

ATTENDANCE

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A. Compulsory School Attendance

The following are district procedures adopted to comply with the changes to the Florida Compulsory Attendance Law, Chapter 1003, Section [1003.24](#), Florida Statutes.

All children who have attained the age of 6 years by February 1 of any school year or who are older than 6 years of age but who have not attained the age of 16 years except as otherwise provided, are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term. A student who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the student files a formal [Declaration of Intent to Terminate Enrollment](#) (form 2007129 – *English or Spanish*) with the district school board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning potential and must be signed by the student and the student's parent/guardian. The school counselor or other school personnel must complete an exit interview and survey with the student to determine the reasons for the decision to terminate school enrollment. Students who attain the age of 18 years or who graduate before the age of 18 are not subject to the compulsory school attendance law.

Regular school attendance means the actual attendance of a student during the school day as defined by law and rules of the State Board of Education. Regular attendance within the intent of F.S. [1003.21](#) may be achieved by attendance in: (a) a public school supported by public funds; (b) a parochial, religious, or denominational school; (c) a private school supported in whole or in part by tuition charges or by endowments or gifts; (d) a home education program that meets the requirements of Chapter [1002](#); or (e) a private tutoring program that meets the requirements of Chapter 1002.

For further information on compulsory attendance and procedures for addressing absences, refer to the current [Compulsory School Attendance Manual](#) created by our department.

B. Enforcement of Attendance

The legislature finds that poor academic performance is associated with non-attendance, and that schools must take an active role in enforcing attendance as a means of improving the performance of many students. It is the policy of the State of Florida that the superintendent of each school district be responsible for enforcing school attendance of all children subject to the compulsory school age in the school district.

School Board policies must require each parent or guardian of a student to justify each absence of the student. That justification will be evaluated based on adopted school board policies defining excused and unexcused absences. Florida Law also allows district school boards to establish policies that allow accumulated unexcused tardies, regardless of when they occur during the school day, and early checkouts to be recorded as unexcused absences. An accumulation of excessive unexcused tardies or early checkouts may therefore result in the violation of the compulsory school attendance law.

Attendance enforcement is not the sole responsibility of the school social worker, but is a collaborative effort of the teachers, administrators, and school staff. Chronic non-attendance cases referred to the school social worker must be addressed through the Problem Solving Team (PST) process.

C. Compulsory Attendance and Home Education

If the parent of a child who has been identified as exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance enrolls the child in a home education program pursuant to Chapter [1002](#), the principal/designee or school social worker shall refer the parent to the District Home Education Contact for inclusion in the portfolio review process, as outlined in Chapter [1003.26](#) [1] [f]. The portfolio review process shall be implemented by the Home Education Office on a monthly basis until the Home Education Review Committee is satisfied that the student's home education program is in compliance with Section [1002.41](#), Florida Statutes.

D. Compulsory Attendance and Driver License

Section [322.091](#), F.S. requires students to attend school in order to maintain their driving privileges. This statute was enacted to reduce truancy and ensure that schools respond in a timely manner to student non-attendance. Students attaining the age of 14 must be reported to the [Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles](#) (DHSMV) when they accumulate 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days. To comply or reinstate license, the student must attend 30 consecutive days without any unexcused absences.

Schools must notify students and parents/guardians that filing a declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment will initiate action by DHSMV as follows: licensed minors will lose their driving privilege unless they comply with attendance requirements and unlicensed minors may not apply for a license until relevant attendance requirements are satisfied or the student reaches the age of 18 years.

A student may request a hardship waiver from the building principal for personal or family hardships (employment or medical care). If the request is denied, the student may appeal the denial to the Student Placement Committee. If the appeal is denied, the student may then pursue the matter through a hearing before the school board.

E. Compulsory Attendance and Learnfare Program

Learnfare Program eligible students must be reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) if identified by the school as either a habitual truant or dropout (Section [414.1251](#), Florida Statutes). This report to DCF could result in a reduction of temporary cash assistance to eligible parents/guardians. Learnfare Program participants who receive temporary cash assistance for their eligible dependent child or eligible teenager may have the assistance reduced if the student is identified as either a habitual truant or a dropout.

F. Compulsory Attendance and Homelessness

Students who meet the definition of homelessness often experience academic, attendance, and behavior problems. Since homeless students may frequently move to different schools due to housing instability, learning problems may not always be detected. The federal [McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act](#) ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Upon identification of a student who appears to meet the definition of a homeless student, school personnel should refer the situation to the designated homeless education school contact and to the appropriate members of the Student Services Team (school social worker, school counselor, and/or school nurse). A [McKinney-Vento Educational Act – Checklist for School Personnel](#) (form 2006048) should be completed on all homeless students when first identified.

