

Attendance

I. Policy

- A. Attendance in school is a major predictor of student academic success. Students must attend school punctually and regularly, and conform to the attendance policies of the school, the Diocese of Orlando, and the laws of the State of Florida-
- B. It is the shared responsibility of the school and the home to assist students in developing desirable habits of punctuality and attendance.
- C. Schools shall maintain accurate attendance records for all students and follow the Diocesan Record Retention Policy for archival purposes. No paper attendance registers are required if electronic attendance is taken.
- D. The Diocese of Orlando requires all schools to develop a calendar, which represents 181 instructional days per school year and meets or exceeds Florida Statute A-1, 09512. See Links and Supporting Documents.

II. Procedures/Guidelines

- A. All absences must be recorded through an automated student attendance recordkeeping system approved by the Diocese of Orlando. For students in grades K–8, attendance must taken at the start of the day. For students in grades 9-12, attendance should be taken by instructional period. Students in K-12 are considered absent when more than 50% of the school day is missed.
- B. A student is considered absent when he/she is either not in the school building or fully present in a virtual setting. Whether or not the absence is excused or unexcused is determined by administration.
- C. Attendance expectations are for all students and must be clearly delineated in the school's handbook to include:
 - 1. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to contact the school if their child will be absent and to state the reason for the absence. The principal is authorized to require satisfactory explanation from the legal/custodial parent or guardian for the absence of a pupil for all or any part of the school day. The explanation must be obtained in writing and retained as documentation. Failure to provide this will result in an automatic, unexcused absence. A physician's note is needed when the student:
 - a. Has been absent for three or more consecutive days;
 - b. Has had surgery;
 - c. Is returning to school after a hospitalization;
 - d. Has been under a doctor's care for a significant illness; or
 - e. Is returning to school after being excluded because of a communicable disease.
 - 2. Policy and Procedures for defining and tracking excused or unexcused absences must be stated in the school's handbook:
 - a. Excused absences include the following:
 - i. Illness or injury to the student;
 - ii. Serious illness or death in the student's family;

- iii. Scheduled medical appointment;
- iv. Required court appearance or supervised visitation;
- v. Having or being suspected of having a communicable disease or infestation including but not limited to head lice, ringworm, impetigo, and scabies;
- vi. Approved school-sponsored events, school athletic events, retreats;
- vii. College site visit; or
- viii. Special event, excused at the principal's discretion with permission from the principal in writing five days prior to the scheduled event, including pre-arranged event of educational value.

b. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to the following:

- i. Vacations or pleasure trips;
- ii. Suspension from school;
- iii. Truancy; or
- iv. Other avoidable absences not included on the "Excused Absence" list above.

- 3. Process for communication of attendance concerns with parent(s) or guardian(s).
- 4. Plan corrective action to address attendance concerns to include prevention and intervention strategies, and written plan for academic remediation.
- 5. Students are required to complete missed assignments and/or class work.
- 6. Conditions for notification to appropriate office and/or agency for habitual non-attendance.

D. For long-term or extensive absences due to medical conditions, parents should enroll student in the applicable county public school district for home instruction or make an arrangement with the school administrator for continued academic progress.

E. Students whose absences exceed 5 unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar day period shall be referred to the principal for a conference to be held with the student, his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and the school administration. ***Principals must document this meeting to include date, time, attendees, and the corrective action plan decided upon to improve the student's attendance and academic performance. It must be clearly communicated that continued excessive absences may result in retention, the loss of scholarship and/or withdrawal from the school. Attendance is reported quarterly to the School Choice Office.***

F. The teacher must verify attendance records at the end of the year. These records must be retained as dictated by the Records Retention Policy.

G. Students who do not comply with the school's published attendance policy may be retained, lose class credit, be suspended, be asked to withdraw, or be expelled. Students enrolled in the Florida School Choice Scholarship Program who are out of compliance with Diocesan attendance requirements risk the loss of the scholarship.

H. In case of emergency, teachers must have access to classroom rosters in either electronic or paper format. This roster should contain each period attendance list as well as list of student medications and must be made available as part of plans/directions for substitute teachers.

III. Links and Supporting Documents

- A. [Florida Statute on Attendance](#)
- B. [Record Retention Policy](#)
- C. [Florida Statue A-1, 09512, Equivalent Minimum School Term for Compulsory Attendance Purposes](#)

Policy Dates:

Initial Adoption: July 1, 2011

Effective Date: July 1, 2011

Revision Date: July 1, 2013, July 1, 2018, 11-21-19, 3-25-2021

Schools affected:

Early Learning Center

Elementary

High School

All