

## STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular attendance by all students is very important. In many cases, irregular attendance is the major reason for poor schoolwork; therefore, all students are urged to make appointments, do personal errands, etc., outside of school hours.

**The Board directs the Superintendent/designee to develop appropriate procedures for tracking student attendance based on the mode of learning. The District monitors daily absences for trends related to COVID-19.**

**Students will not be penalized for absences related to contracting COVID-19 or having to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19 exposure/symptoms, regardless of whether the student is participating in-person, remotely or both.**

Reasons for which students may be medically excused include, but are not limited to (*customize to reflect District reasons*):

1. personal illness of the student;
2. illness in the student's family necessitating the presence of the child;
3. quarantine for contagious disease or
4. emergency or other set of circumstances in which the judgment of the Superintendent constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school, which may include but not be limited to absences due to documented medical appointments.

**Any limits that may be in place regarding the number of medical excuses that will be authorized without a doctor's note may be extended if the student or someone in the student's family is in quarantine due to COVID-19 or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.**

Reasons for which students may be nonmedically excused include, but are not limited to:

1. needed at home to perform necessary work directly and exclusively for parents or legal guardians for a limited period of time when approved by the Superintendent (applies to students over 14 years of age only);
2. death in the family (applies to absences of up to 18 school hours unless a reasonable cause may be shown for a longer absence);
3. observance of religious holidays consistent with a student's truly held religious belief;

4. traveling out of state to attend a Board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (applies to absences of up to 24 school hours);
5. college visitation;
6. absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status;
7. absences due to a student being homeless; ~~or~~
- 8. temporary internet outage for individual students or households;**
- 9. technical difficulties for individual students or households occurring at inopportune times such as during a teacher-led remote learning lesson;**
- 10. absences due to COVID-19 reasons that are not considered medically excused until alternative arrangements can be made or**
11. as determined by the Superintendent.

The District makes an attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or other person having care of a student who has not notified the school of the student's absence that day regarding that student's absence without legitimate excuse within 120 minutes of the start of the school day. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to determine and use the appropriate notification procedure and methods consistent with State law.

Each student who is absent must immediately, upon return to school, make arrangements with his/her teacher(s) to make up work missed. Students who are absent from school for reasons not permitted by State law may, or may not, be permitted to make up work. Each case is considered on its merits by the principal and the respective teacher(s). Students who are absent due to an in-school or out-of-school suspension are permitted to make up missed classroom assignments in accordance with District level policies and procedures. Students are requested to bring a note to school after each absence explaining the reason for the absence or tardiness in accordance with procedures and timelines defined in District level policies and procedures.

The Board does not believe that students should be excused from school for vacations or other nonemergency trips. The responsibility for such absences resides with the parent(s), and they must not expect any work missed by their child to be retaught by the teacher. If the school is notified in advance of such a trip, reasonable efforts are made to prepare a general list of assignments for the student to do while he/she is absent.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to establish a hearing and notification procedure for the purpose of denying a student's driving privileges if that student of compulsory school age has been absent without legitimate excuse for more than 60 consecutive hours during a school month or a total of at least 90 hours during a school year.

[Adoption date:]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3313.609; 3313.66  
3321.01; 3321.03; 3321.04; 3321.13; 3321.14; 3321.141; 3321.19;  
3321.38  
4510.32  
OAC 3301-69-02

CROSS REFS.: IGAC, Teaching About Religion  
IKB, Homework  
JEDB, Student Dismissal Precautions  
JEE, Student Attendance Accounting (Missing and Absent Children)  
JHC, Student Health Services and Requirements  
JHCC, Communicable Diseases

*NOTE:*

*Boards should ensure that policies and procedures clearly reflect reasons for which a student's absence is deemed excused as well as whether the reason is then classified as a medically or nonmedically excused absence. Districts should review the reasons outlined in Ohio Administrative Code 3301-69-02 when making these determinations. This policy can be further customized to reflect these determinations.*

*In 2009, the Ohio General Assembly enacted House Bill (HB) 1, which directed school districts to count – up to 24 school hours as excused absences – time that a student is absent from school for the sole purpose of traveling out of state to a board-approved enrichment activity or an extracurricular activity. The student is required to make up all missed classroom assignments.*

*In addition, if the student will be out of the state for 24 or more consecutive school hours for a board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity, a classroom teacher employed by the board must accompany the student to provide instructional assistance.*

*HB 166 added a requirement that districts will attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or other person having care of a student regarding that student's absence without legitimate excuse within 120 minutes of the start of the school day using a method consistent with State law. The following methods are acceptable:*

- *A telephone call placed in-person*
- *An automated telephone call (via a system that includes verification that each call was actually placed)*
- *A notification sent through the school's automated student information system*
- *A text message*
- *An email*
- *An in-person visit*
- *Any other notification procedure that has been adopted by resolution of the board of education*

*Schools are not required to notify a parent who notifies the school of the student's absence within the first 120 minutes after the beginning of the school day. In addition, an immunity provision is included in the new law, which states that a school district or any officer, director, employee, or any member of the district board of education is not liable in a civil action for injury, death, or loss to person or property from an employee's action or inaction in good faith compliance with the law.*

*HB 491 requires boards to adopt a policy establishing parameters for completing and grading assignments missed due to a student's suspension. The policy must permit the completion of classroom assignments missed and students must receive at least partial credit for completed assignments. The policy may permit grade reductions and must prohibit the receipt of a failing grade solely on account of the student's suspension. Districts may further customize this policy to reflect parameters or outline in detail in student handbooks.*

***Ohio Department of Education Reset and Restart guidance for the 2020-2021 school year states that pursuant to the Ohio Department of Health guidelines families, caregivers and staff should notify their school if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or if they, or any members of their households, have been diagnosed or presumed to have COVID-19. They should also notify the school if they are quarantined due to known exposure to someone diagnosed or presumed to have COVID-19. The recommended quarantine period is 14 days.***

***The guidance acknowledges the likelihood of increased absences due to illness or quarantine and recommends revising school policies so as to not penalize staff or students for COVID-19 related absences.***



*In all cases Districts should communicate what documentation is required for student absences based on the reason for the absence. At minimum, this should be communicated through student handbooks. (i.e., Doctor's documentation, court documents, verification of college visits)*

***THIS IS A REQUIRED POLICY***