

STUDENT ABSENCES/EXCUSES/DISMISSALS

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2
3 Student attendance is a cooperative effort and the Alexandria City School Board (Board) involves
4 parents/legal guardians and students in accepting the responsibility for good attendance.

5
6 Each parent/legal guardian or person having control or charge of a child within the compulsory
7 attendance age is responsible for such child's regular and punctual attendance at school as required
8 by law.

9
10 Parents/legal guardians of students who are absent must inform the school of the reason for the
11 absence no later than upon the student's return to school. Reasons for excused absences are listed
12 in Regulation JEA-R. Unexcused absences are handled in accordance with Regulation JEA-R.

13
14 The Superintendent, by regulation, establishes procedures for appropriate interventions when a
15 student engages in a pattern of absences for less than a full day, the explanation of which, if it were
16 a full-day absence, would not be an excused absence. These procedures are in Regulation JEA-R

17
18 The Superintendent's regulations include procedures for excusing students who are absent by
19 reason of observance of a religious holiday. Such regulations ensure that a student is not deprived
20 of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an
21 alternate test or examination, which the student missed by reason of such absence, if the absence
22 is verified in an acceptable manner. These procedures are in Regulation JEA-R

23
24 Students must attend school for a full day unless otherwise excused by the principal or designee.

25
26 High school students may spend a maximum of 5 school days each academic year participating in
27 High School to Work Partnerships established pursuant to guidelines developed by the Virginia
28 Board of Education. Students who miss a partial or full day of school while participating in
29 Partnership programs will not be counted as absent for the purposes of calculating average daily
30 membership. The Superintendent's regulations implementing the High School to Work
31 Partnership include procedures by which students may make up work missed while participating
32 in a Partnership.

33
34 An attendance officer, or the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee when acting as an
35 attendance officer pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-258, may complete, sign, and file with the intake
36 officer of the juvenile and domestic relations district court, on forms approved by the Supreme
37 Court of Virginia, a petition for a violation of a school attendance order entered by the juvenile
38 and domestic relations district court pursuant to Va. Code § 16.1-278.5 in response to the filing of
39 a petition alleging the student is a child in need of supervision as defined in Va. Code § 16.1-228.

40
41 Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer
42 or the Superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law.

43 **Compulsory Attendance Procedures**

44
45 Whenever a student fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no information
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47 has been received by school personnel that the student's parent/legal guardian is aware of and
48 supports the absence, or the parent/legal guardian provides a reason for the absence that is
49 unacceptable to the school administration, the school principal, principal's designee, attendance
50 officer or other school personnel or volunteer notifies the parent/legal guardian by phone, email or
51 other electronic means to obtain an explanation. A log of these notifications is maintained by the
52 school. School staff record the student's absence for each day as "excused" or "unexcused." Early
53 intervention with the student and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) takes place for repeated unexcused
54 absences.

55
56 A. Upon Fifth Absence Without Parent/Legal Guardian Awareness and Support

57
58 If: (1) a student fails to report to school for a total of five scheduled school days for the school
59 year; and (2) there is no indication that the student's parent/legal guardian is aware of and supports
60 the absence; and (3) a reasonable effort to notify the parent/legal guardian has failed, then the
61 principal or designee makes a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the
62 parent/legal guardian, either in person, through telephone conversation, or through the use of other
63 communication devices to obtain an explanation for the student's absence and to explain to the
64 parent/legal guardian the consequences of continued nonattendance. The school principal or
65 designee, the student, and the student's parent/legal guardian jointly develop a plan to resolve the
66 student's nonattendance. The plan must include documentation of the reasons for the student's
67 nonattendance.

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

70
71 If the student is absent for more than one additional day after direct contact with the student's
72 parent/legal guardian and the school personnel have received no indication that the student's
73 parent/legal guardian is aware of and supports the student's absence; the school principal or
74 designee schedules a conference with the student, the student's parent/legal guardian, and school
75 personnel. The conference may include the attendance officer and other community service
76 providers to resolve issues related to the student's nonattendance. The conference must be held no
77 later than 10 school days after the 10th absence of the student, regardless of whether the
78 parent/legal guardian approves of the conference.

79
80 The conference team monitors the student's attendance and may meet again as necessary to
81 address concerns and plan additional interventions if attendance does not improve. In
82 circumstances in which the parent/legal guardian is intentionally noncompliant with compulsory
83 attendance requirements or the student is resisting parent/legal guardian efforts to comply with
84 compulsory attendance requirements, the principal or principal's designee makes a referral to the
85 attendance officer. The attendance officer schedules a conference with the student and student's
86 parent/legal guardian within 10 school days and may (i) file a complaint with the juvenile and
87 domestic relations district court alleging the student is a child in need of supervision as defined in
88 Va. Code § 16.1-228, or (ii) institute proceedings against the parent/legal guardian pursuant to Va.
89 Code § 18.2-371 or § 22.1-262. In filing a complaint against the student, the attendance officer
90 provides written documentation of the efforts to comply with the provisions of this Policy. In the
91 event that both parents/legal guardians have been awarded joint physical custody pursuant to Va.
92 Code § 20-124.2 and the school has received notice of such order, both parents/legal guardians

93 will be notified at their last known addresses.

