

## **V. ATTENDANCE (Sections 1003.24, 1003.26, 1003.27, Florida Statutes)**

Compulsory school attendance age now applies to students between six (6) and eighteen (18) years of age unless the parent files a notice with the school of the student's intent to terminate school enrollment. This notice of intent applies to students between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) only. All students are expected to attend school each day except for reasons indicated under Excusable Absence.

### ***Excusable absence includes***

- that which is caused by the illness of student, serious illness, death in the family, or quarantine.
- that which has the sanction of both parents and school. This agreement should be made prior to the absence. **An absence related to vacation will not be excused.**
- that which the principal deems excusable because of unusual circumstances.
- that which recognizes absence for a religious holiday. (Prior notice of absence is required.)

Each absence must be explained. Parents or guardians are responsible for providing notification within three (3) days of the student's return to school or the absence will result in being recorded as "unexcused absence." Notification should include the student's name, the date the student was absent, the reason for the absence, and parent's or legal guardian's name. Schools may request the parent or guardian contact the school by telephone within three days or provide the written notice upon the student's return to school.

Absences related to illness or injury of the student shall be excused upon receiving notification by the parents or guardian for absences of no more than five (5) consecutive days or a total of ten (10) days in a period of ninety (90) calendar days. Students who check in or out of school for a medical appointment should provide documentation from the medical professional upon return to the school for the absence to be excused.

Absences related to illness or injury of the student that exceed five (5) consecutive days or a total of ten (10) days in a period on ninety (90) calendar days shall require a physician's statement. The physician's statement should indicate the student is under his/her care and the dates (or period of time) that it is medically necessary for the student to be absent. Absences related to illness or injury that exceed the number of days described above and lack a physician's statement as required shall be recorded as "unexcused absences." Any student who accumulates five (5) unexcused absences in a thirty (30) calendar day period or ten (10) days in a period of ninety (90) calendar days will be referred to an attendance child study team. The student's parent/guardian shall be notified and a parent/guardian meeting will be scheduled to identify potential remedies. S. 1003.26 Florida Statutes (2008). This policy applies to absences from individual class periods, as well as to absences from the entire school day.

Students with excused absences will be allowed to make up all missed work. All missed work must be requested by the student/parent/guardian upon the student's return to

school with an excused absence. All work assigned during a student's excused absence may be submitted without penalty upon the student's return at a time agreed to by the teacher and student but no less than the number of consecutive days absent. The principal or the principal's designee shall make a good faith effort to immediately inform a student's parent by telephone of a student's suspension and the reasons for the suspension. Each suspension and the reasons for the suspension shall be reported in writing within 24 hours to the student's parent by United States mail. S. 1006.09 Florida Statutes (2008)

Students will receive a zero on all graded classwork/tests during unexcused absences and suspensions.

To be counted present in a **class**, the student must be in attendance at least half the **class period**.

Students in attendance for any part of the school day are counted present for the day but counted **absent** for any **classes** missed.

Upon request, students will be provided information regarding daily classwork within 24 hours of being suspended so the student may remain current with class assignments.

Each school shall determine how the assignments are given to the student/parent. Only **homework** that is graded for all students will be graded for suspended students.

Homework not graded for other students will not be graded for suspended students.

**Suspended students who do not complete "graded" homework assignments in a reasonable amount of time subject to administrative review will receive zeroes for those assignments. With the exception of homework graded for all students, suspended students will receive zeroes for all work missed while suspended.**

State law requires the name of any minor with fifteen (15) unexcused absences during a period of ninety (90) calendar days reported to the district school board and the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Students reported to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles shall have their license suspended or withheld upon making application for a license unless the department is provided with (a) proof of compliance or (b) a hardship waiver. Request for proof of compliance or a hardship waiver should be made to the school social worker within fifteen (15) days from the date of receipt of the notice of intent to suspend the license.

Should the request for a hardship waiver be denied by the principal or the principal's designee, the student, parent or guardian may request to appeal that decision to the School Board. Requests to appeal the school's decision regarding a hardship waiver shall be made in writing and submitted to the Office of School Social Workers, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, 32503.

### ***Guidelines for Class Work Missed by Student Attending Gifted Enrichment Centers***

Gifted students' attendance one day each week at a Gifted Center is considered part of their regular school day. Gifted students

- are expected to maintain normal progress and master the same concepts and skills taught in all general education classes.
- may not be counted absent while attending a gifted center.
- must be permitted to make up any tests that are missed during gifted program attendance with no penalty because of program participation.
- may not be required to complete routine work assignments and must be provided any required makeup work by the teacher.
- must be given adequate time for makeup work.

Center Contact Numbers:

PATS Center, (494-5640 x 260)

Lipscomb Center (494-5760)

West Side Gifted Center (492-0531)

### ***Awarding Credits***

A student who misses more than five (5) days during a semester, must demonstrate mastery in one of the following methods to be eligible to earn credit:

- 1) earn a passing grade on the semester exam that when averaged with the two grading periods is 60 percent or higher for the course; or
- 2) earn a course average of 70 percent or higher.

A student who has not been in attendance for the required number of days and does not demonstrate mastery by one of the two methods listed above will have a maximum of a 59 recorded in academic history for that course. 1003.428 (4), 1003.436 Florida Statutes

### ***Religious Holiday***

Students shall receive an excused absence for an absence related to the observance of a religious holiday per Section 1002.20 Florida Statutes (2008). The observance of the holiday shall be consistent with the tenets of the student's religion. Parents/guardians shall provide written notice of the observance prior to the absence. A note shall not be required upon the student's return to school.

Students shall not receive any adverse effect for an absence related to the observance of a religious holiday and shall be allowed to make up any work missed as the result of the absence.

### ***Truancy – See Chapter 1003, Florida Statutes (2008)***

1. Each parent/guardian is responsible for his/her child's school attendance as required by law. Whenever a child of compulsory school attendance age is absent without the permission of the person in charge of the school, the parent/guardian of the child shall report and explain the cause of such absence as soon as practical after learning of such absence.
2. If a student under the age of eighteen (18) is absent from school without valid reason, the parent shall be given written notice requiring that the child be in attendance at

school within three (3) days from the date of the notice. Failure to comply with such notice may subject the parents to criminal prosecution.

3. Students who become habitual truants shall be dealt with according to the provisions of Section 1003.27 and Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.

4. During the school day, students between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) who are not in school or under the supervision of an adult shall be transported to school when found by law enforcement.

***Law Enforcement Officers and the Truant Child***

A law enforcement officer is authorized to take a child into custody when such officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the child is truant. 984.13, Florida Statutes (2008)