

To All Parents and 9-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students:

Louisiana State Law mandates compulsory school attendance in which **every parent or legal guardian of a student shall enforce and be held accountable for the attendance of their student for every day scheduled by the local school board until their eighteenth (18) birthday.** Daily phone calls are made if a child is tardy, absent, or checks out early. Records of a student's attendance prints out on his/her progress reports and nine (9) week report cards. Also, at any time parents can view their child's current grades, discipline, and attendance through the Student Progress Center on the School District website at [www.fpsb.us](http://www.fpsb.us).

All students are expected to attend school regularly and be on time for classes. There is a direct relationship between poor attendance and class failure. **Due to the misunderstanding of the state attendance requirements for students in our district, we feel it is necessary to implement the following attendance policies for the 2022-23 school year.**

A student is considered to be in attendance when he or she is physically present at a school site or is participating in an authorized school activity and is under the supervision of authorized personnel. This definition for attendance would extend to students who are homebound, assigned to and participating in drug rehabilitation programs that contain a state-approved education component, participating in school-authorized field trips or other school-approved activities, or taking a state-approved virtual course.

- **Half-day attendance** - A student is considered to be in attendance for one-half day when he or she (1) is physically present at a school site or is participating in an authorized school activity and (2) is under the supervision of authorized personnel for more than 25% but not more than half (26%-50%) of the student's instructional day.
- **Whole-day attendance** - A student is considered to be in attendance for a whole day when he or she (1) is physically present at a school site or is participating in an authorized school activity and (2) is under the supervision of authorized personnel for more than 50% (51%-100%) of the student's instructional day.

### **Franklin Parish Attendance Policy**

**1<sup>st</sup> Notice:** When a student accumulates three (3) unexcused absences, the parent or legal guardian will be notified in writing. This notification shall include information relative to the parent or legal guardian's legal responsibility to enforce the student's attendance at school and the civil penalties that may be incurred if the student is determined to be habitually absent or habitually tardy. The student's parent or legal guardian shall sign a receipt for such notification.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Notice:** When a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, the parent or legal guardian and student are required to attend a mandatory conference with the school administrator or their designee. If the parent or legal guardian does not attend the mandatory conference, the principal will send a referral for investigation and/or home visit to the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance. A referral to the FINS program can be made at this time.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Notice:** When a student accumulates eight (8) unexcused absences, the principal shall send a request for assistance letter to the Child Welfare and Attendance Supervisor. The Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance shall file a Court Referral with the Fifth Judicial Court System. The punishment shall be as follows:

- A. A first offense shall be punished by a fine of not more than two hundred fifty (250) dollars or not more than 30 days in jail, or both.
- B. The court system can require parents to participate in forty (40) hours of community service or a combination of community service and attendance in parenting classes or family counseling sessions.
- C. Students and parents will be required to attend Truancy Court at the given date and time.
- D. The parent or legal guardian will be required to pay court costs

**4<sup>th</sup> Notice:** After the eleventh (11) unexcused absences, notices will be sent to the parents or legal guardian.

## **Reporting Absences**

All excuses for a student's absence, including medical verification of extended personal illness, must be presented within five (5) days of the student's return to school or the student's absence will be considered unexcused.

Exceptions to the attendance regulation shall be the enumerated extenuating circumstances below that are verified by the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance or the school principal/designee where indicated.

1. Extended personal physical or emotional illness as verified by a physician or nurse practitioner licensed in the state.
2. Extended hospital stay in which a student is absent as verified by a physician or dentist.
3. Extended recuperation from an accident in which a student is absent as verified by a physician, dentist, or nurse practitioner licensed in the state.
4. Extended contagious disease within a family in which a student is absent as verified by a physician or dentist licensed in the state.
5. Quarantine due to prolonged exposure to or direct contact with a person diagnosed with a contagious, deadly disease, as ordered by state or local health officials; or
6. Observance of special and recognized holidays of the student's own faith.
7. Visitation with a parent who is a member of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard of a state and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. Excused absences in this situation shall not exceed five (5) school days per school year.
8. Absences as verified by the principal or his/her designee as stated below:
  - A. Prior school system-approved travel for education;
  - B. Death in the immediate family (not to exceed one week); or,
  - C. Natural catastrophe and/or disaster.

For any other extenuating circumstances, the student's parents or legal guardian must make a formal appeal in accordance with the due process procedures established by the school system. Students who are verified as meeting extenuating circumstances, and therefore eligible to receive grades shall not receive those grades if they are unable to complete makeup work or pass the course.

## **Attendance Report for Student Drivers**

A student who does not meet the required minimum school attendance provisions may be subject to denial or suspension of his/her driver's license or learner's permit. Written notification of a minor student who has been determined by the principal to be a dropout or habitually absent or tardy may be sent to the Louisiana Office of Motor Vehicles for denial or suspension of driving privileges.

## **Tardiness**

A student is considered tardy to class if the student is not in the classroom when the bell to begin class ceases. A student will be considered tardy to school if the student is not in his/her homeroom/first period class when the bell to begin homeroom ceases. Tardy shall also mean leaving or checking out of school unexcused prior to the regularly scheduled dismissal. Students who exhibit habitual tardiness shall be subject to disciplinary action. Parents of students who continue to be tardy shall be notified for a conference with the principal or their designee. The student may be subject to suspension from school and the parent/legal guardian subject to court fines or community service.

Any questions can be directed to your school or the Child Welfare and Attendance Supervisor. Please contact the Child Welfare and Attendance Supervisor for assistance with special circumstances that may be interfering with your child's ability to attend school on a regular basis. Our mission is to provide the best education possible for your child and we cannot do this if your child is not attending school on a regular basis. Thank you for your cooperation in this very important matter.