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95 **Report for Suspension of Driver's License**

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

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102 **Attendance Reporting**

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

108

109 **Dismissal Precautions**

110

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

119

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

121

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

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128 Adopted: December 5, 1996

129 Amended: June 18, 1998

130 Amended: June 23, 1999

131 Amended: June 21, 2001

132 Amended: June 4, 2004

133 Amended: June 18, 2009

134 Amended: January 8, 2015

135 Amended: September 10, 2020

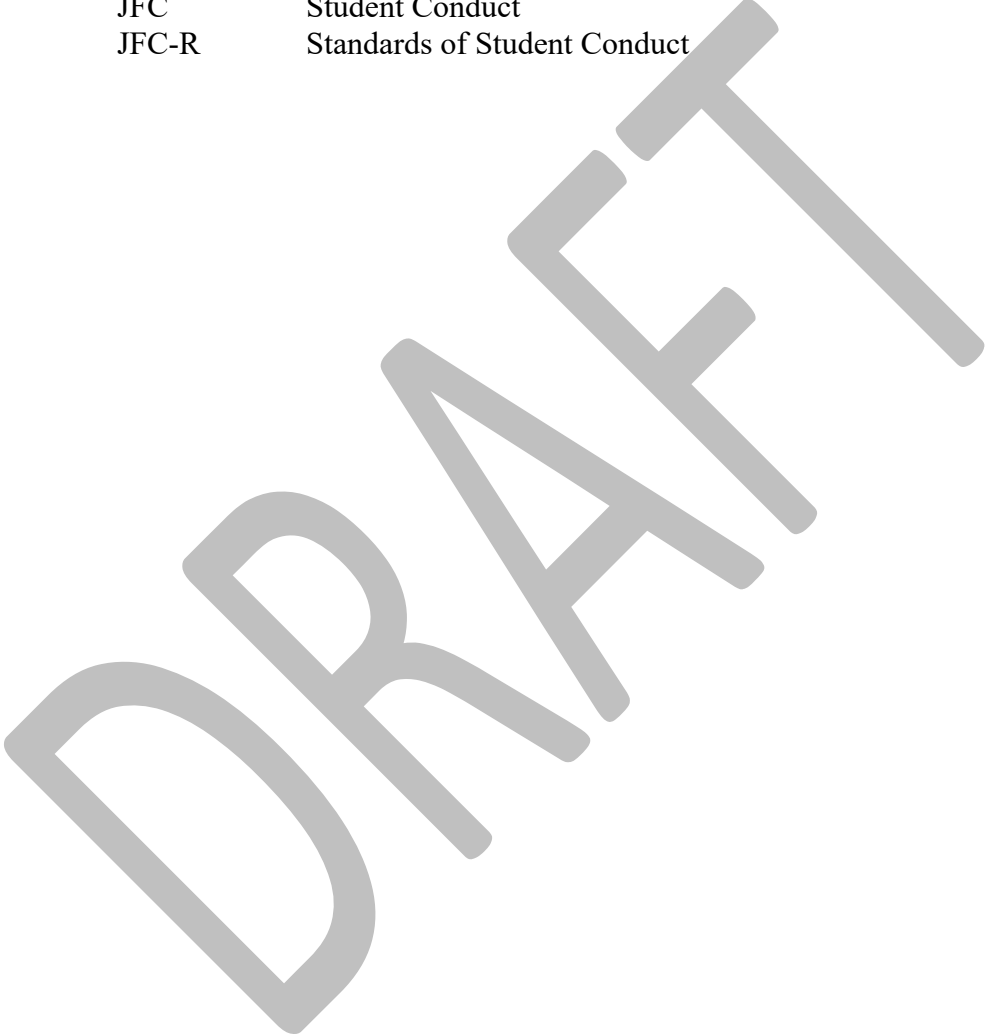
136 Amended: October 21, 2021

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139 Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-227.1, 22.1- 254;
140 22.1-258, 22.1-260, 22.1-279.3, 46.2-323, 46.2-334.01, 54.1-
141 3900.
142 8 VAC 20-730-10.
143 8 VAC 20-730-20.
144

145 Cross Refs.: IGAJ Driver Education
146 JEA Compulsory Attendance
147 JEA-R Attendance Regulations
148 JFC Student Conduct
149 JFC-R Standards of Student Conduct



STUDENT ABSENCES/EXCUSES/DISMISSALS

Student Attendance Policy

Student attendance is a cooperative effort and the Alexandria City School Board (Board) involves parents/guardian/legal guardian 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 guardian 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. 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 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 5 school days 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 sSuperintendent'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 [2]: The VSBA model policy calls for ACPS to set a maximum here.

~~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/~~Guardian~~Legal 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/~~Guardian~~Legal 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~~ make 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 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

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

Parents/~~Guardian~~Legal Guardians with Joint Custody of Students

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

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- 8 VAC 20-730-10.
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