

TOPEKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	REGULATION NUMBER 8075-01
SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS	DATE OF ISSUE: 06/18/80 <hr/> REVISIONS: 10/07/99; 07/16/04; 04/06/07; 06/10/14; 08/01/16; 06/25/18 <hr/> PREPARING OFFICE: TEACHING/ LEARNING/ADMINISTRATION

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for ensuring the implementation of the policy for student attendance requirements.

II. PROCEDURES

A. Legal Requirements

1. Compulsory School Attendance

- a. Every parent or person acting as a parent in the state of Kansas, who has control over or charge of any child who has reached the age of seven (7) years and is under the age of eighteen (18) years and has not attained a high school diploma or a general educational development (GED) credential, shall require such child to attend continuously each school year either
- (1) a public school for the duration of the school term, or
 - (2) a private, denominational, or parochial school taught by a competent instructor for a period of time which is substantially equivalent to the period of time public school is maintained in the school district in which the private, denominational, or parochial school is located.

If the child is 16 or 17 years of age, the parent or person acting as parent, by written consent or the court, pursuant to a court order, may allow the child to be exempt from the compulsory attendance requirements of this section.

- b. If the child is 16 or 17 years of age, the child shall be exempt from the compulsory attendance requirements of this section if:
- (1) the child is regularly enrolled in a program recognized by the local board of education as an approved alternative educational program, or
 - (2) the child and the parent, or person acting as parent, attend a final counseling session conducted by the school during which a disclaimer to encourage the child to remain in school or to pursue educational alternatives is presented to and signed by the child and the parent or person acting as parent. The form attached to this regulation shall be used to provide the disclaimer and waiver required by state law.

2. Definition of Child in Need of Care (Truancy)

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

- a. State law defines, in part, a “child in need of care” means a person less than eighteen (18) years of age who is not attending school as required by law.
- b. The board of education shall designate one or more employees who shall report to the secretary for children and families, or a designee thereof, all cases of children who are less than thirteen (13) years of age and are not attending school as required by law and to the appropriate county or district attorney, or a designee thereof, all cases of children who are thirteen (13) or more years of age but less than eighteen (18) years of age and are not attending school as required by law. The designation shall be made no later than September 1 of each school year and shall be certified no later than ten (10) days thereafter by the board of education to the secretary of social and rehabilitation services, or the designee thereof, to the county or district attorney, or the designee thereof, and to the commissioner of education. The commissioner of education shall compile and maintain a list of the designated employees of each board of education.
- c. Whenever a child is required by law to attend school and such child is inexcusably absent therefrom on either three (3) consecutive days or five (5) school days in any semester or seven (7) school days in any school year, whichever occurs first, such child is truant. A child is inexcusably absent from school if s/he is absent therefrom all or a significant part of a day without a valid excuse acceptable to the school employee designated by the Board of Education to have responsibility for the school attendance of such child.

3. Enforcement

- a. The board of education shall adopt rules for determination of valid excuse for absence from school and for determination of what shall constitute a ‘significant part of a school day.’
- b. The board of education shall designate one or more employees, who shall each be responsible for determining the acceptability and validity of offered excuses for absence of specified children so that such a designee is responsible for making such determination for each child enrolled in school.

B. Definitions

1. A student is inexcusably absent from school if s/he is absent from all or a significant part of a day without a valid excuse acceptable to the school employee designated by the Board of Education to have responsibility for the school attendance of such student.
2. A “significant part of a day” is defined as being absent without being properly excused for more than 50% of the school day.

C. Responsibilities Pertaining to Student Attendance Requirements

1. Responsibilities of Students and Their Parent(s) or Lawful Custodians Concerning Attendance

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

- a. Each child who has reached the age of seven (7) years or is under the age of eighteen (18) years must be enrolled. Children with an individualized education plan (IEP) may be required by law to enroll in a special services education program before the age of seven (7).
- b. In the event of a student's absence, the absence will be considered to be accruing toward truancy as defined by law. It shall be the responsibility of the parent(s) or lawful custodian to notify the school in writing of the reason for absence on or before the first day of the absence unless prevented by circumstances beyond their control. However, when the validity of the communication is suspected, the school will attempt to establish authenticity.
- c. Each student is responsible for making arrangements with teachers for the instruction missed during any absence approved by the school principal.

2. Responsibilities of Teachers Concerning Student Absences

- a. Each teacher is responsible for reporting the attendance for each student enrolled in each class taught.
- b. Each teacher is responsible for establishing the conditions for making up the instruction missed during an excused absence.

3. Responsibilities of the School Principal

- a. The principal is to determine the validity and acceptability of the written excuse offered for a student's absence.
 - (1) When a student's illness extends beyond five (5) consecutive school days, the school principal may require a physician's statement verifying the necessity of the absence, permission to return to classes, request for restricted activity, or to qualify for homebound instruction.
 - (2) Whenever a school principal believes a student's absences have seriously affected achievement, the principal should arrange a conference which may involve the parent or lawful custodian, the student, the counselor, and teacher or teachers in order to determine what action, other than reporting the truancy, should be taken regarding the student's absenteeism. In case of any change of enrollment within the school day, the principal will notify the parent(s) or lawful custodian.
- b. The principal will notify the parent(s) or lawful custodian, in writing, before reporting alleged truancy. An effort will be made by the school principal to contact the parent or lawful custodian before the alleged truancy report is filed with the truancy officer.
- c. The principal will report all cases of truancy to the truancy officer. When a student accumulates three (3) consecutive or a total of five (5) unexcused absences during any semester, or a total of seven (7) unexcused absences during any school year, the principal should file Form 8600 00 (Rev. 7 90) verifying the dates and extent of such absences with the truancy officer. Copies of notices that were sent to parents should also be sent to the truancy officer.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

