

Section 4 Attendance

4.1 Attendance: Students are subject to compulsory school attendance and the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law. Each teacher is responsible for maintaining the attendance of each student enrolled in each class taught. Each teacher is also responsible for establishing the conditions for making up the instruction missed during an **EXCUSED ABSENCE**.

PPO or the Attendance Office is located on the left in the entrance hall of the main building. Attendance related matters are handled in this office. Students **MUST** present a pass from a teacher or administrator to enter the Attendance office.

A parent should notify the Attendance Office when her/his child will be absent from school for any extended period of time. Cobb

County School Board policy JBD requires that parents furnish the school with a doctor's statement verifying an illness for each absence after ten (10) or more school days have been missed.

The Phonemaster system will call parents each time a student is absent from school. School officials will cooperate with parents to ensure regular attendance at school. When appropriate, students will be referred for special attention and possible subsequent referral to juvenile court.

4.2 Emergency Numbers

Parents/guardians should list emergency telephone numbers for relatives or neighbors on the emergency information card for student release in case of an emergency, and the parent/guardian cannot be reached by telephone. **Students cannot be released to anyone who is NOT listed on the emergency card.**

4.3 Absence Notes -- Excused

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify the school in writing of the reason(s) for a student's absence(s). This written statement from his/her parents/guardians or medical doctor must include the date(s) and reason(s) for absence(s), parent's phone numbers (work and/or home), and the parent/guardian's signature. This statement should be presented to the attendance office within three days of the absence. If a note is not brought in within three days or the reason for the absence is personal or unexcused the absence will be coded "unexcused".

In accordance with the State Compulsory Attendance Law, the following reasons may temporarily **excuse** students from an absence or tardy.

1. When personally ill and when attendance in school would endanger their health and the health of others
2. When in their immediate family there is a serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school
3. On special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith
4. When mandated by governmental agencies (examples: pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces or a court order, etc.; official documentation may be required)
5. Students may be excused from school attendance when prevented from such attendance due to conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety.
6. Students serving as a Page in the Georgia General Assembly
7. To register to vote or to vote in a public election

Students with an **excused** absence are responsible for make up work in accordance with the school's make-up policy. A student is charged with an unexcused absence if he/she is absent from all or a significant part of a day without a valid excuse (See above.) Any student who has an **UNEXCUSED absence may NOT be allowed to make up the work missed. THE PRINCIPAL OR HIS DESIGNEE IS AUTHORIZED TO REQUIRE VERIFICATION OF STATEMENTS EXPLAINING A STUDENT'S ABSENCE FROM CLASS OR SCHOOL. WHEN PROBABLE CAUSE EXISTS FOR QUESTIONING THE VALIDITY OF A STUDENT'S STATEMENT, A MEDICAL AUTHORITY'S NOTE MAY BE REQUIRED.**

4.4 Unexcused Absences

Such reasons as "out-of-town, personal business, vacation, sick friend, car trouble, and power outage" do **NOT** constitute excused absences from school. Religious activities such as camps, retreats, and workshops, when not part of recognized religious observances, also **DO NOT** qualify for excused absences or tardies.

4.5 Attendance Policy

Dear Parents and Students:

The Cobb County School District, as well as all other school districts in Georgia, is required to establish a district-wide attendance protocol that details the steps schools and staff will take to report, investigate, and prosecute student absenteeism. On August 10, 2011, the Board of Education adopted revisions to Administrative Rule JE (Student Absenteeism) that include important changes to the protocol. The administrative rule identifies new timelines and thresholds for contact with students, parents, and/or guardians. It is designed to address unexcused absences and promote regular school attendance – a vital part of a student’s academic and future work success.

Creating an early pattern of regular attendance establishes attitudes and habits that will carry over into adult work habits. Inconsistent attendance results in falling behind in class work making it difficult to catch up. It is unfair to the rest of the class when teachers have to backtrack for students who have missed class lessons. **Your child’s success in school depends on having a solid educational background, one that can only be gained through regular school attendance.**

Please see the chart below for a quick look at the revised attendance protocol.

