

# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: ATTENDANCE

ADOPTED: April 27, 1981

REVISED: September 22, 2010

<p>1. Purpose SC 1301, 1326, 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.12, 11.13, 11.41, 12.1 Pol. 200</p> <p>3. Authority SC 1327, 1329, 1330 Title 22 Sec. 11.23, 11.25, 12.1</p> <p>Title 22 Sec. 11.25</p> <p>Title 22 Sec. 11.26</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>204. ATTENDANCE</b></p> <p><b>The School Reform Commission requires that school age students enrolled in district schools attend school regularly, in accordance with state laws. The educational program offered by the district is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation</b> in order for students to achieve academic standards and consistent educational progress.</p> <p><b>Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in district schools during the days and hours that school is in session, except that a principal may excuse a student for temporary absences upon receipt of satisfactory evidence of mental, physical, or other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence.</b> Urgent reasons shall be strictly construed and does not permit irregular attendance.</p> <p><b>The SRC considers the following conditions to constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Illness.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Quarantine.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Recovery from accident.</b></li> <li>4. <b>Required court attendance.</b></li> <li>5. <b>Death in family.</b></li> <li>6. <b>Educational tours and trips, with prior approval.</b></li> <li>7. <b>Authorized school activities.</b></li> </ol>
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	<p><b>All absences shall be treated as unlawful/unexcused until the district receives a written excuse explaining the reason(s) for the absence, to be submitted within three (3) calendar days of the absence. Failure to provide a written excuse within three (3) days will result in the absence being counted permanently as unlawful/unexcused.</b></p> <p>All <b>absences</b> of three (3) or more consecutive school days shall be supported by a physician's statement <b>verifying the illness.</b></p>
<p>SC 1333, 1354 Title 22 Sec. 12.1</p>	<p><b>The SRC shall report to appropriate authorities infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of seventeen (17). The SRC shall issue notice to those parents/guardians who fail to comply with the requirements of compulsory attendance that such infractions will be prosecuted according to law.</b></p>
<p>SC 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.22, 11.23, 11.28 Pol. 115, 116, 117, 118</p>	<p><b>Attendance need not always be within school buildings. A student shall be considered in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the SRC; the student is receiving approved tutorial instruction, or health or therapeutic services; the student is engaged in an approved and properly supervised independent study, work-study or career education program; the student is receiving approved homebound instruction.</b></p> <p>The absence and/or <b>early dismissal of students shall not be granted for private instruction in activities such as music, dancing, etc.</b></p>
<p>SC 1329 Title 22 Sec. 11.41</p>	<p>The SRC shall permit a student to be excused for participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, FFA or combined 4-H and FFA group upon written request prior to the event.</p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.23, 11.25</p>	<p><b>The SRC will recognize other justifiable absences for part of the school day. These shall include medical or dental appointments, court appearances, family emergencies, authorized school activities, and other legitimate reasons determined by the building principal.</b></p>
<p>SC 1329, 1330 Title 22 Sec. 11.34</p>	<p><b>The SRC shall excuse the following students from the requirements of attendance at district schools, upon request and with the required approval:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. On certification by a physician or submission of other satisfactory evidence and on approval of the Department of Education, children who are unable to attend school or apply themselves to study for mental, physical or other reasons that preclude regular attendance.</b></li> </ol>

<p>SC 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.32</p>	<p>2. <b>Students enrolled in nonpublic or private schools in which the subjects and activities prescribed by law are taught.</b></p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.5</p>	<p>3. <b>Students attending college who are also enrolled part-time in district schools.</b></p>
<p>SC 1327.1 Pol. 137</p>	<p>4. Students attending a home education program in accordance with law.</p>
<p>SC 1327</p>	<p>5. <b>Students fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) years of age whose enrollment in private trade or business schools has been approved.</b></p>
<p>SC 1330</p>	<p>6. <b>Students fifteen (15) years of age, and fourteen (14) years of age who have completed the highest elementary grade, engaged in farm work or private domestic service under duly issued permits.</b></p>
<p>SC 1330 Title 22 Sec. 11.28</p>	<p>7. <b>Students sixteen (16) years of age regularly employed during the school session and holding a lawfully issued employment certificate.</b></p>
	<p><b>The SRC may excuse the following students from the requirements of attendance at district schools:</b></p>
<p>SC 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.22 Pol. 116</p>	<p>1. <b>Students receiving tutorial instruction</b> in a field not offered in the district's curricula <b>from a properly qualified tutor</b> approved by the Superintendent, when the excusal does not interfere with the student's regular program of studies.</p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.34</p>	<p>2. <b>Homebound children unable to attend school on the recommendation of the school physician and the school psychologist</b> or a psychiatrist and approval of the Secretary of Education.</p>
<p>SC 1327</p>	<p>3. <b>Students enrolled in special schools conducted by the Philadelphia Intermediate Unit No. 26</b> or the Department of Education.</p>
	<p><u>Religious Holidays And Religious Instruction</u></p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.21</p>	<p>Upon written request by a parent/guardian, an absence for <b>observance of a student's religion on a day approved by the SRC as a religious holiday shall be excused.</b></p>
<p>SC 1546 Title 22 Sec. 11.21</p>	<p>The SRC shall, upon written <b>request</b> of the <b>parents/guardians</b>, release from attendance a student participating in a <b>religious instruction</b> program acknowledged by the SRC. Such instruction shall <b>not</b> require the child's absence from school for</p>

