

LEGAL REFERENCES:

1. T.C.A 49-6-3001
2. T.C.A 49-6-3007
3. T.C.A 49-6-3009
4. T.C.A 49-6-3017
5. Student Membership and Attendance Procedures Manual. Tennessee Department of Education 2021.

DEFINITIONS

Absent: A student is not in attendance in regularly scheduled classes at the school where he/she attends.

Attendance Review Committee: A building level committee to review extenuating circumstances which would adequately explain a student’s excessive absence from school and/or class. The Attendance Review Committee is composed of the superintendent or designee, Supervisor of Attendance, principal or designee, guidance counselor, and a classroom teacher.

Early Dismissal: A student leaving a class or school early before the end of the school day. These are coded as Tardies in the computer system.

Present: A student is in attendance in regularly scheduled classes where he/she attends.

Tardy: Entering class or school after the designated time.

Truancy Review Board (TRB): A district meeting to discuss absenteeism of six (6) or more unexcused absences. The TRB is composed of Supervisor of Attendance, principal or designee, board office employee, family liaison (if available), juvenile officer, student, and parent..

Please help us help your child

IT’S THE LAW

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Dover Elementary
North Stewart Elementary
Stewart County Middle
School Stewart County High**

**Stewart County School System
1031 Spring Street
Dover, TN 37058
(931) 232-5176**

Adopted June 9, 1994

**Revised 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2006,
2007, 2008, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018,
2022,2023**

TENNESSEE COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAW

T.C.A 49-6-3001- Every parent, guardian, other legal custodian residing within the state of Tennessee, having control or charge of any child or children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) years, both inclusive *, shall cause such child or children to attend public or non-public school, and in event of failure to do so, shall be subject to the penalties hereinafter provided.

* The meaning of the word “inclusive” is that the child must attend school from age six (6) until eighteen (18) years old.

ATTENDANCE REPORTS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW

Progressive Truancy Policy

Tier I

All students are considered to begin in Tier I. Attendance will be supported through the Positive Behavior Support Program and perfect attendance will be valued and recognized. In Tier I, the school will notify the Supervisor of Attendance when a student has accumulated three (3) unexcused absences as stated in T.C.A 49-6-3007 . If a student accumulates three (3) unexcused absences on or before November 1st, a Tier I meeting will be held at the student’s school and an attendance contract will be signed. If a student accumulates three (3) cumulative unexcused absences after November 1, the Supervisor of Attendance will make a decision if a school-based meeting is necessary. If a student accumulates 10 excused and/or unexcused absences, a Tier I meeting will be held at the school. This meeting will include an attendance contract and the reasons for so many absences. This meeting is designed to brainstorm ways to improve attendance and make any referrals the family may need for help. The student and parent(s)/guardians(s) will be notified that five (5) or more unexcused absences will move the student to Tier II.

Tier II

Tier II of the progressive truancy plan shall be implemented after the student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, but before referral to juvenile court, and includes the following:

1. A conference with the student and the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s);
2. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the Attendance Supervisor/designee. The contract shall include:
 - a. a specific description of the school’s attendance expectations for the student;
 - b. the period for which the contract is effective; and
 - c. penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional

disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court.

3. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student’s progress; and

4. A school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a student has been absent from school. The employee may refer the student to counseling, community-based services, or other services to address the student’s attendance problems.

Tier III

A Truancy Review Board (TRB) meeting will be held at the Central Office. Members of the board will include the Supervisor of Attendance, board supervisor, school administrator, School Family Liaison, Juvenile officer, parent/guardian, and student. The following actions may be taken:

1. Referral to Mental Health
2. Referral to Family School Liaison for personal meeting
3. Individualized meeting with Juvenile officer
4. New contract of attendance expectations

The TRB will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) that a student can only attend TRB once a year during their enrollment at Stewart County. For each additional unexcused absences the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) may attend Juvenile Court.

PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS

T.C.A 49-6-3009- Any parent, guardian, or other person who has control of a child, or children, and who shall violate the provisions of this part commits a Class C misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be subject to a fine of up to \$50 or five (5) hours of community service. Each day’s unlawful absence shall constitute a separate offense. A parent or guardian may be assigned time in jail for each absence.