Absence threshold	Old Policy	Absence threshold	New Policy
5 Total Absences	Teacher makes a phone call	3 UNEXCUSED	Teacher will make contact with parents
10 total absences	School sends letter (unless student has known medical condition)	5 UNEXCUSED absences	School will send a letter to parent
15 total absences	Student is referred to school social worker to address attendance	7 UNEXCUSED absences	School Social Worker referral (intervention on case as needed)
7 UNEXCUSED absences 14-17 years old			Letter and phone call to parent that 3 additional unexcused absences will result in denial/suspension of driving privileges
10 UNEXCUSED absences			Notification sent to parents to attend the school Truancy Intervention Panel

Out of School Suspension

Absences due to out-of-school suspensions or expulsions are considered unexcused absences. However, parents of students who are suspended or expelled will be notified pursuant to Administrative Rules JDD and JKDA.

Pursuant to the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Statute, O.C.G.A. & 20-2-690, et seq., a parent or legal guardian who fails to send his or her child to school may be charged with a misdemeanor.

4.6 Present for the Class/Day

A student must be present for **3 1/2 periods** in order to be counted present for that day. A student who misses more than half a class period is counted absent from that class. **In order to participate in extracurricular activities, a student must be counted present on the day of participation. There are NO sanctioned "skip days" for ANY students.** Students should make every attempt to be present in **EVERY class EVERY day.**

4.7 Out-of-Town (Unavailable) Parents

The **Attendance office must be notified in writing when parents will be unavailable to verify students' dismissals, absences, etc.** Both routine and **emergency situations** require that the student's parent, legal guardian, or **emergency contact** on the data base be notified. Please provide the attendance office the name(s) and telephone number(s) of the approved emergency contact person(s) who may be called. **If parents know they will be out of town and plan to leave their children in someone else's care, the parents should be sure that the person caring for their children has written permission to authorize medical treatment. Please send this written information to the ATTENDANCE OFFICE so that school personnel will know whom to contact in case of an absent parent.**

4.8A Tardies to School

Any student entering the school after **8:20 A.M., the start for first period, is TARDY to school.** ****Those students should report immediately to the designated Late Arrival System to check-in.** In **NO** case will the school accept notes after three (3) days. Telephone numbers where a parent can be reached at the time of sign-in **MUST** be on the note as well as a parent/guardian signature. If the note cannot be verified, the tardy will be marked **UNEXCUSED.**

4.8B Tardies to Class

Students that are tardy to class should report to the closest Late Arrival System to receive a check in and receive a pass to class.

4.8C Late Arrival System

The Late Arrival System will be located in the Attendance Office and Room #721 (front area of Mr. O'Neill's office)

4.8D Disciplinary Action For Tardies

Disciplinary action for tardies will include afternoon detention; Lunch Detention, Saturday School, ISS, revoked parking permit, and/or suspension are as follows:

6th unexcused tardy = 1 Saturday school + loss of parking

9th unexcused tardy = 2 days ISS or 2 days of Saturday School 12th unexcused tardy = 3 days ISS

Each additional tardy=3 days ISS

4.9 Late Bus Arrivals

Students who arrive on a late bus should obtain a late bus pass from the bus administrator to take to take to the Late Arrival System. This does not count as a tardy.

4.10 Checking Out of School Before 3:30 P. M.

All Cobb County Schools have closed campuses to ensure the safety of students. **Students may not leave campus for lunch. Early checkout from school is discouraged.** Students and parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside school hours. A parent, guardian, or administrator **MUST** grant permission to check out in **EVERY** case. **Under non-emergency circumstances, the student should take a note to the Attendance Office BEFORE THE START OF THE SCHOOL DAY.** The request should include the following:

1. The student's first and last name
2. The student's advisement number
3. The dismissal time and date
4. The reason for the early dismissal
5. A telephone number where the parent can be reached during the school day to verify the check-out request

6. The parent/guardian's name and signature

Attendance personnel will verify the note and give the student a pass to return to the **ATTENDANCE OFFICE** to sign out at the time of the early dismissal. **Anyone who checks out a student must bring a picture ID.**

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student should get a pass from his/her classroom teacher to report to the nurse or to the ATTENDANCE OFFICE. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the student may **NOT** leave. If the student leaves after being informed that her/his early dismissal cannot be verified, the departure will be treated as a class cut, and disciplinary action will be taken. If the student whose parents cannot be reached is so ill that emergency medical attention is required, an ambulance will be called at the parents' expense, and the student will be transported to the nearest emergency room or suitable medical facility. **Including several emergency names/phone numbers on the school records is extremely important. Please remember to update school records if your phone number(s) changes.**

4.11 Forged/False Attendance-Related Statements

Forged, false, misleading, or deceptive attendance-related statements and/or actions are serious offenses. Examples of such offenses are the following:

1. Signing parent/guardian name(s) on an attendance-related document
2. Participating in any attempt or form of check-in or check-out by deception
3. Student withholding pertinent information
4. Falsely identifying another person as a parent or guardian or other responsible party
5. Aiding or abetting illegal check-in or check-out

This regulation includes but is not limited to these offenses. Penalties range from ISS to out-of-school suspension.

