



COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM POLICY

Compulsory Attendance

Pursuant to OCGA §20-2-690.1, all children in this state are required to enroll in and attend public school, private school, or a home study program daily between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays (“age of compulsory attendance”), unless the child has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma or a state approved high school equivalency diploma.

Any parent or guardian who fails to facilitate compulsory attendance by enrolling their child and sending that child to a public school, private school, or home student program may be found guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of up to \$100, community service, up to 30 days of imprisonment, or a combination thereof. After the parent or guardian has been notified by the school that the student has five unexcused absences, each additional day’s absence from school shall be considered a separate offense.

Chronic Absenteeism

The School will continuously work to identify and provide appropriate supports for students who are identified as being chronically absent or at risk of becoming chronically absent. Such supports may include, but are not limited to, the establishment of a student attendance review team or attendance intervention plans with the student and their parent/guardian.

If the chronic absenteeism rate of total enrollment at the school is 15% or higher, the school shall establish a school-level Attendance Review Team (ART). The ART, which shall meet monthly, will be responsible for reviewing the individual cases of chronically absent students and collaborating with each student and their parent/guardian to develop an attendance intervention plan. A student or school-level ART established under this policy may consist of school administrators, school counselors, school social workers, teachers, other school personnel, and the parents/guardians of the chronically absent student. No student shall be subject to expulsion from this school solely due to the student’s absences from school.

Notice of Absences

Annually, the school shall provide written notice of compulsory attendance requirements and a summary of the possible consequences and penalties for failure to comply with those requirements. The parent or guardian of each student and all students age 10 years or older must



sign a statement indicating that they have received notice of the possible consequences and penalties. After two reasonable attempts to secure such signatures, the school shall mail a copy of the statement to the parent or guardian via certified mail, return receipt requested, or first class mail. A copy of all signed statements must remain on file at the school through the end of the school year.

If a student has five unexcused absences within a school year, the school shall make reasonable attempts to notify the parent or guardian about the student's absences and the possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance obligations. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent or guardian without a response, the school shall send written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested or first-class mail.

If after receiving notice, the parent fails to comply with compulsory attendance obligations, the school may file court proceedings to enforce such obligations. Prior to commencing judicial proceedings, the school shall mail notice of such intentions to the parent or guardian by certified mail, return receipt requested, or first-class mail.

Definitions

"Parent" or "Parent or Guardian" means the biological parent, legal guardian, custodian, or other person with legal authority to act on behalf of a child.

"Chronically Absent" means the attendance status of a student whose total number of absences, whether excused or unexcused, at any time during the school year is equal to or greater than 10% of the total number of school days the student has been enrolled in the school during the current school year, excepting the student's first day of enrollment.

"School chronic absenteeism rate" means the number of students enrolled in a school who were chronically absent during the previous school year divided by the total number of students enrolled in the school during the previous school year.

Authority:

OCGA §20-2-690.1 Compulsory Attendance for children between ages six and 16

OCGA §20-2-690.3 Chronically absent students; attendance review teams