

Board Policy JB: Student Attendance

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 01/15/2013

In responding to student attendance issues, the Newton County School System shall comply with all requirements of state law, State Board of Education rule, and the Student Attendance Protocol developed by Newton County's Student Attendance Protocol Committee.

Excused Absences

It is the policy of the Board to excuse students from school for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school that endangers a student's health or the health of others.
2. A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. The observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U. S. armed forces or National Guard, and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted up to 5 days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the parent's leave.
7. Any emergency or set of circumstances which, in the judgment of a building administrator, constitutes just and sufficient cause for an excused absence from school. **This may include non-school sponsored activities approved by the building administrator if the student satisfactorily makes up his or her work.**

The Board authorizes high school administrators to allow for eligible students a period not to exceed one day for registering to vote or voting in a public election.

Students shall be counted present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly.

Students in foster care shall be counted present when they attend court proceedings relating to their foster care.

The principal may in certain circumstances require students to present appropriate medical or other documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused.

Grades and Absences

Final course grades of students shall not be penalized because of absences if the following conditions are met:

1. Absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons.
2. Make up work for excused absences was completed satisfactorily.

Policies and Procedures to Reduce Unexcused Absences: Notification

1. The school system requires its schools to provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in school a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the school system, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student will be asked to sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1 must sign a statement indicating receipt of written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to the local board policy; and
2. The school system will notify the parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the student when such student has five unexcused absences. The notice will outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense. After two reasonable attempts

to notify the parent, guardian or other person who has charge of the student, the school system will send written notice via first class mail. ~~The school system will notify the parent, guardian or other person by first class mail, return receipt requested, before initiating court proceedings due to failure to comply with compulsory attendance laws.~~

3. ~~The School System will use its best efforts including first class mail to notify a student age 14 and older when the student has only three absences remaining before violating the state's attendance requirements pursuant to O.C.G.A. 40-5-2 regarding the denial of driver's permits and licenses.~~
 4. Students shall be notified through the student codes of conduct of the definition of truancy and a summary of possible consequences and penalties for truancy, ~~including possible dispositions for unruly children in accordance with O.C.G.A. 15-11-67 and the possible denial of or suspension of a driver's license.~~
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