

DICKSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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1
2 Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and therefore, students are expected to be
3 present each day school is in session. The Director of Student Services shall oversee the entire
4 attendance program which shall include:¹
5

- 6 1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
- 7 2. Alternative program options for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance
8 requirements;
- 9 3. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
- 10 4. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new
11 or reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
- 12 5. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license
13 withdraws from school.²
14

15 Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student
16 records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access
17 to student information without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.³
18

19 Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the
20 principal/designee. Excused absences shall include:⁴

- 21 1. Personal illness of student; after three (3) consecutive days, or excessive, repeated
22 absence, a note from a physician may be required.
- 23 2. Illness of immediate family member which requires the student's help at home;
- 24 3. Death in the family;
- 25 4. Religious observances;⁵
- 26 5. School sponsored or school endorsed activities;⁶
- 27 6. Summons, subpoena, or court order;
- 28 7. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the
29 student has no control.
- 30 8. Student who is visiting a parent who is being deployed to or returning from a military
31 assignment, regardless if the deployment is abroad or domestic.
- 32 9. Extreme weather conditions

33 The following may be excused when such requests are made three (3) days in advance of the
34 absence:

- 35 1. Driver's test,
- 36 2. College visits and
- 37 3. Military examination
38

39 Students participating in school-sponsored activities whether on or off campus shall not be
40 counted absent. In order to qualify as school sponsored, the activity must be school-planned,
41 school-directed and teacher supervised.
42

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1 Schools may require an official verification of any appointment prior to excusing the absence.
2 Schools may limit the number of excused absences.

3
4 The accumulation of (8) eight unexcused tardies or unexcused dismissals from school will be
5 equal to (1) one unexcused school day in the enforcement of the schools attendance policy.

6
7 Reasons for absences or tardiness and request for early dismissal before the close of the school
8 day must be presented in writing or in person by the parents or guardians.

9 The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:⁷

- 10 1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
- 11 2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or
12 absent for the majority of the day;
- 13 3. All student absences are verified;
- 14 4. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness;
- 15 5. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

16

17 *Emergency Rule for 2021-2022 School Year*

18 Any student who is quarantined or required to be isolated at home due to exposure or confirmed
19 positive test of the Covid-19 virus may participate in remote instruction during the period of
20 quarantine or isolation. A student who participates in remote instruction maybe counted present
21 once the classroom teacher verifies participation and completion of assignments and meets all
22 expectations of the remote instruction.⁸

23

24 **TRUANCY**

25

26 Truancy is defined as an absence for an entire school day, a major portion of the school day or
27 the major portion of any class, study hall or activity during the school day for which the student
28 is scheduled.

29

30 Annually, the Director of Schools/designee shall provide written notice to parent(s)/guardian(s)
31 that attendance at school is required. Students shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the
32 scheduled school day in order to be counted present. If a student is required to participate in a
33 remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the
34 parent(s) and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences from these
35 programs shall be reported in the same manner.⁹

36

37 Students who are absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Director
38 of Student Services who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the
39 student's absence

40

41 If a parent does not provide documentation within adequate time excusing those absences, or
42 request an attendance hearing, then the Director of Schools/Designee shall implement the
43 progressive truancy intervention plan described below prior to referral to juvenile court-

44

45 *Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan*¹⁰

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1 Prior to referral to juvenile court, the following progressive truancy intervention plan will be
2 implemented.

3 4 **Tier I**

5
6 Tier I of the progressive truancy intervention plan shall apply to all students and include school-
7 wide intervention strategies and positive reinforcement for school attendance. These supports
8 may include but are not limited to:

- 9 1. A conference with student and parent/guardian, with a school administrator
- 10 2. A school-based attendance contract signed by parent/guardian and administrator. The
11 contract shall include the expectations, the period of the contract and penalties for
12 additional absences.
- 13 3. Regular scheduled follow up meetings to discuss progress

14 15 **Tier II**

16
17 If a student accumulates additional unexcused absence in violation of the attendance contract in
18 Tier I, the student will be subject to Tier II

19
20 Under this tier, the School Juvenile Liaison shall

21 Schedule a conference with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardians(s);

- 22 1. Complete and sign an attendance contract based on the conference signed by the student,
23 the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the Attendance Supervisor/designee. The contract will
24 include:
 - 25 a) A description of the school's attendance expectations for the student
 - 26 b) The period for which the contract is effective and
 - 27 c) Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional
28 disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court.
- 29 2. Schedule follow up meetings to discuss the student progress and
- 30 3. Prepare an individualized assessment detailing the reasons for the student absence from
31 school. A referral may be sent to school counselors, community based services or other
32 services to address the student's attendance problems.

33 34 **Tier III**

35
36 This tier shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful.

37
38 These interventions shall be determined by a team formed at each school, which may include
39 community based services, school social workers, guidance counselors and administrators. The
40 interventions shall address student needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be
41 approved by the Director of Schools/designee..

