

# Maryville City Schools Board of Education

Monitoring:

**Review: Annually,  
in November**

Descriptor Term:

**Attendance**

Descriptor Code:

**10.2**

Review Date:

**06/11/18**

Rescinds:

Last Revision:

## **10.2**

### **10.2.1 School Attendance**

**10.2.1.1** School attendance is compulsory for all children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) both inclusive. If residing in the City of Maryville, they shall attend school under the provision of TCA 49-6-3001.

**10.2.1.2 Absences from School** - An absence occurs when a student is not in attendance at that student's assigned location. Absences are discouraged, but will be excused by the principal for personal illness, illness in the family temporarily requiring help from the child, death in the family, compliance with established ordinances of religion and instruction, or, with prior approval for other reasons. All absences, excused or unexcused, will be a part of a student's total attendance record. Junior high and high school students who miss 50% or more of class time from a class period or block will be counted absent.

**10.2.1.3 Tardiness to School** - A tardy student is one who reports to school after the school day has begun, but arrives in time to be counted legally present for the day. Each school will set appropriate tardy policies. Tardiness is discouraged and administrative action will be taken when students have been tardy more than six times in a school year.

**10.2.1.4 Leaving School** - A student who leaves school after the school day has begun will be recorded as absent from the classes missed. A student absent more than 50% of the school day will be counted absent for the day.

**10.2.1.5 Excuse Notes** - Excuse notes from parents shall clearly state the reasons for absences or tardies. Notes from professionals shall clearly state the period of time required. School administrators may limit the number of parent notes accepted at which point the principal may require a note from a professional before issuing an excused admit slip to a student. All excuse notes from parents and professionals will be presented to the principal or principal's designee for determination of "excused" or "unexcused" before the student is admitted to class. The school district reserves the right to reject doctor notes. If parents want to appeal an unexcused absence, they should communicate with the principal. The principal's decision will be final at the school level.

Students will be limited to ten (10) excused days with parental notes for the year. Parental note absences above the limit of ten (10) days will be unexcused.

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**10.2.1.6 Notification to Parents** – Parents/guardians will be provided written notice annually that attendance at school is required. Each school will be responsible for notifying parents of days absent from school and days tardy to school.

## **10.2.1.7 Dismissal Procedure**

The following procedures shall be observed with regard to dismissal of students during school hours:

- No teacher shall permit any student to leave school prior to regular dismissal hours except with approval of the principal. Elementary and Intermediate School students shall be permitted to leave school prior to regular dismissal time only in the company of a parent, legal guardian, school employee, police officer, court officer, or a person designated by the parent or guardian. High school and junior high school students may be permitted to leave school with parent permission by note or phone.
- No student shall be sent from the school during school hours to perform an errand or act as a messenger, except with parental permission and the approval of the principal.
- Parents shall be urged to schedule dental and medical appointments outside of school hours. When such appointments cannot be scheduled outside school hours, parents must notify the principal or call for the student in person.

**10.2.1.8 Attendance Regulations** - Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and, therefore, students are expected to be present each day that school is in session. The Director of Schools and school administrator shall develop programs and practices to encourage all students to attend school.

The attendance supervisor shall oversee the entire attendance program, which shall include:

1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
2. Alternative program options for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance requirements;
3. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
4. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new or reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
5. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license withdraws from school.

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The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:

1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent for the majority of the day;
3. All students absences are verified;
4. Written excused are submitted for absences and tardiness; and
5. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

## **Truancy**

A student who is absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Director of Schools/designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's absence. If a parent does not provide documentation within adequate time excusing those absences, or request an attendance hearing, then the Director of Schools shall implement the progressive truancy intervention plan described below prior to referral to juvenile court.

## **Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan**

Prior to referral to juvenile court, the following progressive truancy intervention plan will be implanted.

### **Tier I**

Tier I of the progressive truancy intervention plan shall include the following:

1. A conference with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s);
2. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and an attendance supervisor or designee. The contract shall include:
  - a. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the student;
  - b. The period for which the contract is effective; and
3. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court; and Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress.

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## Tier II

If a student accumulates additional unexcused absences in violation of the attendance contract in Tier I, the student will be subject to Tier II.

Under this tier, a school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a student has been absent from school. The employee may refer the student to counseling, community-based services, or other services to address the student's attendance problems.

## Tier III

This tier shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful.

These interventions shall be determined by a team formed at each school. The interventions shall address student needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be approved by the Director of Schools/designee.

## State-Mandated Assessment

Students who are absent the day of the scheduled state-mandated exams must present a signed doctor's excuse or must have been given an excused release by the principal prior to testing to receive an excused absence. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam. Excused students will receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the state-mandated exam.

Students who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the course exam, which shall be averaged into their final grade.

## Driver's License Revocation

More than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) reported unexcused absences by a student during any semester renders a student ineligible to retain a driver's permit or license, or to obtain such if of age.

In order to qualify for reclaiming a driver's permit or license, the student must make a passing grade in at least three (3) full unit subjects or their equivalency at the conclusion of a subsequent grading period.

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## **Attendance Hearing**

Students with excessive (more than five (5)) unexcused absences or those in danger of credit/promotion denial shall have the opportunity to appeal to an attendance hearing committee appointed by the principal. If the student chooses to appeal, the student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist to excuse an absence(s) or to determine if the student has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Director of Schools/designee and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student of any action taken regarding the excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Director of Schools/designee.

The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.

Within five (5) school days of the Director of Schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the Board, and the Board shall review the record.

Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools/designee. The action of the Board shall be final.