

# BOARD POLICIES

## Section 9000 STUDENTS

### STATEMENT OF POLICY

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**SUBJECT:** Student/School Attendance and Truancy Policy

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#### **I. DEFINITIONS**

“Minor” means a person under the age of 18 years.

“Truant” means absent from school without a legitimate or valid excuse.

“School-age minor” means a minor who is at least six years old, but younger than 18 years old; and is not emancipated.

#### **II. PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY**

To empower all students to function effectively in the society in which they live, the Cache County Board of Education (Board) promotes and encourages regular school attendance of all students. This policy authorizes appropriate interventions when students are truant. Accordingly, the District expects parents and students to fully comply with the State’s compulsory attendance law.

#### **III. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PRINCIPLES**

Frequent absences of students from regular classroom learning experiences disrupt the continuity of the instructional process. The Board supports the following school attendance principles:

- A. Regular interaction between students in the classroom and student participation in well-planned instructional activities under the direction of a competent teacher are essential to the learning experience;
- B. The Board recognizes that Utah law requires parents or guardians to ensure the attendance of their school-age children in school;
- C. It is reasonable to expect school administrators to encourage a parent or legal guardian to comply with Utah attendance laws to ensure regular student attendance and punctuality.
- D. Timely communication between parents, teachers, and the school administration resolves most attendance issues.

#### **IV. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

Using this policy, each school shall establish attendance procedures to help parents/guardians and students with their responsibility for regular school attendance.

A. Accounting and Definitions:

1. Elementary teachers shall mark attendance at the beginning of each school day. Secondary teachers shall mark attendance for each period of the day.
2. When marking a student's attendance, the following attendance codes are used:

Attendance Codes:

- A - Unverified
- G - Verified
- I - Illness
- V - Vacation
- S - School Activity
- K - Counselor
- O - Admin Office
- H - Homebound
- P - ISP
- X - Suspended
- E - Family Death
- D - Detention
- C - Pending Court Action
- Z - Truant

Tardy Codes:

- T - Tardy
- L - Late
- R - Left Early
- Y - Excused Tardy

B. Parent or Legal Guardian Notification

1. The school shall make reasonable attempts to notify a parent or legal guardian of student's unverified absence(s).
2. Injury or Illness. The school shall notify the custodial parent of a student who is injured or becomes ill at school during the regular school day if:
  - a. the injury or illness requires treatment at a hospital, doctor's office, or other medical facility not located on the school premises;
  - b. the school has received a current telephone number for the party it is required to notify or make reasonable efforts to notify.

C. Notice of Extended Absence

If the custodial parent or legal guardian of a student knows that their student will be absent from school for an extended period of time, the parent/guardian shall notify the school's administration via a phone call, an email, or a written notice in order for the school to properly account for the missed school-days.

## V. TRUANCY PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The Cache School District Truancy Intervention Program has been established to encourage good attendance, identify interventions to resolve attendance problems, and to facilitate the processing of chronically truant students.

#### **A. Interventions**

The school shall make and document efforts to resolve a student's attendance problems and shall include, as reasonably feasible:

1. school authorities provide counseling and positive supports for the student;
2. the school administration making adjustments to the curriculum and schedule to meet special needs of the student;
3. suggestions from the Student Assistant Team (SAT);
4. considering alternatives proposed by a parent or legal guardian;
5. monitoring school attendance of the student;
6. voluntary participation in truancy mediation, if available;
7. home visits;
8. providing a student's parent, upon request, with a list of resources available to assist the parent in resolving the student's attendance problems;
9. enlisting the assistance of community intervention education classes as appropriate;
10. issuing a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation to the parent or legal guardian of a student who is younger than 14 years old;
11. issuing a Notice of Truancy to a student who is at least 12 years old;
12. issuing a Truancy Citation to a student who is at least 12 years old;

#### **B. Notice of Truancy and Truancy Citations**

Earnest and persistent efforts to resolve student attendance problems may include the issuance of a Notice of Truancy and/or Truancy Citation, as follows:

1. Notice of Truancy (habitual). A school administrator may issue a Notice of Truancy to a student who is at least 12 years of age and has been MARKED truant at least five (5) times during the current school year. The Notice of Truancy shall:
  - a. identify the classes and/or dates for which the student has been considered truant;
  - b. direct the student and parent to meet with school authorities to discuss the student's truancies; and
  - c. inform the student and parent that Utah State Law requires their cooperation in securing regular attendance of the student;
  - d. explain the next step – Truancy Citation

#### **2. Truancy Citations**

A school administrator may issue a Truancy Citation to a student who is at least 12 years of age and has been absent without a valid excuse or an immediate citation may be issued for not attending class while at school. A copy of the Truancy Citation shall be delivered in person or by mail to the parent or legal guardian of the student.