A recording of that PST meeting is kept utilizing the [Problem Solving Team: Attendance/Homeless PST: 6 A/H](#) (form 2009060). The [PST: 6 A/H](#) is an appropriate tool to use for determining areas of concern and need and should be used for this purpose. For students who are having academic and/or behavioral concerns, targeted interventions should be implemented.

G. Guidelines for Handling Cases of Excessive Absences as Required by Florida Statutes

According to Florida Statute [1003.26](#), students who are exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance must be referred to the Problem Solving Team (PST) for assistance with the remediation of the problem.

The following guidelines are intended for PST Chairpersons, team members, and those addressing attendance within school sites. However, the [Student Attendance Manual](#), distributed by Student Accounting Services, should be referenced for more specific, technical information regarding compulsory school attendance and district procedures.

1. A representative from the school (i.e., instructional, administrative, clerical, and/or support staff) must notify parents/guardians of each unexcused absence. Notification can be done through phone calls, ParentLink, or personal contact with the parent. For households with no phone or schools not using Phone Master, a letter may be used to contact the parent. The [Parent Notification of Unexcused Absences](#) letter (form 2001099 – *English or Spanish*) may be used to contact parent/guardian. Parents should be encouraged to utilize the ParentPortal to access information about their child.
2. Teachers should take every opportunity to notify parents of developing patterns of non-attendance and determine the cause. Parent contact must be made or attempted prior to referral to the Problem Solving Team. The [Student Data Collection: Parent Contacts & Staff Consultations PST 2](#) (form 2009011) can be utilized to document parent contacts and consultation with the school social worker. If the teacher or the school staff has exhausted all attempts to contact the parent (i.e., phone calls, phone messages, letters, notes, etc.), a [Social Work Referral](#) (form 2004261) requesting assistance in communication may be generated.
3. The attendance clerk or designee is to monitor the attendance using the following Compulsory Attendance Report printouts and inform the PST Chair and/or school social worker of any students developing patterns of non-attendance according to the information, excluding out-of-school suspensions:
 - CrossPointe Compulsory Attendance Report (5 unexcused absences within a calendar month)
 - CrossPointe Compulsory Attendance Report (10 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days)
4. The Problem Solving Team Chair, school representative, and/or school social worker reviews the CrossPointe Compulsory Attendance Reports to determine which students/cases are serious enough to forward to the PST. Data determines whether the problem should be addressed through the PST or through a PST meeting designated for attendance concerns only. In the latter case, invitations to the PST should be made to the school social worker and parents and may exclude other members of the Problem Solving Team (i.e., school psychologist, content area specialists, etc.). However, students who also demonstrate academic and/or behavioral concerns for reasons beyond poor attendance should be referred to the PST and the standard PST procedures should be followed.

Suggestions for Prioritizing Students with Excessive Absences to the Problem Solving Team

Schools must prioritize which students are actually referred to Problem Solving Team for attendance issues only. Suggestions for prioritizing students to be brought before PST due to excessive unexcused absences include:

- a) Consider the age of the students. Those students who are under age 16 are to be given priority over those ages 16 or older. Schools may also want to consider whether students age 5 and under should be referred to the Problem Solving Team or whether attendance issues for these students should be handled through parent/teacher conference. Please note that these students are not subject to compulsory attendance.
 - b) Consider the number of unexcused absences. Students with a high number of unexcused absences and a prior history of excessive absences are to be considered before those students who have no prior history and a low number of unexcused absences. Prior communication with the school administrator regarding unexcused absences and/or extenuating circumstances should also be taken into consideration.
 - c) The grade level of the student is to be considered. Schools can set their priorities and refer students based upon those priorities.
 - d) Students who are under Department of Juvenile Justice supervision may need to be referred to their DJJ Counselor for follow-up rather than being brought before the PST.
 - e) Students whose parents request services should be given priority.
 - f) Students with excessive behavior referrals or who are suffering academically must be given priority.
5. For students with attendance issues only whose concerns have not been remediated as a result of the strategies agreed upon with the student and/or parent, the [Request for Problem Solving Team Assistance PST 5](#) (form 2009014) is to be completed and forwarded to the Problem Solving Team Chair. Schools may use the designated [PST Parent Invitation](#) letter (form 2009021 – *English or Spanish*) available on the PST website to invite parents to the PST meeting. Every attempt shall be made to include school social workers in PST meetings when attendance is the concern.

