

STUDENT ABSENCES/EXCUSES/DISMISSALS

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3
4 Student attendance is a cooperative effort and the Alexandria City School Board (Board) involves
5 parents/legal guardians and students in accepting the responsibility for good attendance.
6

7 Each parent/legal guardian or person having control or charge of a child within the compulsory
8 attendance age is responsible for such child's regular and punctual attendance at school as required
9 by law.

10
11 Parents/legal guardians of students who are absent must inform the school of the reason for the
12 absence no later than upon the student's return to school. Reasons for excused absences are listed
13 in Regulation JEA-R. Unexcused absences are handled in accordance with Regulation JEA-R.
14

15 The Superintendent, by regulation, establishes procedures for appropriate interventions when a
16 student engages in a pattern of absences for less than a full day, the explanation of which, if it were
17 a full-day absence, would not be an excused absence. These procedures are in Regulation JEA-R
18

19 The Superintendent's regulations include procedures for excusing students who are absent by
20 reason of observance of a religious holiday. Such regulations ensure that a student is not deprived
21 of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an
22 alternate test or examination, which the student missed by reason of such absence, if the absence
23 is verified in an acceptable manner. These procedures are in Regulation JEA-R
24

25 Students must attend school for a full day unless otherwise excused by the principal or designee.
26

27 High school students may spend a maximum of 90 school days, or the equivalent number of hours,
28 each academic year participating in High School to Work Partnerships established pursuant to
29 guidelines developed by the Virginia Board of Education. Students who miss a partial or full day
30 of school while participating in Partnership programs will not be counted as absent for the purposes
31 of calculating average daily membership. The Superintendent's regulations implementing the High
32 School to Work Partnership include procedures by which students may make up work missed
33 while participating in a Partnership.
34

35 An attendance officer, or the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee when acting as an
36 attendance officer pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-258, may complete, sign, and file with the intake
37 officer of the juvenile and domestic relations district court, on forms approved by the Supreme
38 Court of Virginia, a petition for a violation of a school attendance order entered by the juvenile
39 and domestic relations district court pursuant to Va. Code § 16.1-278.5 in response to the filing of
40 a petition alleging the student is a child in need of supervision as defined in Va. Code § 16.1-228.
41

42 Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer
43 or the Superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law.
44

45 **Compulsory Attendance Procedures**

46

47 Whenever a student fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no information
48 has been received by school personnel that the student's parent/legal guardian is aware of and
49 supports the absence, or the parent/legal guardian provides a reason for the absence that is
50 unacceptable to the school administration, the school principal, principal's designee, attendance
51 officer or other school personnel or volunteer notifies the parent/legal guardian by phone, email or
52 other electronic means to obtain an explanation. A log of these notifications is maintained by the
53 school. School staff record the student's absence for each day as "excused" or "unexcused." Early
54 intervention with the student and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) takes place for repeated unexcused
55 absences.

56
57 A. Upon Fifth Absence Without Parent/Legal Guardian Awareness and Support

58
59 If: (1) a student fails to report to school for a total of five scheduled school days for the school
60 year; and (2) there is no indication that the student's parent/legal guardian is aware of and supports
61 the absence; and (3) a reasonable effort to notify the parent/legal guardian has failed, then the
62 principal or designee makes a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the
63 parent/legal guardian, either in person, through telephone conversation, or through the use of other
64 communication devices to obtain an explanation for the student's absence and to explain to the
65 parent/legal guardian the consequences of continued nonattendance. The school principal or
66 designee, the student, and the student's parent/legal guardian jointly develop a plan to resolve the
67 student's nonattendance. The plan must include documentation of the reasons for the student's
68 nonattendance.

69
70 B. Upon Additional Absences without Parent/Legal Guardian Awareness and Support

71
72 If the student is absent for more than one additional day after direct contact with the student's
73 parent/legal guardian and the school personnel have received no indication that the student's
74 parent/legal guardian is aware of and supports the student's absence; the school principal or
75 designee schedules a conference with the student, the student's parent/legal guardian, and school
76 personnel. The conference may include the attendance officer and other community service
77 providers to resolve issues related to the student's nonattendance. The conference must be held no
78 later than 10 school days after the 10th absence of the student, regardless of whether the
79 parent/legal guardian approves of the conference.

