

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: **5000**
CATEGORY: **Students**
POLICY CODE: **5113.1/Attendance
Grades K-8**

ATTENDANCE GRADES K-8

Policy Statement

The Trumbull Board of Education believes that regular school attendance is essential for an effective and productive learning experience. The sequential presentation of school learning requires a continuity of instruction. The maximum benefits for each individual child can be achieved only from participation and interaction in daily activity.

The Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 10-184, 10-186, and 10-210, require students over five (5) and under eighteen (18) years of age to attend school on a regular basis. The primary responsibility for adherence to regular attendance rests with the student's parent/guardian and the individual student. The District will comply with Connecticut State Statutes related to compulsory school attendance.

The Board of Education recognizes that students may occasionally miss school for entirely legitimate reasons. Absences that occur for no legitimate reason or with no notification to the school will warrant appropriate follow-up action by the school.

The Board of Education believes that family vacations should not take place when school is in session.

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of early intervention for students exhibiting truancy behavior, and for that purpose distinguishes between "excused absences" and unexcused absences" as follows:

A student's absence from school shall be considered "excused" if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school or in accordance with Section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes and meets the following criteria:

- For absences one (1) through nine (9) in a school year, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation;
- For the tenth (10th) absence and all absences thereafter in a school year, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons: student illness if verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional; student's observance of a religious holiday; death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family; mandated court appearance if supported by appropriate additional documentation; the lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends; or extraordinary

5113.1/Attendance Grades K-8

educational opportunities pre-approved by District administrators in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidelines.

A student's absence from school shall be considered "unexcused" if it does not meet the criteria to be considered an "excused" absence and if it is not the result of school or District disciplinary action.

Based on the definitions above, a "truant" means a child enrolled in a grade from kindergarten through eight who has four (4) unexcused absences in one month, or ten (10) unexcused absences in one year. A "habitual truant" means any such child who has twenty (20) unexcused absences within a school year.

Adopted: 07/09/1985
Revised: 1988, 2/1992, 02/23/1993,
6/1993, 11/22/1994, 12/1997,
11/10/2015

References

- Connecticut General Statutes 10-184, 10-186, 10-198a, 10-210, and 46b-149
- Connecticut State Department of Education, "Guidelines for Implementation of the Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences and Best Practices for Absence Prevention and Intervention"
- Trumbull Elementary and Middle School Student Handbooks
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 6173: Homebound and Hospitalized Instruction
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 5131: Standard of Conduct

Regulations

1. Each school will record and maintain all student attendance and tardiness information.
2. It is the responsibility of a parent/guardian to report his/her child's absence to the school each day by calling the school's office prior to 9:00 a.m. that day by:
 - a) telephoning the school secretary or school nurse;
 - b) e-mailing the school secretary or school nurse; or
 - c) speaking to the school secretary or school nurse in person.
3. Each school will keep close contact with parents/guardians of students having difficulty with attendance and shall make parents/guardians aware of the importance of regular school attendance. Both the home and school should work cooperatively to achieve this end.
4. Each school will record if an absence is excused or unexcused. The principal or school nurse may request additional information regarding a student's absence. A parent/guardian may request reconsideration of the recording of an excused or unexcused absence in accordance with the attendance guidelines of the Connecticut State Board of Education.
5. When an absence occurs, the student will be given sufficient opportunity to make up any missed work. Teachers are not required to provide tutoring for make-up work caused by family vacations when school is in session. If special help or tutoring is needed as a result of such absences, any cost incurred is the responsibility of the parent/guardian, not the District.
6. A student returning to school after a hospitalization must present a note from the physician regarding the hospitalization. The note should also state in detail any physical limitations, treatment programs, or medication changes. A change in his/her Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) may be required upon re-entry to school. Therefore, a full disclosure by the student's physician is necessary to ensure the well-being of the student.

Truancy

1. The school principal and/or his/her designee will hold a meeting with the parent/guardian of a child who is a truant as defined above. Such meeting will be held no later than ten (10) school days after the child's fourth (4th) unexcused absence in a month or tenth (10th) unexcused absence in a school year.
2. Whenever a student enrolled in school in grades K-8 fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the student's parent/guardian (or other person having control of the student) is aware of the child's absence, a reasonable effort to notify, by telephone and by certified letter, the parent (or such other person) shall be made by the school personnel. Such notice shall include a warning that two (2) unexcused absences from school in a month or five (5) unexcused absences in a school year may result in a complaint filed with the Superior Court pursuant to section 46b-149 alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that the child's family is a family with service needs. Persons who, in good faith, give or fail to give notice shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be

incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding which results from such notice or failure to give such notice.

3. An IEP Team meeting will be convened to determine the appropriateness of a special education evaluation of the truant student. In addition, there will be consideration of referral to the school's Early Intervention Team (EIT).
4. The school system will coordinate services with community agencies and referrals of truant students to agencies providing child and family services.
5. The Superintendent may file a written complaint with the Superior Court, Juvenile Matters for a Family with Service Needs when a student is truant. If a parent/guardian having control of a child who is a truant fails to attend the meeting with the school principal and/or his/her designee, the school principal shall notify the Superintendent, who shall file, no later than fifteen (15) calendar days after such failure to attend such meeting, a written complaint with the Superior Court pursuant to section 46b-149 alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that the child's family is a family with service needs.
6. In accordance with State statute, the Board of Education shall annually report to the Connecticut State Department of Education, on a school-by-school basis, the number of students enrolled in grades K to 8, inclusive, in schools under its jurisdiction who are habitual truants.