An [Attendance Contract](#) (form 2001042 – *English or Spanish*) may be completed at this time, if appropriate, and a copy given to the parent. In addition, parents should be advised of their right to appeal if they believe that the interventions recommended are inappropriate or unnecessary, and should be provided a copy of the [Notice of Right to Appeal](#) (form 2001097 – *English or Spanish*). If a parent chooses to exercise their right to appeal, then they should be given a copy of the [Notice of Intent to Exercise Right to Appeal](#) (form 2007188 – *English or Spanish*).

Note: For ESE students, the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Committee should utilize the [ESE Request for Assistance/Attendance](#) (form 2004029) and follow the [Guidelines for Addressing Attendance Issues with ESE Students](#).

6. **Students with 15 absences (excused and/or unexcused) are reflected on the CrossPointe Compulsory Attendance Report printout.** Schools are to send parent/guardian of those identified students the designated [15-Day Doctor's Note](#) (*English or Spanish*) requiring a doctor's note for subsequent absences due to illness, in order to establish if any of the absences are to be excused. Mailing labels of home addresses for these students will be generated from MIS as well, and made available to schools.

Note: If school officials have previously received medical documentation of a chronic condition for which ongoing absences are anticipated, then there is no need to send a notification 15-day Doctor's Note letter to the parent/guardian.

Absences not due to illness (vacation, funeral, visiting college, etc.) do not require a doctor's excuse. The legitimacy of a cause for being absent shall be determined by the building principal or designee based on the following criteria: (a) whether the reason for absence is equivalent in importance to the student's need to be in attendance; (b) the needs of the student and the student's family; (c) the number of absences accumulated by the student; (d) other justifiable rationale.

7. Interventions developed throughout the problem-solving process which address the non-attendance issues should be documented on the [Problem Solving Team: Attendance/Homeless PST 6 A/H](#) (form 2009060). The [Family Assessment Form](#) (form 2004239) may also be used to gather information about the family to assist with intervention strategies.

Note: When addressing attendance concerns only, or if poor academic performance is hypothesized to be resulting solely from poor attendance, [PST 6A/H](#) (form 2009060) is used in lieu of forms PST 6-8. When attendance concerns are occurring with academic and/or behavioral concerns, [PST 6](#) (form 2009015), [PST 6B](#) (form 2009016), [PST 7](#) (form 2009017), and [PST 8](#) (form 2009018) are to be completed as well as the [PST 6A/H](#).

8. After the initial PST meeting, the student's attendance should be monitored by the school designee. If attendance continues to be a concern despite the interventions, a referral to the school social worker for additional follow-up may be generated or another PST meeting may be requested. School social workers are to follow-up to assist parents in complying with the recommended interventions and offer additional services, if needed (i.e., individual case management, parent/student education, group work, referrals to appropriate agencies, etc.). If further PST involvement is needed, the problem solving process should continue, including implementation and progress monitoring of additional interventions that best address the problem. These interventions may include (but should not be limited to) a referral to the school social worker, if not previously initiated. These further interventions should also be documented on the [PST 6 A/H](#).

Note: If the PST process has been initiated at one school and the student transfers to another school, a referral may be made to the school social worker at the new school, prior to scheduling a second PST meeting.

Information regarding students who are not enrolled in school should be referred directly to the school social worker for appropriate follow-up. This may include students for whom the district has received notification from private or non-public schools that have been withdrawn for non-compliance with the compulsory attendance law. Upon receiving referrals for non-enrollment, school social workers are to send the parent/guardian a [3-Day Non-Enrollment Letter](#) (certified or hand-delivered) requiring enrollment in one of the options outlined in the Florida Statute, and provide appropriate follow-up as needed.

9. Parents who disagree with the strategies recommended shall have the right to meet with the District Student Placement Committee (DSPC) to discuss the matter by completing and submitting the [Notice of Intent to Exercise Right to Appeal](#) (form 2007188 – *English or Spanish*). If the parent is not satisfied with the action recommended by the DSPC, they have the right to request a hearing before the school board. Schools are to submit all written requests for an appeal to the Court Liaison for Attendance, ESE & Student Services Office, Trailer 00382, at Holly Hill Middle School.

Note: If attempts to contact the parent have failed or the parent is non-responsive to attempts/interventions and a student continues to accumulate unexcused absences, a [3-Day Unexcused Absences Letter](#) may be hand-delivered or sent via certified mail by the school social worker.

10. If all reasonable efforts to resolve the non-attendance behavior fail, the school social worker will be responsible for taking the necessary steps to seek criminal prosecution for non-compliance with the compulsory school attendance law. This may involve a referral to [Adult Court](#), [ASAP](#), [Teen Court](#), or [CINS/FINS](#).