4.12 Lost/Mutilated Notes, Early Dismissal Slips, Etc.

School officials are not responsible for student notes, early dismissal slips, etc. Students should remember that these items are important school records and are advised to keep copies for the entire semester to avoid confusion related to attendance matters.

4.13 Certificates of Attendance for Prospective Drivers

As required by the Department of Public Safety for the State of Georgia, students between the ages of 15 and 17 must present a notarized Certificate of Attendance when applying for a driving permit and driver's license. Certificates are available in the Attendance Office. Students and parents should remember that there is a **1-day waiting period** for these certificates and should plan accordingly. Cobb County Schools collect a **\$2.00 notary fee** for each certificate. With a pass, students should go to the **ATTENDANCE OFFICE** during their lunch hour **ONLY** to apply for these certificates. During school holidays, (winter & spring break) please plan ahead and make sure you give the **ATTENDANCE OFFICE** ample time to process your certificate. No one is available to process these over breaks. If a student plans ahead and obtains the certificate of attendance the last week of school, the Department of Motor Vehicles will honor it all summer.

4.14 Attendance/Driver's License

Georgia Code Section 40-5-22 mandates that a student's driver's license be revoked for the following reasons:

1. Has dropped out of school without graduating and has remained out of school for ten (10) consecutive school days
2. Has more than ten (10) days of unexcused absences in the school year.
3. Has been suspended from school for one or more of the following:
 1. Threatening, striking, or causing bodily harm to a teacher or other school personnel
 2. Possession or sale of drugs or alcohol on school property
 3. Possession or use of a weapon on school property

Notification will be made to the Department of Public Safety of the above.

4.15 Students on Campus Before/After the Regular School Day

Any use of the building before or after school hours (7:45A.M.-3:30P.M.) should be cleared with the proper coordinating administrator. **Students should not be on school property BEFORE or AFTER school hours unless directly supervised by a Lassiter staff member. Students waiting for transportation after school must wait at the front entrance to the school.** The school day officially begins when students arrive on campus. If students arrive early, they are expected to stay on campus at all times until their school day officially ends, or they have checked out using proper procedure. Students waiting for transportation **Leaving campus without permission is a suspendable offense.**

******ALL STUDENTS MUST VACANT THE CAMPUS BY 4:00 UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY A STAFF MEMBER FOR AN ACTIVITY.**

4.16 Withdrawal From School

In order to withdraw, a student must report to the Counseling Office for the proper form. Withdrawing students should either be accompanied by a parent/guardian or should have written verification of their withdrawal from a parent with a phone number where the parent can be reached. The Attendance clerk should be notified of the withdrawal several days prior to the student's last day of school. Students should plan to attend school all day on their last day in order to return books and clear any financial obligations they may have incurred.

If a student officially withdraws from school prior to the completion of a semester, the courses taken, grades earned, and attendance shall be recorded only on the withdrawal form, and the decision concerning grades and credits shall be the responsibility of the school to which the student transfers. **Any student who officially withdraws from school to attend Oakwood will not be readmitted during the same semester in which he/she is withdrawn.**

4.17 College Visits

Seniors are allowed two (2) days of unexcused absences for college visits, but students will be allowed to make up work. It is the student's responsibility to inform her/his teachers in advance of these appointments. Students fill out the "Senior College Visit" form in the attendance office when they plan to visit a prospective college or university.

Additions:

1. When students are absent, it is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify the school in writing of the reason for a student's absence. This written statement from parent or medical doctor must include the date and reason for the absence, parent's phone number, and the parent signature. This should be returned to the attendance office within three days of the absence.

2. If a student needs to be checked out early, BEFORE THE START OF THE SCHOOL DAY, a written request should be submitted to the attendance office, including:

- 1. The student's first and last name**
- 2. The student's advisement number**
- 3. The dismissal time**
- 4. The reason for the early dismissal**
- 5. A telephone number where the parent can be reached during the school day to verify the check-out request**
- 6. The parent/guardian name and signature**

3. If students become ill during the school day, in order to be dismissed from school they must go through the clinic.