

**TROUP COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**  
**Student Attendance Protocol (condensed version)**

Georgia law requires all pupils of school age to be in regular attendance. A student who misses school is not able to benefit from important academic instruction that he or she will need in order to be successful in school and ultimately to be a successful citizen. Pursuant to the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Statute, O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1, a parent, guardian or other person residing within this state having control or charge of a child (hereinafter referred to as the "Responsible Person") who fails to send his or her child to school may be charged with a misdemeanor. At its discretion, a court having jurisdiction may subject the Responsible Person to a fine not greater than \$100.00 and/or imprisonment not to exceed thirty (30) days if found guilty of violating this statute. Each day's absence shall be considered a separate offense as related to the penalty.

The school's principal will be responsible for designating personnel to administer this protocol in accordance with Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-5-1.10, students may be temporarily excused from school who are:

1. Personally ill and whose attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others;
2. In whose immediate family there is a serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;
3. Mandated by order of governmental agencies, including preinduction physical examinations for service in the armed forces and court orders
4. The observation of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. When conditions render school attendance impossible or hazardous to the student's health or Safety.
6. Registering to vote or voting for a period not to exceed one day;
7. Serving as Pages of the General Assembly during the school year (Pages shall be credited as present by the school in which enrolled);
8. Military connection of parent or legal guardian necessitates an absence.

The law requires the Responsible Person to see that their children attend school, and it provides penalties for failure to do so. The Troup County School System Attendance Protocol will be enforced as outlined below:

1. At the beginning of the school year, the Responsible Persons, along with students who are 10 years or older will be asked to sign the Troup County Attendance Protocol and a copy of the signed Protocol will be kept on file at the school.
2. No later than upon the third unexcused absence, unexcused tardy, or unexcused dismissal, a designated staff member, will notify the Responsible Person by phone or written correspondence if necessary. For the purpose of intervening and providing support, resources will be offered to the Responsible Person. If applicable, a list of these students' names will be forwarded to the appropriate School Counselor, Social Worker, Family Assistant, Administrator or Designee. This shall be considered the first notice of attendance.
3. If two (2) reasonable attempts to notify the Responsible Person of absences, tardies or early dismissals produce no response, the school will send an Attendance Notice to the Responsible Person or guardian via certified mail, return receipt requested or first class mail. If applicable, these students' names will be forwarded to the appropriate School Counselor, Social Worker, Family Assistant, Administrator or Designee.
4. After five (5) unexcused absences, seven (7) or more unexcused tardies, or seven (7) or more unexcused early dismissals, a referral to law enforcement will be submitted by the school. Law enforcement shall serve the referral to the Responsible Person who will be asked to sign it indicating receipt. In addition, a school designee will request a conference with the Responsible Person and the plan will be reviewed and updated. Also, if a referral is made to SBRRP and the Responsible Person elects not to participate and there is a subsequent unexcused absence, then an educational neglect complaint may be filed in the Juvenile Court (SBRRP applies to elementary school students only).
4. Except in extraordinary circumstances found in the discretion of the school, upon the occurrence of the first unexcused absence, unexcused tardy or unexcused early dismissal following the 1<sup>st</sup> Notification, law enforcement intervention will be requested.
5. If the above attempts are met with continued non-compliance by the Responsible Person of a child between the ages of 6-16 as evidenced by continued absences, the school will contact law enforcement and a warrant will be issued upon the 10th absence. At any time during the year the

student's academic progress is affected by continued unexcused absences, the school may proceed with Educational Deprivation charges through Juvenile Court.

6. After ten (10) or more unexcused absences, the school may elect, as an alternative to sending a warrant request or in addition thereto, to file a complaint for educational neglect or a Child in Need of Services complaint.
7. Attendance related information obtained by Law enforcement will be provided to the school and kept on file at that school.
- 8.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian/Responsible Person's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature (if 10 years or older)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade/ Student's Printed Name

**Revised 07/20**

#### **Facts About School Attendance (as reported by Attendance Works)**

- Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year. Half the students who miss 2-4 days in September go on to miss nearly a month of school.
- Over 8 million U.S. students miss nearly a month of school each year.
- Absenteeism and its ill effects start early. One in 10 kindergarten and first grade students are chronically absent.
- Poor attendance can influence whether children read proficiently by the end of third grade or be held back.
- By 6th grade, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.
- Research shows that missing 10 percent of the school, or about 18 days in most school districts, negatively affects a student's academic performance. That's just two days a month and that's known as chronic absence.
- Students who live in communities with high levels of poverty are four times more likely to be chronically absent than others often for reasons beyond their control, such as unstable housing, unreliable transportation and a lack of access to health care.
- When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating.
- Attendance improves when schools engage students and parents in positive ways and when schools provide mentors for chronically absent students.

~Attendance Works