H. Procedures for Addressing Tardies/Checkouts

1. The attendance clerk or designee monitors tardies/checkouts using CrossPointe S250 format utilizing the appropriate parameters. (Refer to your assigned school social worker for assistance.)
2. When a student reaches a total of 5 unexcused tardies and/or 5 unexcused checkouts within a 30-day period the school must notify parents/guardians (i.e., [5 Unexcused Absences Within 30 Calendar Days Note](#) (form 2010041 – *English or Spanish*), letters, report cards, and/or ParentLink messages).
3. When a student’s accumulated unexcused tardies/unexcused checkouts, and/or unexcused absences (or a combination of both) reach 5 unexcused absences within a calendar month, the student’s attendance history shall be reviewed to see if a pattern of non-attendance is occurring. A student with fewer accumulated unexcused tardies/checkouts may be considered for further intervention if patterns of non-attendance are developing.
4. When a student reaches 10 unexcused tardies and/or 10 unexcused checkouts within a grading period, the classroom teacher or principal’s designee should invite the parent/guardian in for a parent/teacher conference to address the tardy/checkout concerns. If after the meeting the student accumulates additional tardies and/or checkouts, the teacher or the principal’s designee must take the necessary steps to refer the student to the PST or attendance team, whichever is appropriate at the specific school. The [10 Unexcused Absences Within 90 Calendar Days Note](#) (form 2010042 – *English or Spanish*) may be used.
5. After 15 tardies and/or checkouts (excused/unexcused) due to illness, parent/guardian must present a doctor’s note in order to excuse future tardies or checkouts. Other excuses for tardies or early checkouts will be at the discretion of the principal.
6. The PST should make recommendations that are necessary to remedy tardy problems. The interventions may include but need not be limited to frequent communication between the teacher and parent/guardian, parent walking student into the front office/classroom, talking with students about affects of being tardy, mentoring, teacher helper, meeting with the principal, attendance groups, detention (as appropriate), referral to BRIDGES and/or Project PASS (form [98273](#)), development of an Attendance Contract (form [2001042](#)), brainstorming reinforcement or incentives, referral to school social worker (form [2004261](#)), or ASAP referral (form [2004038](#)) to the State Attorney’s office generated by the school social worker.
7. Parents/guardians should be advised of the right to appeal if they believe that the interventions recommended are inappropriate/unnecessary. Parents/guardians should sign and date the [Notice of Right to Appeal](#) (form 2001097 – *English or Spanish*) and be provided a copy. If choosing to exercise their right to appeal, then they should be given the [Notice of Intent to Exercise Right to Appeal](#) (form 2007188 – *English or Spanish*).

Note: The following letters may be used to address tardies/checkouts:

[Tardies/Early Checkouts/Absences Note](#) (form 2010040 – *English or Spanish*)

[Unexcused Tardies Note](#) (form 2010038 – *English or Spanish*)

I. Procedures for Calculating Unexcused Tardies/Checkouts for Court Action

The school board policy allows five (5) unexcused tardies and/or unexcused checkouts to be calculated as one (1) unexcused absence from school. Tardy is defined as when a student arrives to school after the beginning of the official school day or is not in the assigned class at the official beginning of a class period. Checkouts are defined as when a student is removed from class by a parent/guardian prior to the official end of the day.

Prior to court action, regular procedures addressing non-attendance (including unexcused tardies and checkouts) through the PST process must be followed. School social workers review the student's attendance record for the current and previous school years and manually count the number of unexcused tardies and checkouts to determine if compulsory school attendance violation criteria is met.

Florida Statute defines habitual truancy as an accumulation of 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days. A combination of unexcused tardies/checkouts and all day unexcused absences can constitute a violation of the compulsory school attendance law. For court purposes, the School Social Services Department will pursue a violation of the compulsory school attendance law only for unexcused tardies that occur at the beginning of the official school day as opposed to tardies at the beginning of class periods.

Note: MIS has already developed codes to identify unexcused tardies and unexcused checkouts that must be included on the student's attendance record. Compulsory attendance procedures have provided guidelines to assist schools in determining when tardies/checkouts should be coded as excused or unexcused.

