who fail to attend school (or given classes) for a minimum number of days (or hours) may be denied credit for their respective class(es) or grade level.

As required by law, each parent/guardian is responsible for regular and punctual attendance of any child in his or her charge within the compulsory age for school attendance. Emancipated students are responsible for their own regular and punctual attendance. Parents and emancipated students are expected to work cooperatively with school personnel to correct attendance problems, including meetings with teachers, counselors, or administrators.

Each member of a school's faculty is expected to avoid causing a student to be tardy or absent from a colleague's class. If a student is tardy or absent because of being detained by a faculty member, he/she will be considered excused and the absence will not be included in the count for excessive absences.

Students shall not be in an unauthorized area of a school without prior permission, and shall not leave a classroom, building, or assigned area without proper permission. Students who do not comply with this section will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Standards of Student Conduct.

A. Absence Defined

At the elementary level, a student who attends a portion of the school day is counted present. Excessive tardies or early releases from any class may be compiled and included in the count for excessive absences.

At the high school and middle school level, absences are computed for each class in addition to the daily attendance report. More than three tardies and/or early releases from any class may be compiled and included in the count for excessive absences.

1. Excused Absences

The parent/guardian has communicated, with supporting documentation if required, to school officials the reason for their child's absence and school officials consider the reason valid. Excused absences include but are not limited to: student illness, death or serious illness of a family member, doctor, dentist or therapist appointments, pre-approved travel for family emergencies or vacation, subpoenas for court, college visitations, injury, religious observances, and out-of-school suspensions.

2. Unexcused Absence

The parent has not communicated to school officials the reason for their child's absence; or the parent has communicated to school officials the reason for their child's absence and school officials consider the reason invalid. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to the following: missed school buses, oversleeping, recreational activities, child care issues, transportation issues, and bus suspensions.

3. Unverified Absence

The parent has not communicated to school officials the reason for their child's absence. These absences are considered unexcused.

B. Suspension Defined

Absence required due to an administrative decision to suspend a student for violation of the Standards of Student conduct and in accordance with discipline guidelines.

C. Parent/Guardian Notification of Absences

A documented attempt will be made to contact the parent or guardian if a student is absent without administrative approval or knowledge. If the parent/guardian does not acknowledge and assume responsibility for student attendance and all intervention strategies are pursued by the school are unsuccessful, the principal may refer the student to the Attendance Officer to consider initial proceedings as specified in the Code of Virginia. Procedures for compliance with this statute are found in Madison County School Board Policy JED.

D. Recordkeeping for Absences

Each principal is responsible for establishing a recordkeeping system for all student absences which complements the school division's system for state reporting purposes.

Each teacher is responsible for recording each student's absence or tardy as excused or unexcused based on the determination of such by the school administration. Excused absences for school sponsored/related activities, authorized visits of students with school personnel, school-directed out-of-school suspensions, and recognized religious holidays should be noted as such.

All absences required written confirmation from the parent/guardian. All absence notes will be preserved until the close of the school term. When a signature is in question, the principal will be the judge of its validity.

E. Make-up work

Students who have been absent for any reason will be allowed to make up all assignments that affect the course grade.

F. Unauthorized Extended Absences – Code of Virginia

Students who absent themselves from school without the knowledge and support of the parent/guardian are in violation of the Code of Virginia.

Procedures for compliance with this statute are found in Madison County School Board policy JED.

G. Excessive Absences

Excessive absences are those absences that are defined by the Code of Virginia (22.1-258) in the Compulsory Attendance Procedures.

H. Excusing Students by Reason of Observance of a Religious Holiday

No student will be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, which the student missed by reason of such absence, if the absence is verified in an acceptable manner.

Adopted: _____

Revised: November 13, 2017

Legal Refs: Va. Code Sections 22.1-254, 22.1-258, and 22.1-262.

Cross Refs.: JED Student Absences/Excuses Dismissals