3. Truancy notices and citations shall be documented in Power School.

4. The parent shall have the right to appeal a Truancy Citation or Notice of Truancy in writing to the building level administrator within ten (10) days of being issued.

5. A school administrator may impose administrative penalties. Administrative penalties may include, but are not limited to, make-up classes or a Truancy Citation as outlined in the schedule below. A school administrator may void a Truancy Citation with improved attendance.

**6. Truancy Citation Fine**

Truancy Citation Fines are approved by the Board

1<sup>st</sup> Citation \$20

Additional Citations \$25

7. A school district or school may refer a minor to court for a class C misdemeanor committed on school property or for being a habitual truant (10 times during one school year), as defined in Section 53G-6-201 and 53G-8-211, if the minor refuses to participate in an evidence-based alternative intervention. The district's Director of Student Services is required to be part of this referral.

When a minor is referred to court the school shall appoint a school representative to continue to engage with the minor and the minor's family through the court process. A school representative may not be a school resource officer. A school district or school shall include the following in its referral to the court:

- a. attendance records for the minor;
- b. a report of evidence-based alternative interventions used by the school before referral, including outcomes;
- c. the name and contact information of the school representative assigned to actively participate in the court process with the minor and the minor's family; and
- d. any other information the school district or school considers relevant.

**VI. Compulsory Education Violation**

A school administrator, in coordination with the Student Services Director, may issue a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation to the parent of a student under the age of 14 if the school-age minor is absent without a valid excuse at least five (5) times during the school year.

A. The Notice of Compulsory Education Violation shall:

1. direct the parent to meet with school authorities to discuss the student's attendance problems;
2. direct the parent to cooperate with the school in securing regular attendance by the student;
3. designate the school authority with whom the parent is required to meet;
4. state that it is a class B misdemeanor for the parent to intentionally or recklessly fail to meet with the school authority or fail to prevent the student from being absent without a valid excuse five (5) or more times during the remainder of the school year.

- B. The Notice of Compulsory Education Violation must be school aged minor's parent or legal guardian in personal or certified mail. the on served
- C. If a parent or legal guardian intentionally or recklessly fails to meet with the school authority or the school-age minor is absent without a valid excuse an additional five (5) or more times during the remainder of the school year, the school administrator shall forward a copy of the documented efforts which have been made by the school to address the school-age minor's attendance issues along with a copy of the Notice of Compulsory Education Violation to the Student Family Resources Department.
- D. If the school's efforts are not successful, the school administration shall submit the school's interventions and documentation to the appropriate county or district attorney.

### **VII. School-aged Minor Exempt from School Attendance**

The District may not issue a citation for truancy or compulsory education violation if the student is properly exempt from school attendance. A student that is exempt from school shall not be on any school campus during the regular school day unless he/she has been approved by the school administration to participate in a specific class or event.

- A. The Board shall excuse a school-age student from attendance if the student's parent/guardian submit a signed affidavit stating the school age minor will attend a home school program.
- B. The Board may excuse a student from attendance if it has received sufficient evidence to support a finding by the Superintendent that the student is over the age of sixteen (16) and is unable to profit from attendance at school because of inability or a continuing negative attitude toward school regulations and discipline, or as otherwise provided in Utah Code Ann. § 53G-6-204(1). When a school-aged minor is excused from attendance by the Board, a certificate shall be issued by the District Director of Student Services stating that the school-aged minor is excused from school attendance for the period specified on the certificate.

### **VIII. POLICY DISSEMINATION AND REVIEW**

Schools shall provide annual notification of the District and school attendance and discipline policies to the parent/guardian(s) of all students at the time of registration.

### **REFERENCES**

- [Utah Code 53G-6, 201-209 Compulsory Education.](#)
- [Utah Code 53G-8-211 Response to school-based behavior](#)
- [Utah Code 53G-9-202 Notification to the parent of an injured or sick child.](#)
- [Utah Administrative Code R277-607 – Truancy Prevention.](#)

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