



Students must attend school every day... **IT'S THE LAW!!!**

Texas law requires every student between 6 and 19 to attend school for the entire period the program is offered. See FEA(LEGAL).

When is a student in violation of compulsory attendance laws?

Texas law defines truant conduct as absence from school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year (TFC §65.003). If a student has been absent without excuse on 3 days or parts of days within a four-week period, the District must issue a warning notice to inform parents that the student is subject to truancy prevention measures (TEC §25.095).

What happens if a student/parent is in violation of compulsory attendance laws?

If a student fails to attend school without excuse on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period, the school district must refer the student to truancy court within 10 school days of the student's 10th absence. The district *may* delay referral to truancy court if the District is applying truancy prevention measures and they are succeeding.

Parents contributing to non-attendance are subject to criminal prosecution:

- If their student has ten (10) or more days of unexcused absences within a six-month period. (This includes “parts of days”, which includes arriving late or departing early without valid documentation.); and
- If District attempts to work with a student's parents are unsuccessful.

A student may also be referred to truancy court for civil processing:

- If he/she has ten (10) or more days of unexcused absences within a six-month period. (This includes “parts of days”, which includes arriving late or departing early without valid documentation.); and
- If he/she is between the ages of 12 and 18 years old.

What is an Unexcused Absence?

An unexcused absence is an absence that does not meet state or District guidelines. Unexcused absences also occur when the parent cannot produce any documentation that explains the absence or if the parent presents documentation that does not meet criteria for excused absences.

What qualifies as an Excused Absence?

The following are excused absences for compulsory attendance purposes (if properly documented):

- Religious Holy Days
- Required Court Appearances
- Serving as an Election Clerk
- U.S. Citizenship Proceedings
- Court- Ordered Appointments
- Health-Care Appointments (*If the student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment*)
- Higher Education Visits (*Juniors & Seniors Only; 2 per academic year*)
- Mental-Health or Therapy Appointments (*If the student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment*)
- Military Dependent Visits (*If the parent, stepparent, or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from continuous deployment of at least four months; No more than 5 days per academic year*)
- TAPS at a Military Funeral

See policy FEA(LEGAL) for more information.