

## ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. The Tecumseh Local School District is required to follow the new State of Ohio law - House Bill 410 which has changed many of the attendance policies and procedures from previous years. Tecumseh Local Schools have a commitment to provide a high quality education to its students. To achieve this goal, students must attend school regularly. Chronic absences, tardiness, or early release disrupts the learning process. Make-up work is not a sufficient substitute for physical attendance in school. It is critical that the school and home come together to ensure students achieve a high attendance rate.

The Ohio Department of Education classifies all students who miss 10% or more of the school year as “Chronically Absent”. Exhaustive research shows students who are chronically absent perform below their peers and fall behind in school. As such, schools in Ohio are required to develop attendance intervention plans for students classified as excessively absent.

In Ohio, children are required to attend school from age six to eighteen unless the pupil has graduated from high school, is employed on an age and school certificate, or has been determined to be incapable of profiting substantially from further instruction. While it is the school’s duty to enforce the compulsory attendance law, responsibility for compliance with the law rests upon the parents, guardians, or other persons having control of the child. (Section 3321.01 of Ohio Revised Code)

- Students are permitted 38 hours of absence in a month or 65 hours (10 days) each school year by parent note, call, or email. Beginning on the 39th hour or 66th hour of an absence, professional documentation is required. The professional (doctor) note must specify the date(s) of the excused absence. Students have 3 school days after they return to school to submit documentation for professional excuses. This hour requirement is total, cumulative absences (excused and unexcused). This is a new state requirement from H.B. 410.
- Absence from School Procedures for All Students
  1. The parent/guardian should call or email the school office before 8:30 am to report an absence.
  2. If a parent/guardian has not notified the school office of an absence via phone or email, the student must present a note stating:
    - Date(s) of absence
    - Reason for absence
    - Signature of parent/guardian
    - Phone number where parent/guardian may be reached.
  3. If the appropriate school officials are not notified of an absence, the student will be considered unexcused. Students have 3 school days after they return to school to provide documentation to change an unexcused absence to an excused absence.

\*The school district has the right to investigate the cause of each single absence as warranted. It is the school, not the parent or guardian, that may determine whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

As cited in the Ohio Revised Code, absences from school that are excused, but count toward allotted days absence are:

1. Personal illness
2. Illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child
3. Quarantine of the home
4. Death of a relative
5. Necessary work at home due to absence or incapacity of parent(s)/guardian(s)
6. Observation of a bona fide religious holiday
7. Extended absences: Fill out the [Extended Absence Form](#) and submit the form at least 3 days prior to the extended absence.
8. Such good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent
  - Students requesting an early dismissal or arriving late to school because of a medical appointment may be excused if a note from the medical office is presented to the school office upon return. Up to five (5) school days will be granted for submittal of documentation for professional excuses.
  - All students, regardless of age, must abide by all school rules. No student can sign himself or herself out without parental permission.
  - If a student does not attend school on a school day due to illness, fever or communicable disease, he/she is not permitted to attend school/co-curricular activities on that day.

#### **TRUANCY (HB 410)**

1. Habitual Truant: Habitual truant is a student of compulsory school age who is absent without legitimate excuse from the school:
  - 30 Consecutive unexcused hours
  - 42 Unexcused hours in a month
  - 72 Unexcused hours in a school year
2. The Tecumseh Local School District is required to follow the new State of Ohio law - HB 410.
3. Tardy/Early Dismissals:

All minutes/hours of school missed by a student will count toward each student's absence rate. The State of Ohio defines a chronically absent student as one who has missed 10% or more of the school year.

Early dismissals/Late Arrivals for the purpose of medical appointments will be approved under the following circumstances:

- Written note or phone call from a parent/guardian must be presented to the secretary with the student's name, grade level, phone number, and where the parent/guardian can be reached before the dismissal can be processed.
- Early dismissals that cannot be verified will be denied.
- Tardy and early dismissals follow school district policy and Ohio law regarding classification of excused and unexcused outlined under the attendance policy.

**Daily Attendance Criteria (plus Extracurricular Eligibility):** To be eligible to participate in or to attend any athletic event, game, performance, practice, school dance, or any school activity or school event a student must be in attendance for a **minimum of four full class periods** during the school day.

- a. If a student has a "Green Slip" excuse he/she may participate in the athletic

contest/activity/performance/practice only if he/she presents the principal(s)/A.D. with the proper documentation from that professional's institution prior to the event.

- b. If a parent has any further questions, they should contact their building administrator.

**Homework Requests:** Homework requests will be accepted when a student has been absent 2 or more days in a row and must be submitted 24 hours prior to pick-up. No additional homework requests will be honored until previous homework requests have been returned completed. Homework sent home is due upon the student returning to school.

**Make-up Work:** Upon returning to school after a period of absence, a student must contact each classroom teacher to obtain necessary make-up work. This work must be completed before the date designated by the teacher, typically one day per day of absence. Make-up work is the student's responsibility, not the teacher's! Any student who has received an unexcused absence will not be given credit for any work missed.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The goal of the Attendance Policy is to encourage the students to be at school every day and period that the school is in session. Many studies correlate regular attendance with academic success at school. Regular attendance means that the academic learning process is not interrupted, less time is spent on make-up assignments, and students benefit from active-participation and interaction with others in the classroom.