80
81 The conference team monitors the student's attendance and may meet again as necessary to
82 address concerns and plan additional interventions if attendance does not improve. In
83 circumstances in which the parent/legal guardian is intentionally noncompliant with compulsory
84 attendance requirements or the student is resisting parent/legal guardian efforts to comply with
85 compulsory attendance requirements, the principal or principal's designee makes a referral to the
86 attendance officer. The attendance officer schedules a conference with the student and student's
87 parent/legal guardian within 10 school days and may (i) file a complaint with the juvenile and
88 domestic relations district court alleging the student is a child in need of supervision as defined in
89 Va. Code § 16.1-228, or (ii) institute proceedings against the parent/legal guardian pursuant to Va.
90 Code § 18.2-371 or § 22.1-262. In filing a complaint against the student, the attendance officer
91 provides written documentation of the efforts to comply with the provisions of this Policy. In the
92 event that both parents/legal guardians have been awarded joint physical custody pursuant to Va.

93 Code § 20-124.2 and the school has received notice of such order, both parents/legal guardians
94 will be notified at their last known addresses.

95
96 **Report for Suspension of Driver’s License**

97
98 In addition to any other actions taken pursuant to this policy, if a student who is under 18 years of
99 age has 10 or more unexcused absences from school on consecutive school days, the principal or
100 their designee may notify the juvenile and domestic relations court, which may take action to
101 suspend the student’s driver’s license.

102
103 **Attendance Reporting**

104
105 Student attendance is monitored and reported as required by state law and regulations. At the end
106 of each school year, each public school principal reports to the Superintendent the number of
107 students by grade level for whom a conference was scheduled. The Superintendent compiles this
108 information and provides it annually to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

109
110 **Dismissal Precautions**

111
112 Principals do not release a student during the school day to any person not authorized by the
113 student's parent/legal guardian to assume responsibility for the student. Students are released only
114 on request and authorization of a parent/legal guardian. When custody of a child is limited by court
115 order to one natural parent over the other, the child may not be released to the non-custodial parent.
116 The Superintendent establishes procedures for release of students who are not residing with or
117 under the supervision of a parent/legal guardian. The burden of proof on the authority of the person
118 to receive the student is on the requesting party. A formal check-out system is maintained in each
119 school.

120
121 **Parents/Legal Guardians with Joint Custody of Students**

122
123 If the student’s parents/legal guardians have joint physical custody of the student and the school
124 has notice of the custody agreement, then both parents/legal guardians must be notified of
125 attendance issues at their last known addresses and, if available, through other contact information
126 the parent/legal guardian has made available to Alexandria City Public Schools.

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129 Adopted: December 5, 1996
130 Amended: June 18, 1998
131 Amended: June 23, 1999
132 Amended: June 21, 2001
133 Amended: June 4, 2004
134 Amended: June 18, 2009
135 Amended: January 8, 2015
136 Amended: September 10, 2020
137 Amended: October 21, 2021

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- 140 Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-227.1, 22.1- 254;
- 141 22.1-258, 22.1-260, 22.1-279.3, 46.2-323, 46.2-334.01, 54.1-
- 142 3900.
- 143 8 VAC 20-730-10.
- 144 8 VAC 20-730-20.
- 145
- 146 Cross Refs.: IGAJ Driver Education
- 147 JEA Compulsory Attendance
- 148 JEA-R Attendance Regulations
- 149 JFC Student Conduct
- 150 JFC-R Standards of Student Conduct

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STUDENT ABSENCES/EXCUSES/DISMISSALS

Student Attendance Policy

Student attendance is a cooperative effort and the Alexandria City School Board (Board) involves parents/guardian/legal guardians and students in accepting the responsibility for good attendance.

Each parent/guardian/legal guardian or person having control or charge of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for such child's regular and punctual attendance at school as required by law.

