

Attendance Policy for Pulaski County Pre-K Program-LITTLE Children Growing

This policy was developed using guidelines from Bright from the Start and aligned to the attendance policy for schools in the Pulaski County School District. The goal of the attendance policy is to assist families in establishing and maintaining regular school attendance patterns.

Chronic Attendance Issues

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than two days per month without medical or other reasonable explanation. Chronic tardiness is defined as late arrival or early departure more than once per week. Chronic tardiness or absenteeism may also be defined by an established regular attendance pattern(s), e.g., if a child is late every Monday or absent every Tuesday or leaves early every Friday. If a chronic attendance problem occurs, parents/guardians will be required to meet with the Director in order to determine the reason(s) for the problem and identify ways to resolve the problem.

Absent:

- Student is not in attendance at all during the school day.
- Student leaves school before 11:30 or does not arrive until after 11:30.

Tardy:

- Arrives after 8:10.

Early Dismissal:

- Leaves before 2:45.

Absences

Excused absences shall include:

Personal illness or when attendance in school endangers the student's health or the health of others.

- A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
- A court order or an order by a government agency mandating absence from school.
- The observation of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
- A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave.
- A foster care student who attends court proceedings relating to the student's foster care shall be credited as present by the school and shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused, for any day, portion of a day, or days missed from school as set forth in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-692.

- Any other absence not explicitly defined herein but deemed by the director to have merit based on circumstances.

School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining chronic attendance issues.

Three (3) Days to Submit Excuse for Absence

Upon returning to school, the student will have three (3) days to present the necessary written documentation to have the absences count as excused. Failure to present this documentation will result in an unexcused absence. Phone calls **will not** be accepted in place of a written notice.

Excuse must include:

1. The date(s) of the absence
2. Student name
3. Reason for absence
4. Parent or guardian signature

Five (5) Days of Parent Notes for Illness

A parent's note will be accepted to excuse personal illness for five (5) days during the school year. After a parent's note has been used for five (5) days at any time during the school year, a doctor's excuse is **required** for ALL future absences due to illness unless otherwise determined by the director or the director's designee.

The conditions for excusing a tardy or early dismissal, as well as the time line for submitting excuses, are the same as an absence.

Violations of Attendance Policy

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences shall include all absences that do not meet the criteria as outlined for excused absences.

- **Three (3) or More Unexcused**
 - By the time a student has acquired an equivalent of three or more unexcused absences, the school will notify the parent or guardian in writing. This is a courtesy to make parents/guardians aware that we are monitoring their student's attendance. This reminder or similar documented action will serve as a good faith effort required of the school before taking further action. Failure to receive this reminder does not prevent further action taken to attempt to improve attendance.
- **Five (5) or More Unexcused**
 - The school will notify the parent/guardian of the attendance policy and consequences at an equivalent of five (5) unexcused absences by phone if at all possible. If a

parent/guardian cannot be reached by phone, the director will notify the parent/guardian in writing. The objective of the notification will be to explore barriers to attendance, develop a plan to improve attendance, and to remind the parent/guardian of the attendance policy and consequences for further unexcused absences.

- **Ten (10) or More Unexcused Absences**

- Ten absences will require a conference between the director and the parent/guardian. The purpose of this meeting to remind the parent/guardian of the attendance policy and consequences for further unexcused absences. Director and parent/guardian will collaborate in order to identify barriers to attendance and to develop a written plan to improve attendance.
- Over 10 absences will require a referral to the state appointed Bright from the Start Pre-K Consultant. At this time, a determination will be made as to whether or not the student will be able to continue enrollment in the program.

Student Withdrawals

Local school systems are authorized to withdraw a student who:

- Has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences.
- Is not subject to compulsory attendance.
- Is not receiving instructional services from the local school system through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Local school systems shall notify the parent or guardian of the intention to withdraw a student younger than 18 years of age who is not subject to compulsory attendance.

Notification of Parent/Guardians

Within thirty (30) days of enrollment in school, the parent or guardian will be notified in writing of the attendance policies and consequences. The parent/guardian must sign and return this notification.