J. Guidelines for Addressing Attendance Issues with ESE Students

1. Schedule an Individual Education Plan (IEP) Review.
2. Use the [ESE Meeting Notice](#) form to notify/invite parent to the meeting. Notice should be marked that parent participation is requested. Under the Purpose of the Meeting, check IEP and/or change in FAPE Services and type Review Attendance Concerns.
3. The meeting should consist of members of any regular IEP Committee including the student's teacher. The [Guidelines for Handling Cases of Excessive Absences from School](#) should be followed as closely as possible, including completion of the [Notice of Right to Appeal](#), [Attendance Contract](#), and [ESE Request for Assistance/Attendance](#).
4. Suggestions made should be documented on the IEP under Special Factors note section.
5. Any changes to the current IEP must be documented.
6. A referral to the school social worker may be initiated after steps 1-5 have been followed.

7. Additional IEP reviews may be scheduled at the discretion of the IEP Committee in an effort to implement a variety of interventions.
8. In the event that all appropriate interventions have been exhausted and proven unsuccessful, a referral to the school social worker addressing the attendance issue and interventions tried should be initiated.

Note: Attendance should be reviewed when unexcused absences exceed 10 days, or when a pattern of non-attendance is developing, or if there has been prior parental contact in reference to attendance.

K. Compulsory School Attendance Law Violation Cases Against Parents

If the notice and attendance requirements are ignored, the school social worker shall report the case to the superintendent's designee. The superintendent's designee shall take such steps as are necessary to bring legal action against the parent or guardian. The superintendent's designee shall give written notice, in person or by return-receipt mail, to the parent or guardian that legal action is being sought. The violation must have met the 15 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar day period.

The school social worker can make recommendations to the court for consideration. The standard recommendations when filing charges are 6 months probation; student to attend school with no unexcused absences, tardies, or checkouts; parent to provide doctor's notes for all absences due to illness; parent to attend a parenting class, either BRIDGES or Project PASS; and parent to meet with and cooperate with school officials. If the student's academics are suffering, a recommendation can be made for the parent to schedule a meeting with the school counselor to discuss ways to help the child. In some cases, when suspected parental mental health or drug abuse issues exists, the school social worker may request that the parent undergo a mental health or drug abuse evaluation. For older students, it is recommended that the parent cooperate with the CINS/FINS program. These are the recommendations most often made; however, the school social workers are free to request any sanction they think would benefit the family. The judge will determine if the suggested sanctions are to be granted.

Note: The court liaison sends an e-mail correspondence or completes a Status Report of Cases Filed Against Parents, which gives the school social worker a status update of the case.

Checklist for Compulsory School Attendance Law Violation Cases Against Parents

1. Documentation of any school interventions
2. Copy of any letters to parents regarding attendance problems including PST invitation
3. Copy of PST Minutes/IEP Special Factors note section for ESE students
4. Copy of computer browses (i.e., attendance, enrollment, grade, discipline, etc.)
5. Copy of attendance printout documenting at least 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days
6. School principal's letter informing parent/guardian that doctor's notes are required to excuse absences due to illness (if available)
7. Copy of Attendance Contract (if available)
8. Copy of signed Notice of Right to Appeal
9. Copy of 3-Day Non-Enrollment Letter (required for cases of non-enrollment)
10. Completed Authorization to File Compulsory School Attendance form
11. Completed Attendance Law Complaint Against Parents form
12. Completed 7th Judicial Circuit 707 Charging Affidavit and Witness/Victim/Evidence Form 707-A (typed and notarized)

13. Submit packet to court liaison for review
14. Approved packet signed by coordinator

L. Children in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS)

CINS/FINS is a prevention program that addresses the needs of youth, ages 10-17, who are truant or ungovernable or who persistently run away. A CINS/FINS service manager assesses the problems of the youth, then works with the family to secure the best possible remedies. If the youth continues to exhibit the problem behaviors, a petition may be filed with the court to have the youth adjudicated CINS. The court may order placement at the BEACH House for up to 35 days. Other aspects of the program, including crisis counseling, are created to help the youth in achieving more control over his or her behavior.

Checklist for CINS/FINS Referrals

1. Documentation of any school interventions
2. Copy of any letters to parents regarding attendance problems including PST invitations
3. Copy of PST Minutes/IEP Special Factors note section for ESE students
4. Copy of ESE Request for Assistance/Attendance (for ESE students)
5. Copy of computer browses (i.e., attendance, enrollment, grade, discipline, etc.)
6. Copy of Attendance Contract (if available)
7. Copy of Notice of Right to Appeal (if available)
8. Completed Referral Form for Centralized Intake Stewart-Marchman-Act Behavioral Healthcare
9. Submit complete packet to court liaison for review

Note: The [Referral Status](#) form may be used to check the status of a case referred to CINS/FINS.

