

Related Entries: (Not identified at this time)

Student Attendance for Grades PreK-12

The School Board of Lee County believes that regular and punctual school attendance is crucial for a student's academic success. All students are required to attend school every day of the school year. Parents are responsible for their child's daily school attendance. This policy applies to all PreK–12 students.

(1) Compulsory School Attendance

- (a) All children who have attained the age of six years or who will have attained the age of six years by February 1 of any school year, or who are older than six years of age but who have not yet attained the age of 16 years or age specified by state statute, whichever is older, except as provided in this policy, are required to attend school regularly during the school year.
- (b) Children who will have attained the age of five years on or before September 1 of the school year are eligible for enrollment in public kindergarten for that school year and, if enrolled, are expected to attend school regularly during the school year.
- (c) Children who are enrolled in an Early Childhood Program (Pre-K) program, birth to four years old, are expected to attend school regularly during the school year.
- (d) A student who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the School Board. The declaration must acknowledge that the termination may reduce the student's earning potential and must be signed by the child and the parent. The school shall notify the parent of the receipt of the student's declaration of intent. A student who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to the legal sanctions for compulsory school attendance.
- (e) An exit interview must be conducted by the student's certified school counselor or other school personnel to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and identify the actions taken to keep the student in school. The student's certified school counselor or other school personnel shall inform the student of opportunities to continue his or her education in a different environment, including, but not limited to adult education and GED test preparation. The student shall complete a survey in a format prescribed by the Department of Education to provide data on student

46 reasons for terminating enrollment and actions taken by schools to keep
47 students enrolled.

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49 (f) Compulsory school attendance requirements may be met by attendance in a
50 home education program.

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52 (g) For students enrolled in Department of Juvenile Justice Programs, the
53 compulsory school attendance requirement is governed by state law and
54 regulations and includes a longer term.

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56 (2) Patterns of Non-Attendance

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58 (a) Non-attendance for instructional activities is established by tardiness, early
59 sign-outs, or absences for all or any part of the day.

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61 (b) For enforcement of compulsory school attendance purposes, three unexcused
62 tardies or unexcused early sign-outs may, at the discretion of the school
63 principal, be considered equal to one day of absence.

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65 (c) For enforcement of compulsory school attendance purposes, unless
66 acceptable documentation is presented/submitted, an accumulation of daily
67 unexcused absences or tardiness, or early sign-outs that equal five days in a
68 calendar month or 10 days within a 90 calendar day period may be exhibiting a
69 pattern of non- attendance as determined by the Child Study Team.

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71 (d) If the student exhibits a pattern of nonattendance (excused or unexcused),
72 principals may request documentation for subsequent absences. Non-
73 attendance for instructional activities is established by tardiness, early sign
74 outs, or absences for all or any part of the day.

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76 (e) "Habitual truant" is defined as a student who has 15 or more unexcused
77 absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of
78 the student's parent or guardian, and who is subject to compulsory school
79 attendance.

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81 (3) Absences

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83 (a) Excused Absences - Students must be in school unless the absence has been
84 permitted or excused for one of the reasons listed below:

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86 1. Illness of the Student

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88 2. Illness of an immediate family member

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90 3. Death in the immediate family

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92 4. Religious instruction or religious holidays.