In the event a student must be absent from school, they will receive an "Admit Slip" from either the Attendance Office or Main Office upon their return. At Tecumseh Local Schools there are three categories of absences, designated by a color code system, which may be used for the purpose of discipline.

### **Green Admit Slips**

- **Excused Absence** – assigned work may be made up without academic penalty to the student.
- Do not count as part of a Student's Attendance Plan for discipline purposes.
- **Examples of "Green Slip" Absences**
  - Hospitalization.
  - Religious Holidays.
  - Death in immediate family – limited to 3 days unless extenuating circumstances.
  - Quarantine by health authorities.
  - Dentist's and Doctor's Appointment - accompanied with a doctor's excuse.
  - Illness – accompanied with a doctor's excuse listing dates.
  - Approved work at home. – Prearranged with the principal.
  - Court Appearance - accompanied with a court excuse listing dates.
  - Processing for entrance to the military.
  - Special Circumstances with prior approval by each individual building principal.
  - Students dismissed through the clinic shall be handled on an individual basis; generally, this would **NOT** be considered as a "Green Slip" Excuse

without an existing physician note unless the student is running a fever or has vomited.

- Emergency Set of Circumstances.

### **Yellow Admit Slips – (Parent/Guardian Excuses)**

- **Excused Absence** – assigned work may be made up without academic penalty to the student.
- Will not be counted as part of a Student’s Attendance Plan.
- Student has 5 days to change a “Yellow Slip” Absence to a “Green Slip” Excuse.
- Up to 32.5 hours of “Yellow Slip” Absences are allowed **per semester** as part of a Student’s Attendance Plan.
- **After the student reaches 32.5 hours of “Yellow Slip” Absence per semester, the student will receive notification that all further absences during that semester, not described within the approved “Green Slip” Excuses, will be considered as a “Red-Slip” Unexcused Absence.**
- **In order to provide documentation to the state, parents/guardians are required to submit an absence note for every student absence, even after the student has exceeded their allotted amount of “Yellow-Slip” Absences.**
- **Examples of “Yellow Slip” Absences**
  - Legitimate Excused Absence based on written note signed by parent/guardian (limited to 32.5 hours per semester)
  - Special Circumstances with prior approval by each individual building principal.
  - **College/Military/Career-Readiness Visits that do not follow the school policy may be considered as a “Yellow Slip” Excused absence, so long as the visits are within the 32.5 hours of Yellow Slip Absence allowed per semester.**
- **Discipline based on “Yellow Slip” Absences may include:**
  - 19.5 Hours of Absence – Letter Sent Home
  - 32.5 Hours of Absence – Letter Sent Home
  - Additional Absences – Considered Unexcused for remainder of semester (“Red-Slip”)

### **Red Admit Slips – (No Written Excuse or Parent Note after the 5<sup>th</sup> Absence per Semester)**

- **Unexcused Absence** – assigned work **may not be** made up for academic credit.
- Will be counted as part of a Student’s Attendance Plan for discipline purposes.
- Student has 5 days to change a “Red Slip” Absence to a “Green Slip” or “Yellow Slip” Excuse
- Ohio Revised Code considers Out of School Suspensions as Unexcused Absences. However, additional school discipline will not be issued based upon OSS.
- Up to 13 Hours of “Red Slip” Absences are allowed **per year** as part of a Student’s Attendance Plan prior to discipline being assigned.
- **Discipline based on “Red Slip” Absences may include:**
  - 19.5 Hours of Absence – Letter Sent Home & possible disciplinary action

- Additional Absences will be periodically communicated to the parent/guardian and may have additional disciplinary action defined based upon grade level or building.
- 72 Hours of Absence – Letter mailed home & Attendance Meeting with Plan
- 100 Hours of Absence – Letter mailed home & possible disciplinary action

### **Reported or Verified Truancy (3 – 5 ALC)**

#### **Juvenile Court Involvement**

- **Based upon the entire academic school year**
- **“Excessive Absences”** (based on Section 2151.011 of the Ohio Revised Code) is defined as “a school-age child who is absent from school for 38 or more hours in one school month or 65 or more hours in a school year.” **Note: a “school month” is defined as a calendar month.**
- **“Habitual Truant”** (based on Section 2151.011 of the Ohio Revised Code) is defined as “a school-age child who is absent from school without an excuse (Red Slip) for 30 or more consecutive school hours, 42 or more hours in one school month, or 72 or more hours in a school year.” **Note: a “school month” is defined as a calendar month.**
- **Students deemed as “Habitual Truant” may be required to attend periodic meetings with their parent/guardian and the school’s Absence Intervention Team as stipulated in the HB 410 provisions. Truant officers, court mediators, and/or other community resource personnel may also attend these meetings.**
- **The goal of these meetings is to provide a holistic, collaborative intervention for the students to address any potential underlying reasons for excessive absences without formally involving the juvenile court system by filing Unruly Charges solely based upon Truancy.**
- Ohio Revised Code considers Out of School Suspensions as Unexcused Absences.

**Formal charges through the juvenile court system may be considered against the student and/or parent as a last resort to address truancy. [ORC – 2151.27(G)]**