M. Achieving School Attendance Program (ASAP)

The Achieving School Attendance Program (ASAP) is a collaborative effort between the Office of the State Attorney and the Volusia County School District. This initiative is designed to assist schools with improving the attendance of students who meet specific criteria relative to their attendance concerns. The Office of the State Attorney generates communication via letters requesting that the parent comply with the recommendations of the Problem Solving Teams.

School and district staff members to be included in this meeting are the school social worker, the student's teacher, school administrator, school counselor, and any other interested parties. Recommendations to remediate the non-attendance are to be documented on the [Problem Solving Team: Attendance/Homeless PST 6 A/H](#) (form 2009060). During this meeting the school social worker will develop an [Attendance Contract](#) (form 2001042 – *English or Spanish*) with the parent.

If the parent fails to show up for the scheduled meeting or fails to follow through with the Attendance Contract, the school social worker may, at their discretion, contact the parent to determine the reason for their failure to show or follow through with recommendations, or they may immediately send an [Achieving School Attendance Program \(ASAP\) Referral Form](#) (form 2004038) to the Office of the State Attorney.

The Office of the State Attorney will send an ASAP letter to the parent requiring their cooperation with the school. [Sample Letter A](#) indicates a parent did not attend PST meeting or parent conference. [Sample Letter B](#) indicates a parent attended PST meeting or parent conference but did not follow through with recommendations or Attendance Contract.

Checklist for ASAP Referrals

1. Copy of PST Minutes/IEP Special Factors note section for ESE students
2. Copy of [Notice of Right to Appeal](#)
3. Copy of [Attendance Contract](#) (if available)
4. Completed [ASAP Referral](#) indicating whether Letter A or B should be sent
5. Submit complete packet to court liaison for review

N. Teen Court

Criteria for Referral to Teen Court

1. The target group for referral to Teen Court includes middle and high school students. Elementary school students age 11 and above will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. Students with 5 unexcused absences within 30 calendar days or 10 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days and who have a history of non-attendance as reflected on their enrollment history may need to have an [Attendance Contract](#) (form 2001042 – *English or Spanish*) completed by school personnel. If the student violates the Attendance Contract and they accumulate a minimum of 15 unexcused absences, they should be considered for a PST meeting and referred to Teen Court, if appropriate. Complete the [Teen Court Referral](#) (form 2004037) when applicable.
3. Students with 15 unexcused absences within 90 school days and who have a history of non-attendance as reflected on their enrollment history, should be scheduled for a PST meeting and referred to Teen Court, if appropriate.

Checklist for Referral to Teen Court

1. Documentation of any school interventions
2. Copies of any letters to parents regarding attendance problems
3. Copy of PST Minutes/IEP Special Factors note section for ESE students (if available)
4. Copy of attendance browse printout documenting number of unexcused absences
5. Copy of [Attendance Contract](#) (if available)
6. Copy of [Notice of Right to Appeal](#)
7. Completed [Teen Court Referral](#) form
8. Completed [Teen Court Sanctions/Recommendations](#) form
9. Submit packet to court liaison for review

Note: Teen Court Referral must include either PST Minutes or Attendance Contract.

Teen Court Sanctions and Rules for Participation

1. Parents of students that are referred to Teen Court will receive a [Parent Notification Letter for Teen Court](#) from the district court liaison. Students will be involved in the Teen Court program for a minimum of 10 weeks. Involvement may be longer, if indicated.
2. Students may be required to perform between 20 and 100 hours of community service as a part of their sanctions. Teen Court coordinators will assign placements for the community service.
3. Students may be required to attend weekly academic tutoring sessions during their participation in the program.
4. Students must provide weekly academic progress reports from their schools to their Teen Court coordinator during their participation in the program.
5. If drug use is suspected, with parental consent, students will be tested and offered appropriate treatment.
6. Students will be required to serve as a juror for a minimum of 5 sessions on other Teen Court cases after their case has been heard before the Teen Court.
8. Students and parents will be required to participate in the BRIDGES (Building Respect, Independence, Development, and Growth through Extended Services) Parenting Program unless they are already involved in a similar program.
9. Students must write a three- to five-page personal success plan. The plan must include the following goals: personal, vocational, educational, financial, recreational, selection of friends, family, and health. The plan must be thoroughly written containing both the youths' ideas and research performed to help them reach their conclusion.

