

## Introduction

Alexander D. Henderson University School/FAU High School (FAUS) *Attendance Policy* has been written for grades K - 9 to comply with the prescribed regulations of Florida state law. The following rules and regulations reflect the intent of the most recent legislation. Please contact the school's administration for more information related to compulsory school attendance.

Attendance is one of the primary determinants of how a student performs in school. Many studies show a high correlation between academic achievement and a student's attendance in class. Although a student may be allowed to make up work missed as a result of an excused absence, the loss of experiences gained through interaction with other students and the teacher cannot be replaced.

Section 1003.24, F. S., states that each parent of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child's school attendance as required by law. The following circumstances are allowable absences from school:

## Excused Absence

The Principal/Director or designee will determine if an absence is excused on the following criteria:

1. Illness of student
2. Major illness of an immediate family member.
3. Medical appointments of the student (A doctor's note may be required).
4. Death in the family.
5. Religious holidays of the student's own faith (pre-approved by the Principal/Director).
6. Subpoena or forced absence by any law enforcement agency to fulfill civic duties (a copy of the subpoena or court summons is required).
7. Special events. Examples of special events include important public functions, conferences, state/national competitions, as well as exceptional cases of family need. The student must get permission from the Principal/Director or designee at least five (5) days ahead of time.
8. Major disaster that would justify absence.
9. Students having, or suspected of having, a communicable disease or infestation which can be transmitted are to be excluded from school and are not allowed to return to school until they no longer present a health hazard (1003.22, F. S.). Examples of communicable diseases and infestations include, but are not limited to, fleas, head lice, ringworms, impetigo, and scabies. Students are allowed a maximum of five (5) excused days' absence for each infestation of head lice.
10. Other planned absences approved in advance by the Principal/Director or designee.

**\*\*\*\* Request for approval must be submitted in writing to the front office at least five (5) days prior to a planned absence.**

*All other absences will be considered unexcused.*

## Habitual Truant

Section 1003.01, F. S., defines "habitual truant" as "a student who has at least 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days."

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## ATTENDANCE & TARDY POLICY

Section 1003.26, F. S., defines “a pattern of nonattendance” as “5 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period.”

Interventions will be implemented for those students who accumulate unexcused absences, as per the discipline matrix. Habitual truants and those exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance shall be referred to the School Based Team as described in “Attendance Procedures” below.

### **Tardies**

A tardy is the arrival of any student to school after the 8:00 a.m. bell each school day. All tardy arrivals will be noted on the students' report cards as days “tardy.” In accordance with section 1003.02, F.S., the school attendance official will record an unexcused absence for every six (6) accumulated unexcused tardies and/or early departures. The school attendance official shall refer any student who accumulates six (6) unexcused tardies and/or early departures in a nine-week period to administration.

The following procedural steps will be taken regarding habitual tardies:

1. Staff completes written warning form.
2. Letter to the parents.
3. Conference with the school counselor and/or administration.
4. School based team meeting may be organized.
5. Possible interventions implemented.
6. Report made to the Assistant Dean of the School.
7. Filing of a truancy petition pursuant to F.S. 984.151.
8. Counseling to return to home school.

### **Early Departures**

In accordance with section 1003.02, F.S., every six (6) early departures and/or unexcused tardies will be recorded as an unexcused absence by the school attendance official. These unexcused absences will be counted toward the total number of unexcused absences allowed each student per this attendance policy.

### **School Attendance- General Rules**

1. Pursuant to Section 1003.21, F. S., all children who are either six years of age, who will be six years old by February 1 of any school year, or who are older than six years of age but who have not attained the age of 16 years must attend school regularly during the entire school term.
2. When a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school, the student must be under the supervision of a doctor in order to receive an excuse. A doctor's written statement must confirm that the student's condition requires absence for more than three (3) days.
3. FAUS Students are expected to be in attendance 180 days each school year.

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4. Students attending FAUS must be in attendance at least 150 days per school year. Those students who are not in attendance for at least 150 days may not be eligible for promotion at the end of the school year.
5. The school day is from 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (2:45 p.m. for middle/high school students). Students who arrive at school after the 8:00 a.m. bell are tardy. Parents will need to sign tardy students in at the front office and the student must present an admission slip to the classroom teacher.
6. The participation of a student in any extra-curricular activity is dependent on attendance in school on the day of the event. Any student who has an unexcused absence for half the day will not be eligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity on that day.

### Attendance Procedures

Section 1003.23, F. S., requires that the attendance or absence of students in grades PK-12 must be checked on a daily basis during the 180-day school year and its associated summer school. The Principal/Director is responsible for implementing the following steps to enforce regular school attendance:

1. Teachers will keep accurate records of student attendance.
  - a. Students are to be marked absent if they are not present at 8:00 a.m. each school day or at the start of the class period.
  - b. Students arriving to class after 8:00 a.m. or class period bell will be marked tardy; they must first receive a tardy pass before entering the classroom.
  - c. Any student arriving to school after 8:00 a.m. must be "signed in" by a parent or guardian in the front office.
2. Parents or guardians must report a student's absence by telephone before 9:00 a.m. **each** day the child is not present in school.
  - a. If the child is absent for a prolonged illness and a physician's note is provided, attendance does not need to be reported daily.
  - b. Should an **absence not be reported on** each day the child is not in school, the **absence** will be **considered unexcused**.
  - c. The report must give the date of the absence and the reason. However, a parent's explanation of an absence does not guarantee that the absence will be excused.
3. The school will track excused and unexcused absences and contact the home in case of an absence for which the reason is unknown to determine the reason for the absence.
4. The school will refer specific students to the School Based Team to determine if a pattern of non-attendance is developing and, if necessary, to meet with the parent and student. The School Based Team is required to implement interventions to resolve the problem.

*Approved by the FAUS School Advisory Body on 1-18-18*