

ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN #83

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY 6.200 – ATTENDANCE, TRUANCY, MAKE-UP WORK, STATE-MANDATED TESTS/GATEWAY EXAMS, CREDIT/PROMOTION DENIAL, DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOCATION AND ATTENDANCE HEARING

TRUANCY

Per 49-6-3007, after a child has five (5) unexcused absences, their parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a notice stating that the child's attendance at school is required. Further, any child who has six (6) or more unexcused absences shall be referred to the Juvenile Court. The child's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be referred to law enforcement if within three days after the 5 day notice, the child's attendance does not immediately conform to school attendance guidelines.

If after notice to the juvenile court is given, either the child or parent(s)/guardian(s) do not immediately conform to school attendance guidelines, additional referrals shall be made to either law enforcement, the Tennessee Department of Children's Services, and/or the juvenile court where appropriate.

Two exceptions exist to the above rule. First, there are children in the Oak Ridge School System who have already been before the Juvenile Court Judge for reasons which may include but not limited to truancy; and, as a result, have a Valid Court Order. Because that Order orders the child to not have any further unexcused absences, a violation of valid court order petition could be filed against the child for only one unexcused absence. And second, a special ed child must have a manifestation hearing stating that the child's absences are not a manifestation of his/her handicapping condition prior to any referral to the juvenile court.

Upon the next unexcused absence or the 10th unexcused absence, whichever comes first, a formal complaint will be filed against the child's parent with local law enforcement and/or against the child in Juvenile Court as well as referral to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services.

Upon the next unexcused absence or 15th absence, whichever comes first, the school shall file a formal complaint against the child's parents with local law enforcement and/or a petition against the child in Juvenile Court. These matters shall be handled by the Juvenile Court Judge.

The legal consequences issued by the Court for unlawful absences can range from zero to the child being placed in the custody of the Tennessee Department

of Children's Services with the parents paying child support to the State. The parents can also be fined up to \$50.00 per day, given community service, or be ordered to serve time in the county jail.

Students participating in school-sponsored activities whether on or off campus shall not be counted absent. In order to qualify as "school-sponsored," the activity must be school-planned, school-directed, and teacher-supervised or approved by the superintendent.

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his/her designee. Absences will only be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness
 - a. Only five days, whether consecutive or not can be excused by a parent note;
 - b. After a child has had (5) days, not necessarily consecutive, of illness related absences excused by a parent note, any future illness related absence must have a doctor's note stating that the absence is medically necessary.
 - c. All parent and doctor notes must be turned into the school within three (3) school days of the child returning to school.
2. Death in the family
3. Religious observations
4. Extreme weather conditions
5. Court appearance or legal mandates
6. Verifiable family emergency
7. School sponsored events
8. Principal has discretion to excuse absences based on the following:
 - a. The absence must be prearranged
 - b. The absence must not have an adverse affect on the child's academic standing
 - c. The child must have a good attendance history
 - d. The child must have a good behavior record
 - e. The Superintendent of Schools must agree

Any absence that does not fit any of the criteria listed above will be considered unexcused. The criteria listed above will also apply to tardies and early dismissals.

MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up work for excused absences must be requested by the student or parent no later than three (3) days after returning to school.

STATE-MANDATED TESTS/GATEWAY EXAMS

Students who are absent the day of the scheduled Gateway Tests must present a signed doctor's excuse or must have been given an excused release by the principal prior to testing to receive an excused absence. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam developed by the teacher that will count as 15% of their grade. (This does not satisfy Gateway requirements.) [or] Excused students will receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the Gateway test. Students who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the course exam which shall be averaged into their final grade at 15%. All students who miss a scheduled Gateway Test must take the test at the next administration in order to meet their Gateway diploma requirements.

CREDIT/PROMOTION DENIAL

Credit/promotion denial determinations may include student attendance, however student attendance may not be the sole criterion. However, if attendance is a factor, prior to credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

1. Parents and students shall be advised if a student is in danger of credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism.
2. Procedures in due process are available to the student when credit or promotion is denied.

DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOCATION

More than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) reported absences (unexcused) by a student during any semester renders a student ineligible to retain a driver's permit or license, or to obtain such if of age.

In order to qualify for reclaiming a driver's permit or license, the student must make a passing grade in at least three (3) full units subjects or their equivalency at the conclusion of a subsequent grading period.

ATTENDANCE HEARING

An attendance committee appointed by the principal will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist or to verify that the student has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted.

The principal shall be responsible for notifying, in writing, the superintendent of schools or designee and the parents of the student of any action taken by the school.

Any administrative decision regarding attendance may be appealed initially to the superintendent of schools or designee and ultimately to the Board of Education. The appeal shall be made in writing within five (5) days following the action or the report of the action, whichever is later.

Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.