42 43 **MILITARY SERVICE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN**

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1 School principals shall provide students with a one-day excused absence prior to the deployment
2 of and a one-day excused absence upon the return of a parent or custodian serving active military
3 service.

4
5 Principals shall also allow up to ten (10) excused cumulative absences per year for students to
6 visit a parent or guardian during a deployment cycle. The student shall provide documentation to
7 the school as proof of his/her parent's/guardian's deployment. Students shall be permitted to
8 make up schoolwork missed during these absences.¹¹

9 10 **NON-SCHOOL SPONSORED EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITY¹²**

11
12 A principal/designee may excuse a student to participate in non-school sponsored extracurricular
13 activities. The principal shall document the approval in writing and shall excuse no more than
14 ten (10) absences each school year. No later than seven (7) business days prior to the student's
15 absence, the student shall provide documentation to the school as proof of the student's
16 participation along with a written request for the excused absence from the student's
17 parent/guardian. The request shall include the following, students name; grade; dates of the
18 student absence; reason for the absence and a signature of the parent/guardian

19 20 **RELEASE TIME COURSE¹³**

21
22 A principal/designee may excuse a student to attend a course in religious moral instruction for up
23 to one (1) class period per school day. Students shall not be excused during any class which
24 requires and examination for state or federal accountability purposes.

25
26 The student shall submit a written consent form signed by the student's parent/guardian prior to
27 participating in the release time course. The principal/designee shall document the approval in
28 writing. The student shall provide documentation to the principal/designee as proof of the
29 student's participation in the released time course.

30
31 The district shall not be responsible for transporting students to and from the place of instruction.

32 33 **MAKE-UP WORK**

34
35 All missed class work or tests may be made up when the excused absence is verified by a note or
36 contact from parent, guardian, or physician and the student makes the request immediately upon
37 returning to school. Students who have received excused absences must have at least time equal
38 to the number of days missed plus one day to make up missed assignments or test. (Exceptions
39 include pre-announced test and term assignments which will be due upon return). School work
40 and tests missed for suspensions may be required to be made up.

41
42 Students may be denied the privilege of making up work missed as a result of an unexcused
43 absence or suspension.

44 45 **STATE-MANDATED TESTS/ FINAL EXAMS**

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1 Students who are absent the day of the scheduled End of Course Exams must present a signed
2 doctor's excuse or must have been given an excused release by the principal prior to testing to
3 receive an excused absence. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to take a
4 make-up exam that will count as a designated percentage of their grade. Excused students will
5 receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the End of Course Exam.

6
7 Students who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the final exam which
8 shall be averaged into their final grade at 25%.

9 10 **CREDIT/PROMOTION DENIAL**

11
12 Credit/promotion denial determinations may include student attendance, however, student
13 attendance may not be the sole criterion¹⁴. However, if attendance is a factor, prior to
14 credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

- 15 1. Parents and students shall be advised if a student is in danger of credit/promotion denial
16 due to excessive absenteeism.
- 17 2. Procedures in due process are available to the student when credit or promotion is denied.

18 19 **DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOCATION**

20
21 More than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) reported unexcused absences by a student during
22 any semester renders a student ineligible to retain a driver's permit or license, or to obtain such if
23 of age.

24 25 **ATTENDANCE HEARING** ¹⁵

26
27 An attendance committee appointed by the principal will conduct a hearing to determine if any
28 extenuating circumstances exist or to determine if the student has met attendance requirements
29 that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance
30 committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Director of
31 Schools/designee and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student of any action taken regarding the
32 excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise parents/guardian(s) of their right to
33 appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Director of Schools/designee.

34
35 The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is
36 received.

37
38 Within five (5) school days of the Director of Schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's
39 parent(s)/guardian(s) may request by the Board, and the Board shall review the record.
40 Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of
41 Schools/designee. The action of the Board shall be final.

42
43 The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building
44 and disseminated to all students, parents, teachers and administrative staff.

¹ TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.08(1)(a); TCA 49-6-3006

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² TCA 49-6-3017(c)

³ TCA 10-7-504; 20 USCA § 1232g

⁴ TRR/MS0520-01-020-.17(1)(c)

⁵ TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(15); TCA 49-6-2904(b)(5)

⁶ TN Department of Education, *Student membership and Attendance Procedures Manual* (2017)

⁷ TN Department of Education, *Student membership and Attendance Procedures Manual* (2017); TCA 49-6-3007; Public Acts of 2018, Chapter No. 958

⁸ Public acts of 2021, Chapter No. 652

⁹ TCA 49-6-3021

¹⁰ TCA 49-6-3007; TCA 49-6-3009; Public Acts of 2018, Chapter No. 958

¹¹ TCA 49-6-3019

¹² TCA 49-6-3022

¹³ TCA 49-2-130

¹⁴ TCA 49-2-203(b)(7)

¹⁵ TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.17