- d. Each building principal shall develop procedures to ensure that accurate attendance is reported for each student enrolled in each class taught.
4. **Responsibilities of the Truancy Officer Regarding School Principal's Reports of Truancy**
 - a. The truancy officer will forward all notifications of truanancies of students under age thirteen (13) to the Kansas Department for Children and Families.
 - b. The truancy officer will forward all notifications of truanancies of students under age eighteen (18) but at least age thirteen (13) to the Shawnee County district attorney's office.
 - c. The truancy officer will assist and coordinate casework activities designed to help improve the student's school attendance.

D. Regulations Pertaining to Students Eighteen (18) Years of Age or Older

1. The school administrator or the administrator's designee will notify the parent(s) or lawful custodian as required by law when a student 18 years of age or older has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences or has accumulated a sufficient number of absences (either excused or unexcused) which adversely affect the student's achievement during a semester. Additional unexcused absences after such notification may be grounds for suspension from school.
2. An unexcused absence is defined as being when a student 18 years of age or older is absent from more than 50 percent of a school day without being properly excused.
3. If a student 18 years of age or older misses five (5) consecutive class meetings without notifying the administrator of the reasons for the absences, the student may be dropped from the class with loss of credit.
4. It shall be the responsibility of the principal or the principal's designee to schedule a conference with the parent or lawful custodian and student to determine whether the student may continue in the class.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

USD 501 COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE DISCLAIMER
FOR 16- AND 17-YEAR-OLD STUDENTS

Unified School District No. 501 encourages

_____ to remain in school or pursue an educational
(Name of Student) (DOB)
alternative.

1. Which of the following best describes your PRIMARY reason for leaving school? (circle one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Classes were not interesting/bored | K. Student-teacher conflict |
| B. Missed too many days and could not catch up | L. Employment/have to work full-time |
| C. Did not like school | M. Friends dropped out |
| D. Failing classes/could not keep up with school work | N. Intimidated/Threatened/Bullied |
| E. Illness | O. Judge or parent request to withdraw |
| F. Became a parent | P. Migrant |
| G. Getting married | Q. Homeless |
| H. Felt like I did not belong | R. Family Problems |
| I. Suspended from school often | S. Other – (please explain) |
| J. Expelled from school | |

2. Which of the following best describes your SECONDARY reason for leaving school? (circle one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Classes were not interesting/bored | K. Student-teacher conflict |
| B. Missed too many days and could not catch up | L. Employment/have to work full-time |
| C. Did not like school | M. Friends dropped out |
| D. Failing classes/could not keep up with school work | N. Intimidated/Threatened/Bullied |
| E. Illness | O. Judge or parent request to withdraw |
| F. Became a parent | P. Migrant |
| G. Getting married | Q. Homeless |
| H. Felt like I did not belong | R. Family Problems |
| I. Suspended from school often | S. Other – (please explain) |
| J. Expelled from school | |

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

3. What would have improved your chances of staying in school? (circle all that apply)

- A. Opportunities for real-world learning (internships, service learning)
- B. Better teachers
- C. Smaller classes
- D. More individualized instruction
- E. Better communication with your teachers
- F. Better communication with your parents
- G. Increased parental involvement
- H. Less freedom and more supervision from parents
- I. Less freedom and more supervision from school officials
- J. Help with transportation
- K. Other – (please explain)

4. What actions did your school personnel take to keep you enrolled in school? (circle all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. Provided student counseling | I. Discussed and offered participation in a credit recovery course/program |
| B. Scheduled a conference with parents(s), guardian(s), student, and school staff | J. Changed or revised course schedule |
| C. Discussed and offered options for tutoring | K. Implemented intervention contracts (e.g. attendance or behavior) |
| D. Discussed the consequences of dropping out | L. School staff took no action |
| E. Discussed and offered options for continuing education in a different environment (e.g. Adult Education, home school, virtual school) | O. Other – (please explain) |
| F. Discussed and offered alternative options for graduation (e.g. diploma options or GED Testing) | |
| G. Conducted home visits | |
| H. Referred student to agencies/programs to address problems interfering with school success (e.g. substance abuse counseling, psychological counseling, family counselor) | |

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

A summary of courses which have been completed for credit by the student named above accompanies this disclaimer. Credits required for graduation are found in your USD 501 Student Handbook of Board of Education Policies & Administrative Regulations.

Options for continuing your education may be obtained from your school counselor.

_____, who is 16 or 17 years of age, is exempt from the compulsory
(Name of Student)
attendance requirements of the state of Kansas for the reason(s) checked below.

- The student is exempt pursuant to a court order which is attached to this form.
- The student and his/her parent or guardian have attended a final counseling session conducted by USD 501 staff and signed this disclaimer which exempts a student from school attendance.

Signature of Student

Signature of Parent(s) or Person Acting as
Parent(s) or Guardian(s)

Counselor or Administrator

School

Date

****Submit copies to the Demographics Department.**