

Hamilton Local School District Attendance Policy

The State of Ohio Revised Code (O.R.C.) 3321.04 of Chapter 3321 School Attendance states that, "Every parent of any child of compulsory age (6 – 18 years) who is not employed under the Age and School Certificate must send such child to a school or special education program that confirms to the minimum standards as prescribed by the State Board of Education. The child must attend full time the school program is in session."

Except in cases where a pupil has been properly excused, his/her parent or guardian has the primary responsibility for requiring school attendance (O.R.C. 3321.04/3321.07) and the failure to send a child to school may result in a fine of up to \$500, community service of up to 70 hours, or, if repeated, a jail sentence for the offending parent (O.R.C. 3321.38, 3321.99).

Ohio Revised Code 3313.609 prohibits the promotion of a student to the next grade level if the student has been truant for more than 10% of the required attendance days (178) of the current school year and has failed two or more of the required curriculum subject areas in the current grade unless the student's principal and the teachers of any failed subject areas agree that the student is academically prepared to be promoted to the next grade level.

Under legislation enacted in 1990, high school students who fail to attend school without a legitimate excuse may be required to forfeit their driving privilege until such time as they reach the age of eighteen or receive a diploma.

All Hamilton Local School District students are expected to be in school and to attend all assigned classes every day. Any attendance pattern contrary to this will be investigated. Parents or guardians of students who are truant or habitually tardy from school may be required to attend a parental education or training program. The failure of a parent or guardian to attend such program constitutes "parental educational neglect" under the Ohio Criminal Code, which is punishable as a fourth degree misdemeanor. School attendance is closely related to school success; therefore the following attendance regulations will be in effect in the Hamilton Local School District.

A student shall not be absent from school for any portion of the school day without authorization. After arriving on school property, a student may not leave without permission. Excessive absenteeism to school or class may result in disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF HAMILTON LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO WITHHOLD PROMOTION FROM A STUDENT MISSING MORE THAN EIGHTEEN (18) CLASS MEETINGS PER YEAR OR NINE (9) PER SEMESTER.

Notification of absence from school - In the event that a student must be absent from school, the parent or guardian is required to contact the school, either by phone or in person during the first two (2) hours of school. Absences of students, which are not verified by parent contact with the office within three (3) days, will be viewed as unexcused. A student's absence from school is excused by parent notification for a maximum of ten (10) days. Once a student reaches (10) absences excused or unexcused, doctor verification is required for additional absences to be considered excused.

Excused absences will be given for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness
2. Illness in the student's family
3. Death in the family
4. Quarantine for contagious disease
5. Required court attendance with official documentation provided
6. Observance of a religious holiday
7. Traveling out of state to attend a Board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (applies to absences of up to four days)

Make up of missed work - Students with excused absences will be permitted to complete make up work missed while absent. The final decision as to the acceptability of an excuse will rest with the building administration.

Doctor, dentist or counselor visits or appointments - Parents are encouraged to schedule their child's appointments with doctors, dentists and counselors during non-school hours. If the student consults a doctor, he/she must supply a statement from the doctor to that effect immediately upon returning to school.

Unexcused absences - If unexcused absences are not resolved in three (3) school days, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. The student may be referred to the District's Truancy Officer for investigation after any truancy or unverified absence.

Parent notification of absence - When the student reaches ten (10) days of parent notified absences, an Absence Notification Letter will be mailed home to the parent or guardian.

Tardiness - Students will be considered tardy when they are not present at the designated beginning of school up to 3½ hours into the school day. An authorized tardy will be considered only in cases of an illness which is confirmed by a doctor, or preplanned medical treatment by a doctor. All students arriving late to school must sign-in at the office. The student will then be issued a pass, which will admit them to the appropriate class. Tardiness to class or school may result in disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

Early dismissal and late arrivals - The school must receive a note in advance of a planned early dismissal or late arrival. When picking up or bringing a child in due to a late arrival, parents must come to the school office and sign the child in or out. All students being picked up must be dismissed from the school office. Any person signing a student out of school, must be listed on the student's Emergency Medical Form and provide a photo I.D. To avoid instructional interruptions, early dismissal requests should be kept to a minimum.

Half-day absences – If an early release or a late arrival causes a student to miss more than 3.5 hours of school the absence shall be considered a half-day absence.

Extracurricular Events/Activities – If a student is absent without excuse or due to illness they should not attend after school extracurricular events/activities.

Vacations - Vacations are defined as an extended absence from school with the immediate family. Excused vacations will be restricted to a maximum total of three (3) days per year. Approved vacation requests will count as parent notified absences and are limited to ten (10) per year. Vacation request forms must be obtained in the office. These forms must be completed and returned to school no later than three (3) days prior to the scheduled vacation. Additionally, vacation requests will not be approved during exam/short cycle weeks or during mandated state testing.

Truancy – Ohio Law creates two categories of truancy: habitual and chronic.

- Habitual truant – A child who has been absent without excuse for five consecutive days, seven days in a month or 12 days in a year without excuse. Habitual truancy is an unruly offense, unless a child has been previously ruled a habitual truant; then the offense is a delinquency.
- Chronic truant – A child who has been absent without excuse for seven consecutive days, 10 days in a month or 15 or more days in a year. Chronic truancy is a delinquency offense. The penalties applicable to delinquent offenses are greater than those imposed for unruly offenses.

In accordance with section 3321.191 of the Revised Code, State of Ohio and Hamilton Local School District Policy JEDA, students identified as chronically truant can be placed in Hamilton Local School's Alternative Academy.

Loss of Driving Privileges – Under Ohio law, high school students who fail to attend school without legitimate excuse may be required to forfeit their driving privileges until they reach the age of eighteen or receive a diploma. Whenever a student under the age of 18 has ten consecutive days or a total of 15 days of unexcused absence from school during any semester, he/she will be considered "habitual truant".

Therefore, as per Board Policies JED and JECE and sections 3321.13 and 4510.32 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Superintendent shall give notice of the habitual absence to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles for the State of Ohio and the Franklin County Juvenile Judge. **The registrar shall suspend the driver's license or temporary permit of the student. If the student has not yet been issued a license or permit, the Registrar must deny such issuance.**

The suspension will remain in effect until the student attains the age of 18, is issued a diploma, or until the Superintendent informs the Registrar that the student has completed at least one semester since the notification and is no longer considered "habitual truant".

Student withdrawal from school - If it becomes necessary to withdraw a student during the school year, please notify the school office at least five days in advance. This gives the school an opportunity to prepare documents necessary for transfer. It also allows for school loaned materials to be collected. A withdrawal/release form should be completed prior to leaving the district.

School closings and delays - Hamilton Local Schools have adopted the Leader Alert phone notification system to inform all district parents of closings, cancellations, unexcused absences, and any other emergency alert information concerning our district buildings or property.

To utilize the Leader Alert notification system, we import a call list generated from each student's primary contact phone number. At any time, if a child's primary contact number is changed please make certain their building secretary is made aware of the new contact number.

When the district's Superintendent has made the announcement, our Leader Alert notification system will make contact within minutes.

If school is cancelled or delayed for two (2) hours due to inclement weather the following local television and radio stations will carry the announcement:

TV Stations:

WCMH - NBC 4 WSYX - ABC 6 WBNS – 10 TV WTTE – Fox 28

Radio Stations:

WTVN – 610 AM WCOL – 92.3 FM WNCI – 97.9 FM WCKX– 107.5 FM

You can also visit our district web site at www.hamilton-local.k12.oh.us for school closing, delay, or emergency information.