O. Guidelines for Handling DNE (Did Not Enter) Students

The following are recommended guidelines for handling DNE students that have not entered their assigned schools:

1. By the end of the first week of school, school personnel should cross-reference their records requests (from other schools) with their list of students who have not entered in order to determine if students have enrolled elsewhere.
2. If no records requests have been received, school personnel should try to contact the parent/guardian at their last known home, work, or emergency phone numbers. If unable to contact by phone, a [Did Not Enter Note](#) (form 2010039 – *English or Spanish*) should be sent to the home address advising the parent/guardian to enroll their child(ren) or provide the school with information regarding their current enrollment status.
3. If no response is received from the letter, a referral should be made to the school social worker no later than the 20th day of school. The [Social Work Referral](#) (form 2004261) may consist of a list of students who have not enrolled, along with a copy of the student master for each non-enrolled child.

4. School social workers will take the necessary steps to determine the current whereabouts of the non-enrolled child(ren) and report back to the school with their findings as soon as they are aware, but not later than the 40th day of school.
5. When no valid reason for a student's non-enrollment is found, the school social worker shall prepare a [3-Day Non-Enrollment Letter](#). This written notice may be delivered in person or mailed certified with return-receipt to the parent or guardian. The letter requires the student's enrollment and attendance within 3 days of receipt of the notice.

If the student does not enroll after the [3-Day Non-Enrollment Letter](#) has been hand-delivered or received through certified mail, the school social worker may complete a packet for violation of compulsory school attendance.

P. Guidelines for Withdrawal of 18-Year-Old Students Due to Non-Attendance

Students that are 18 years old, general education or ESE, may be withdrawn with a W15 code for non-attendance only after all procedures outlined in Florida Statute Sections [1003.26](#) and [1003.27](#) have been followed. Student Accounting Services must be contacted prior to withdrawing with a W15 code. A general explanation of the procedures is provided below.

1. General Education Students: Schools may withdraw general education students who are 18 years old or older and not go through the compulsory attendance rules (i.e., PST meeting). It is recommended that schools send a letter notifying parents that the student will be withdrawn and giving them the opportunity to return the student to school prior to the withdrawal.
2. ESE Students: If a student is receiving ESE services and is not attending school, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting should be scheduled. The committee should review the current IEP, placement, and services that the student is receiving. If any additional services can be offered to assist the student in maintaining regular school attendance, these suggestions should be documented on the Special Factors section. Any changes to the current IEP must be documented. This ensures that the IEP Committee has acknowledged the student's needs since ESE students are eligible to attend school until their 22nd birthday. If no improvement in attendance is made, then a [Notification of Intent to Withdraw ESE Students](#) (form 2008020 – *English or Spanish*) should be sent to the student and parent. If the parent or student does not respond and all attempts to remediate school attendance have been exhausted, then the student will be withdrawn. A the [Withdrawal Notice for ESE Students](#) (form 2008021 – *English or Spanish*) will be sent to the student and parent.

For the complete guidelines of withdrawing 18 year old students, general education, or ESE, refer to the [Compulsory School Attendance Manual](#).

Q. Guidelines for Withdrawing ESE Students 18 Years and Older Due to Non-Attendance

1. Schedule an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting/parent conference to discuss the student's attendance. The school social worker should be invited to attend.

2. Although the student is 18, the parent should be informed or invited. Use the [ESE Meeting Notice](#) form to notify/invite parent to the meeting. Notice should be marked that parent participation is requested. Under the Purpose of the Meeting, check IEP and/or change in FAPE Services and type Review Attendance Concerns. Ensure two contacts have been made (one must be in writing) to the parent and student.
3. If the parent and student do not attend, the IEP Committee can proceed to discuss attendance as long as two or more contacts were made and documented.
4. The meeting should consist of members of any regular IEP Committee, including the student's teacher. The [Guidelines for Handling Cases of Excessive Absences from School](#) should be followed as closely as possible, including completion of the [Notice of Right to Appeal](#), [Attendance Contract](#), and [ESE Request for Assistance/Attendance](#).
5. Determine if ESE placement and services are appropriate and if any additional services can be offered that will assist the student in maintaining regular school attendance. Document the suggestions made on the IEP under Special Factors note section. Any changes to the current IEP must be documented. Implement the strategies indicated.
6. Develop an Attendance Contract with the student and parent outlining expected behavior and outcome based upon the services recommended. Include the parent's input in this process. Obtain the student's and parent's signatures.
7. If the parent/student are not in attendance and the IEP Committee recommends that an Attendance Contract be completed, send a copy of the contract requesting a signature, contact person information, and a copy of the IEP to the parent/student in the mail.
8. Indicate on the IEP a reasonable timeline in which to receive a response and for improvement to occur. Reasonable time should be considered for the implementation of the Attendance Contract (i.e., 4-6 weeks).
9. If no improvement in attendance is achieved, send the parent and student the [Notification of Intent to Withdraw ESE Students](#) (form 2008020 – *English or Spanish*) or a letter with similar content (date to be withdrawn and name/phone number of ESE Case Manager should be noted). If the team conducts a follow-up meeting as part of the IEP review, then a copy of the notification letter should be placed in the ESE Audit folder (pink) folder. If not, then the letter should be filed in the student's cum record.
10. If the school does not receive a response or the student does not return to school by the date stated on the letter, student may be withdrawn. Send the parent and student the [Withdrawal Notice for ESE Students](#) (form 2008021 – *English or Spanish*) or a notice with similar content. Indicate on the notice that if the student wishes to re-enroll in school at a later date, he may do so until his 22nd birthday.
11. Place copies of all documents in the ESE Audit folder (pink) for further reference if required.