~~A reasonable effort shall be made to contact a parent/guardian of each absent student every day, and to obtain an explanation for the student's absence, where there is no indication that the student's parent/guardian is aware of and supports the absence. A log will be kept of call attempts.~~

Commented [1]: Moved down into the procedures section to improve readability and align with the VSBA model policy.

Parents/guardian/legal guardians of students who are absent must inform the school of the reason for the absence no later than upon the student's return to school. Reasons for excused absences are listed in Regulation JEA-R. ~~U~~Unexcused absences are handled in accordance with Regulation JEA-R.

The Superintendent, by regulation, establishes procedures for appropriate interventions when a student engages in a pattern of absences for less than a full day, the explanation of which, if it were a full-day absence, would not be an excused absence. These procedures are in Regulation JEA-R.

~~The Superintendent's Regulation JEA-R regulations also includes~~ procedures for excusing students who are absent by reason of observance of a religious holiday. ~~Such The~~ regulations ensures that a student is not deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, which ~~the student he/she~~ missed by reason of such absence, if the absence is verified in an acceptable manner. These procedures are in Regulation JEA-R.

Students ~~shall/will~~ must attend school for a full day unless otherwise excused by the principal or designee.

~~Secondary students shall be scheduled for a full school day unless they are enrolled in a cooperative work study program. All other exceptions to a full day schedule must be approved on an individual basis by the Superintendent or designee.~~

High school students may spend ~~a maximum of 90 school days, or the equivalent number of hours,~~ ~~time~~ each academic year participating in High School to Work Partnerships established pursuant to guidelines developed by the Virginia Board of Education. Students who miss a partial or full day of school while participating in Partnership programs will not be counted as absent for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. ~~The s~~Superintendent's rRegulations implementing the High School to Work Partnership ~~will~~ include procedures by which students may make up work missed while participating in a Partnership.

Commented [MS2]: This permits students to have up to 50% of their schedule be an internship.

~~Student attendance shall be monitored and reported as required by state law and regulations.~~

Commented [3]: Redundant with section IV Attendance Reporting

~~In addition, an~~ An attendance officer, or the Superintendent or ~~s~~Superintendent's designee when acting as an attendance officer pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-258, may complete, sign, and file with the intake officer of the juvenile and domestic relations district court, on forms approved by the Supreme Court of Virginia, a petition for a violation of a school attendance order entered by the juvenile and domestic relations district court pursuant to Va. Code § 16.1-278.5 in response to the filing of a petition alleging the student is a child in need of supervision as defined in Va. Code § 16.1-228.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or the Superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law.

Compulsory Attendance Procedures

Whenever a student fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no information has been received by school personnel that the student's parent/guardian/legal guardian is aware of and supports the absence, or the parent/guardian/legal guardian provides a reason for the absence that is unacceptable to the school administration, the school principal, principal's designee, attendance officer or other school personnel or volunteer notifies the parent/guardian/legal guardian by phone, email or other electronic means to obtain an explanation. A log of these notifications is maintained by the school. School staff record the student's absence for each day as "excused" or "unexcused." Early intervention with the student and parent(s)/guardian/legal guardian(s) takes place for repeated unexcused absences.

Commented [MS4]: Added to ensure this data is tracked in a way that is easily accessible.

A. Upon Fifth Absence Without Parent/GuardianLegal Guardian Awareness and Support

If: —(1) a student fails to report to school for a total of five scheduled school days for the school year; and (2) there is no indication that the student's parent/guardian/legal guardian is aware of and supports the absence; and (3) a reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian/legal guardian has failed, then the principal or designee makes a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the parent/guardian/legal guardian, either in person, through telephone conversation, or through the use of other communication devices to obtain an explanation for the student's absence and to explain to the parent/guardian/legal guardian the consequences of continued nonattendance. The school principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian/legal guardian ~~shall~~ jointly develop a plan to resolve the student's nonattendance. ~~Such~~ The plan ~~shall~~ must include documentation of the reasons for the student's nonattendance.