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5. An appointment scheduled to receive a therapy service provided by a licensed health care practitioner or behavior analyst certified for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder, including, but not limited to, applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.
 6. Required court appearance or subpoena
 7. Special event: Examples of special events include important public functions, conferences, state/national competitions, as well as exceptional cases of family need. The student must request and receive permission from the principal/designee at least five days prior to the event.
 8. Scheduled medical or dental appointment.
 9. Students having, or suspected of having, a communicable disease or infestation which can be transmitted are to be excluded from school and are not allowed to return to school until they no longer present a health hazard.
 10. Students on field trips and students who attend alternative to suspension programs are not considered absent.
- (b) Unexcused Absences – Absences not excused as defined in the previous section, are considered unexcused.
1. Students without a completed Certificate of Immunization indicating compliance with the current required schedule of immunizations will not be allowed to attend classes until this document is provided or a waiver is obtained. Absences due to non-compliance with immunization requirements shall be considered unexcused.
 2. Students transferring to Lee County who are considered homeless, children of a military family or are under the care of the Division of Children and Families, have a 30 day waiver of both health examination and immunization requirements.
- (c) Make up Work
1. Excused Absences: Make-up work for credit and grade is allowed for all excused absences. Immediately upon return to school, the student will be given the number of days absent plus one additional day to make up all work missed.
- (d) Tardiness – Tardiness is defined as a student not being in the classroom when the class is scheduled to begin.

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1. Parents must follow the same process to excuse a tardy as they do to excuse an absence.
 2. Excessive tardiness shall be addressed on a case-by-case basis to determine if there is a pattern of non-attendance. Non-attendance for instructional activities is established by tardiness, early sign-outs, or absences for all or any part of the day.
 3. Tardiness to any class without documentation may be considered unexcused.
 4. Habitual tardiness is defined as six or more tardies to school or to an individual class per quarter.
 5. Principals have the discretion to excuse tardiness for extenuating circumstances.
 6. Unless excused under the provisions of this policy, accumulated tardiness will be recorded as unexcused absences.
- (e) Early Sign-Outs – Early sign-outs are defined as a parent or guardian signing out a child before the end of the school day.
1. No student shall be released within the final 30 minutes of the school day unless the principal/designee determines it is an emergency.
 2. All schools shall establish procedures for early release that ensure that all students are treated consistently.
 3. Excessive early sign-outs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis to determine if there is a pattern of non-attendance.
 4. Unless excused under the provisions of this policy, accumulated early sign-outs will be recorded as unexcused absences.
- (4) Driving Privileges and Attendance
- (a) Attendance Requirements for Minors (from ages 14-18) to Maintain Driving Privileges:
1. Unexcused absence data shall be compiled at each Lee County School through an automated system and electronically transmitted to Information Systems (IS).
 2. Information regarding each minor student accumulating 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days or who drops out of school

187 shall be transmitted to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor
188 Vehicles (DHSMV). DHSMV may not issue a driver license or learner
189 permit, or may suspend the driving privileges of any reported student
190 until the student satisfies regular school attendance requirements.

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192 (5) Interventions

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194 (a) The primary teacher of a student exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance shall
195 notify the principal. The principal shall refer the student to the Child Study Team
196 (CST) to develop an intervention plan to improve the student's attendance. The
197 CST will schedule a meeting with parents or legal guardian and the assigned
198 school social worker. If appropriate, a contract will be developed and signed
199 by the participating parties.

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201 (b) After nine absences in a course, credit may be withheld. The Child Study Team
202 must develop a contract with the student and parent(s) that includes a plan to
203 restore the credit withheld.

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205 (c) Non-compliance with the contract may result in referrals to the Truancy
206 Intervention Program, the Truancy Ungovernable Runaway Network or the
207 State Attorney's Office.

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209 (d) The School shall provide written notice to parents after three tardies or three
210 early sign-outs within 30 calendar days. Additional tardies or early sign-outs
211 shall result in two of the following interventions:

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213 1. A mandatory parent conference with the principal/designee

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215 2. A mandatory student conference with the principal/designee

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217 3. Other appropriate penalties such as after-hours detention, in
218 accordance with the *Code of Conduct for Students*

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220 4. A referral to the Child Study Team or Attendance Review Committee

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222 5. A referral to the School Social Worker

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224 (6) Students shall not be treated differently with regard to attendance on the basis of their
225 race, color, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or religion.

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227 **STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** 1000.36, 1001.41, 1001.42, 1001.43, 1003.02 (1) (b),

228 1003.21, 1003.26, 1003.27, 1003.52 F.S.

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