R. District Attendance Initiatives



1. Attendance Awareness Week

During the 2002-2003 school year, several members of the School Social Services Department collaborated with school level staff and administrators to develop a plan to focus on improving attendance in the district. One of the recommendations was to implement an Attendance Awareness Week, when schools would focus on the importance of attendance for an entire week. Schools would implement positive strategies that would bring attention to attendance and at the same time encourage all students to have regular attendance. This program is now an annual event occurring in September, and has been recognized with a Resolution by the Volusia County School Board.

2. Everybody Everyday: Poem, Poster, Video Rap/Song Contest

All students have the opportunity to create poems, posters, and videos showing why attendance is important to education and school achievement. All submissions are screened by the Attendance Committee and winners are selected. The committee meets regularly to discuss attendance issues.

3. Excellence in Attendance Award

At the end of each semester, the schools with the highest level of attendance at the elementary, middle, high school, and alternative sites are recognized for their Excellence in Attendance. When funds are available, the first place winning school for elementary, middle, high, and alternative education receives a monetary reward and a district banner for display at their school. A press release goes out recognizing all schools placing first, second, and third in attendance by level.

4. Attendance Awards Recognition

In the 2008-09 school year, the “Everybody Everyday” Prize Patrol was implemented to recognize winners in the Attendance Poem, Poster, and Video Rap/Song Contest. The Prize Patrol team visits the schools with the most winners, lavishing individual winners with gift cards, certificates, and balloons. Pictures are taken of the winners, Prize Patrol team, and administration/school staff. Parents of the winners are invited to join in on the recognitions.

In the past, recognition and awards to poem, poster, and video rap/song contest winners and Excellence in Attendance Awards to top schools was presented at an awards ceremony. This ceremony was for students, parents, and school staff.

5. Superintendent’s Attendance Challenge Award

In the 2006-07 school year, the Superintendent’s Attendance Challenge Award was given to the top schools at each level achieving the greatest improvement in attendance during the third nine-weeks. The schools achieving first place received a district banner to put on display at their school. Participating schools were encouraged to research ideas, seek input, and develop strategies prior to the start of the challenge. The District Attendance Committee provided guidelines for the challenge.

6. Shirley H. Lee Community Support for School Attendance Award

This award is given to an individual who has exhibited an exemplary personal commitment to promoting regular school attendance. This person has served as an advocate and/or mentor and has given their time and/or resources to enhance the academic success of a student(s) through encouraging daily attendance

7. Attendance Brochures

The Attendance Committee has developed two brochures, [Florida's Compulsory School Attendance Law](#) and [School Attendance: The Path to Success](#). These brochures are shared with schools and parents to help answer any questions they may have regarding the compulsory attendance law, and offer suggestions to help keep students in regular school attendance.

ATTENDANCE CODES

Excused Absences

- E - ABSENT (Excused Absence)
- H - HEALTH RELATED (Head lice only) – Excluded from school due to head lice. Students can only be reported with this code for three (3) consecutive days for this reason. After the three day's time, students are considered unexcused (U).
- V - Excused absence due to receipt of a Doctor's Verification. This code can be used for students who have reached the 15-day criteria requiring a doctor's note for absences due to illness.

Unexcused Absences

- S - SUSPENSION (This code will list on absentee rosters as OTHER.)
- U - ABSENT (Unexcused Absence)
- X - EXCLUDED (Excluded from school due to lack of proper documentation of immunization.)
- Z - TRUANCY (Absence with or without the knowledge or consent of the parent or legal guardian constitutes truancy.)

Other

- B - UNEXCUSED CHECKOUT
- C - EXCUSED CHECKOUT
- F - FUNCTION (Field Trip, School Activity – Off Campus)
- G - GROUP ACTIVITY (On Campus)
- I - IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION
- L - UNEXCUSED TARDY
- T - EXCUSED TARDY