<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.21</p>	<p><b>more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year</b>, and its organizers must inform the SRC of the child's attendance record. The SRC shall not provide transportation to religious instruction.</p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.26</p>	<p><b>No student so excused shall be deprived of an award, eligibility to compete for an award, the opportunity to make up a test</b> or work missed, or penalized in any way due to an absence for a religious holiday or religious instruction.</p> <p><u>Educational Tours/Trips</u></p> <p>The SRC may excuse a student from school attendance to participate in an educational tour or trip not sponsored by the district if the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The parent/guardian submits a written request for excusal prior to the absence.</li> <li>2. The student's participation has been approved by the Superintendent or designee.</li> <li>3. The adult directing and supervising the tour or trip is acceptable to the parents/guardians and the Superintendent.</li> </ol> <p>The SRC may limit the number and duration of tours or trips for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school term.</p>
<p>4. Delegation of Responsibility Title 22 Sec. 11.41</p>	<p><b>The Superintendent or designee shall</b> annually notify students, parents/guardians and staff about the district's attendance policy by publishing such policy in student/parent handbooks, district web site and other efficient methods.</p> <p><b>The Superintendent</b> or designee shall develop administrative <b>procedures</b> necessary for the implementation of this policy which:</p>
<p>SC 1501, 1504 Title 22 Sec. 4.4, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure <b>a school session</b> that conforms <b>with requirements of</b> state law and regulations.</li> </ol>
<p>SC 1332, 1339  Title 22 Sec. 11.41</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Govern the keeping of attendance records in accordance with</b> law.</li> <li>3. <b>Distribute</b> annually <b>to</b> staff, students, and <b>parents/guardians</b> SRC policies and school <b>rules</b> and regulations <b>governing</b> student <b>attendance</b>, absences <b>and excusals</b>.</li> </ol>

<p>SC 1333, 1338, 1354 Pol. 218, 233</p>	<p>4. <b>Impose on truant students appropriate incremental disciplinary measures for infractions of school rules, but no penalty may have an irredeemably negative effect on the student's record beyond that which naturally follows absence from classroom learning experiences.</b></p>
<p>SC 1333, 1354</p>	<p>5. <b>Identify the habitual truant, investigate the causes of truant behavior, and consider modification of the student's educational program to meet particular needs and interests. Habitually truant refers to absences for more than three (3) school days or their equivalent following the first notice of truancy given after a student has been absent three (3) days without lawful excuse.</b></p>
<p>SC 1333, 1354</p>	<p>6. <b>Ensure that students legally absent have an opportunity to make up work.</b></p>
<p>SC 1333, 1354</p>	<p>7. <b>Issue written notice to any parent/guardian who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance law, within three (3) days of any proceeding brought under that law. Such notice shall inform the parent/guardian of the date(s) the absence occurred; that the absence was unexcused and in violation of law; that the parent/guardian is being notified and informed of his/her liability under law for the absence of the student; and that further violations during the school term will be prosecuted without notice.</b></p>
<p>SC 1318 Pol. 218, 233, 236</p>	<p><b>Repeated infractions of SRC policy requiring the attendance of enrolled students may constitute misconduct and disobedience that warrant the student's referral to the student assistance program, suspension or expulsion from the regular school program, or provision of alternative education services. However, students may not be removed from district enrollment solely because of excessive absences.</b></p>
	<p>References:</p> <p>School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 510, 1301, 1318, 1326, 1327, 1327.1, 1329, 1330, 1332, 1333, 1338, 1339, 1354, 1501, 1504, 1546, 2103</p> <p>Home Rule Charter – 12-300</p> <p>State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 4.4, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.5, 11.8, 11.12, 11.13, 11.21, 11.22, 11.23, 11.24, 11.25, 11.26, 11.28, 11.32, 11.34, 11.41, 12.1</p> <p>School Reform Commission Policy – 115, 116, 117, 118, 137, 200, 218, 233, 236</p>