

State Law Regarding Attendance and Truancy in Texas Public Schools

State Law Regarding Attendance

A student **must be in attendance at least 90% of the time in each class**, beginning in Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. The following absences will be excused under the Compulsory Attendance Laws per TEC §25.087 and these absences will not affect credit.

Excused Absences:

- Documented health care appointment if student attends part of school day
- US Citizenship proceedings
- Religious holy days
- Required court appearances
- Higher education visits (2 per year for only Juniors and Seniors)
- Court ordered/DFPS required activity
- Student learner's/driver's license appt. (max 1 each at LHS only)
- Serious or life-threatening illness (must meet specific state requirements)
- Serving as an election clerk (must meet specific state requirements)
- Military dependent child visiting parent before, during after deployment (must meet specific state requirements)
- Participation in UIL school sponsored events
- Participation in Stock shows with note from Extension agent
- 17 year old trying to enlist in Military (must meet state requirements)
- Playing TAPS at Texas Military Funeral (6th – 12th graders)

Excused Absences that may affect credit:

- Parent Note (6 days per year)
- Documented health care appointment but the student did not attend school the same day

The following absences will not be considered excused absences.

Unexcused Absences:

- Parent Note (7th day +)
- Any other undocumented absence

Who Must Attend school?

Any student who is enrolled in PreK or Kindergarten, or student who is enrolled and has not yet reached their 19th birthday, must attend school for the entire period the program is offered.

What is the Entire Period?

The "entire period" means being present at school on time, being present in every class period, and remaining in class until the school day has officially ended.

How to Document an Absence?

Medical notes from a doctor or health clinic for an appointment will be considered EXCUSED if the absence was during the school day and the student begins class, or returns to school on the same day, with documentation of the appointment. The note will be considered Excused when a student doesn't attend school the same day as the appointment, however, the student may have clock hours assigned for these absences.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance review committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence to determine whether an absence will be excused or unexcused.

Parent notes for an absence will be considered EXCUSED for the first 6 documented days (or part of days) missed as long as the parent note is submitted to the school within 72 hours of the last day missed. Parent notes should describe the reason for the absence and should be signed by the parent.

How to Make Up Credit Lost from Too Many Absences?

Students begin to accrue Clock Hours after they drop below 90% attendance. To earn credit students must make up all clock hours earned.

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's campus to see when clocks can be served.

NOTE: The district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence, unless the absence is an exemption under compulsory attendance laws.

State Law Regarding Truancy

If a student is absent from school without an acceptable excuse (listed above) for 10 or more days, or parts of days, within a 6 month period, the parent may be subject to prosecution and the student may be referred to truancy court.

To prevent truancy, the school district will send notices to parents making them aware of absences that may lead to truancy. The school district will also invite parents to attend Attendance Review Meetings to develop an intervention plan.