STEWART COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION ATTENDANCE POLICY

Recognizing that absenteeism is a hindrance to efficient education of students and that punctuality and regularity of attendance affect the progress of a student at school, the Stewart County Board of Education has adopted the following attendance policy. The parents/guardian or other person having charge and control of a child is held responsible for the child's regular school attendance. A student's absence is determined to be "excused" or "unexcused" and is based on the following information:

EXCUSED ABSENCES

1. The student's personal illness or hospitalization. A physician's statement will be required. If the illness or the hospitalization is to exceed ten (10) consecutive days, the parent/guardian should apply for homebound instruction.
2. An illness or incapacitating condition of a family member which requires the temporary help of a student. (A physician's statement will be required.)
3. A death in the immediate family. (family includes parent, stepparent, guardian, grandparent, brother, sister, stepbrother/sister, aunt and uncle.)
4. Recognized religious holidays/events. Parents/guardians are requested to inform the school principal prior to a student being absent from school for religious holidays/events.
5. Required court appearances. A student may be excused from school attendance for required court appearances. (Verification from appropriate authorities must be provided.)
6. Other emergency or unusual extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student. These must be approved by the school personnel. Students and parents have the right to appeal any attendance matter to the Attendance Review Committee.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences for reasons other than those stated above may be for reasonable cause but are considered to be "unexcused" for official school record keeping and attendance purposes.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE GRADES K-8

All absences will be marked unexcused unless the school receives a communication from the parent or a doctor's note. The school will only mark five (5) absences excused with communication from the parent. After that, every absence will be marked unexcused unless the school receives a doctor's note or if there are other extenuating circumstances (i.e. death in the family).

ATTENDANCE AND MAKE-UP WORK POLICY GRADES 9-12

RATIONALE

Recognizing that absenteeism is a hindrance to efficient education of students and that punctuality and regularity of attendance affects the progress of a student at school, the following attendance and make-up policy for students in grades 9-12 is adopted by the Stewart County Board of Education. The parents/guardian or other person having charge and control of a child is responsible for the child's regular school attendance. No parent calls or notes will be accepted to excuse an absence at the high school. Five unexcused absences will result in the student moving to Tier II in the Progressive Truancy Policy.

MAKE-UP WORK AND ATTENDANCE

The purpose for making up work when absent is to provide a degree of reasonableness and fairness to the student who is absent. When permitted, the extent of make-up is determined by the teacher. After an absence and when permitted, it is the student's responsibility to make up all assignments according to the teacher's instructions and in a reasonable amount of time as determined by the teacher. The teacher will allow and assist with make-up work and missed assignments under the instances described below:

1. The teacher will allow and assist with make-up work with any absence that has been determined

to be "EXCUSED" by the office. (See section "EXCUSED ABSENCES" for the definition of an excused absence.) If the office determines an absence to be "EXCUSED" according to the policies discussed previously, the admission slip will be marked "EXCUSED." An admission slip is to be picked up by each student upon returning to school.

2. The student will gather the absent work on the day returning to school. The teacher will not stop instruction to get missed work together, but will make it available before the student goes home.

3. The student will complete the homework within a reasonable amount of time (on average the same number of days the student was absent.)

4. **Check Individual School Handbook for specifics of homework/make-up policies.**

Teachers are not required to provide homework assignments in advance for students while they are absent. Reasonable time to make-up work will be allowed by the teacher upon the student's return to school if make-up work is allowed.

Homebound instruction is available to students who are excessively absent due to a medical condition. Homebound instructions must be based upon a physician's instructions. Contact the Attendance Supervisor for more information - Jacquelyn Perigen 931-232-5176.

SUSPENSION AND MAKE-UP WORK

Suspensions from school are unexcused absences and make-up class work and exams are not allowed to be made-up. The only exceptions for make-up due to suspensions are quarter and final exams.

ATTENDANCE AND THE TENNESSEE DRIVER'S LICENSE

Any student who has 10 consecutive unexcused absences or 15 cumulative unexcused absences will have their name reported to the Tennessee Department of Safety. As a result, the student will lose their Tennessee driver's license until the student returns to school and makes satisfactory attendance or attains eighteen (18) years of age.

SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES

Off-campus and/or out-of-school activities shall be counted as attendance only when school directed, with prior approval of the principal.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION APPLIES TO ALL SCHOOLS

When a student has accumulated 5 unexcused absences, the school will hold a meeting with the student, parent, an administrator, and a guidance counselor or family liaison to make a plan to improve attendance and will be placed on Tier II Truancy Intervention. The next unexcused absence will result in a meeting at Truancy Review Board and the student being placed on Tier III. If another unexcused absence occurs a petition will be filed for the student to go to Juvenile Court.