~~If the student's parents/guardians have joint physical custody of the student and the school has notice of the custody agreement, then both parents/guardians shall be notified at their last known addresses. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to comply with the principal or designee's request within three school days, the principal or designee shall/will notify the attendance officer or Superintendent who shall enforce the compulsory attendance rules.~~

Commented [5]: Moved down to it's own section and revised. The essential point here is that if there is joint custody we try to reach both parents. If the rest follows the regular process, there is no reason to repeat it here.

B. Upon Additional Absences without Parent/GuardianLegal Guardian Awareness and Support

If the student is absent for more than one additional day after direct contact with the student's

93 parent/guardian/legal guardian and the school personnel have received no indication that the
94 student's parent/guardian/legal guardian is aware of and supports the student's absence; the school
95 principal or designee ~~shall~~ schedules a conference with the student, the student's
96 parent/guardian/legal guardian, and school personnel. The conference may include the attendance
97 officer and other community service providers to resolve issues related to the student's
98 nonattendance. ~~The conference, and must be held take place~~ no later than ~~10 the tenth~~ school days
99 after the ~~10th tenth~~ absence of the student, regardless of whether the parent/guardian/legal guardian
100 approves of the conference.

101
102 The conference team ~~shall~~ monitors the student's attendance and may meet again as necessary to
103 address concerns and plan additional interventions if attendance does not improve. In
104 circumstances in which the parent/guardian/legal guardian is intentionally noncompliant with
105 compulsory attendance requirements or the student is resisting parent/guardian/legal guardian
106 efforts to comply with compulsory attendance requirements, the principal or principal's designee
107 ~~shall~~ makes a referral to the attendance officer. The attendance officer ~~shall~~ schedules a conference
108 with the student and student's parent/guardian/legal guardian within 10 school days and may (i)
109 file a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations district court alleging the student is a
110 child in need of supervision as defined in Va. Code § 16.1-228, or (ii) institute proceedings against
111 the parent/guardian/legal guardian pursuant to Va. Code § 18.2-371 or § 22.1-262. In filing a
112 complaint against the student, the attendance officer ~~shall~~ provides written documentation of the
113 efforts to comply with the provisions of this ~~p~~Policy. In the event that both parents/guardian/legal
114 guardians have been awarded joint physical custody pursuant to Va. Code § 20-124.2 and the
115 school has received notice of such order, both parents/guardian/legal guardians ~~will shall~~ be
116 notified at their last known addresses.

117 118 **Report for Suspension of Driver's License**

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120 In addition to any other actions taken pursuant to this policy, if a student who is under 18 years of
121 age has 10 or more unexcused absences from school on consecutive school days, the principal (or
122 ~~their/his/her~~ designee) may notify the juvenile and domestic relations court, which may take action
123 to suspend the student's driver's license.

124 125 **Attendance Reporting**

126
127 Student attendance ~~shall be is~~ monitored and reported as required by state law and regulations. At
128 the end of each school year, each public school principal reports to the Superintendent the number
129 of students by grade level for whom a conference was scheduled ~~pursuant to Part II (B) above~~. The
130 Superintendent compiles this information and provides it annually to the Superintendent of Public
131 Instruction.

132 133 **Dismissal Precautions**

134
135 Principals do not release a student during the school day to any person not authorized by the
136 student's parent/guardian/legal guardian to assume responsibility for the student. Students are
137 released only on request and authorization of a parent/~~or guardian/legal guardian~~. When custody
138 of a child is limited by court order to one natural parent over the other, the child ~~may shall~~ not be

139 released to the non-custodial parent. The Superintendent establishes procedures for release of
140 students who are not residing with or under the supervision of a parent/~~guardian~~legal guardian.
141 The burden of proof on the authority of the person to receive the student is on the requesting party.
142 A formal check-out system is maintained in each school.

143
144 Parents/~~Guardian~~Legal Guardians with Joint Custody of Students
145

146 If the student's parents/~~guardian~~legal guardians have joint physical custody of the student and the
147 school has notice of the custody agreement, then both parents/~~guardian~~legal guardians must be
148 notified of attendance issues at their last known addresses and, if available, through other contact
149 information the parent/~~guardian~~legal guardian has made available to Alexandria City Public
150 Schools.
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171 Cross Refs.: IGAJ Driver Education
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