

8010: STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICYAge of Attendance

Every child who has completed or will have completed six (6) years of life on or before September 1 of any school year and has not completed eighteen (18) years of life shall regularly attend some public day school during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session in Scituate. Every person having under his or her control a child as described above shall cause the child to attend school as required by this section.

If the child has attended, for the required period of time a private day school approved by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, or a course of at-home instruction approved by the School Committee of the town of Scituate, or that the physical or mental condition of the child was such as to render his or her attendance at school inexpedient or impracticable, or that the child was excluded from school by virtue of some general law or regulation, then attendance shall not be obligatory. Nothing in this section shall be construed to allow the absence or irregular attendance of any child who is enrolled as a member of any school, or of any child sent to school by the person having control of the child. Provided, however, that nothing in this section shall prohibit or limit Scituate from enacting programs of early intervention and/or mediation in an effort to address the problems of students who are habitually late or absent from school.

Regularity of Attendance

Every child who willfully and habitually absents himself from school, so as to render himself a fit subject for exclusion therefrom, shall be suspended from school and referred to Family Court. Every habitual truant, that is, every child who is required under Title 16-19-1 to attend school and who willfully and habitually absents himself or herself therefrom; and every habitual school offender, that is every child who is required to attend school under the provision of Title 16-19-1, but who persistently violates the rules and regulations of the school which he or she attends, or otherwise persistently misbehaves therein, so as to render him or herself a fit subject for exclusion therefrom; shall be deemed a wayward child as provided in Title 14-1, and shall be subject to all the provisions of Title 14-1, and may be proceeded against and dealt with as a wayward child in accordance with the provisions of Title 14-1.

Whenever any pupil in grades kindergarten through nine (9) fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the pupil's parent or guardian is aware of the pupil's absence, a reasonable effort will be made to notify, by telephone, the parent or guardian by school personnel or volunteers. The Superintendent of Schools shall develop and implement administrative procedures to accomplish this requirement.

8010: STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

School Attendance Areas

The Superintendent shall ordinarily assign students to school nearest to their homes, but he may make exceptions for the following reasons:

1. To equalize classroom loads;
2. To effect economies in transportation;
3. To provide special education for physically or mentally handicapped children.

The Superintendent shall, for sufficient reasons, have power to transfer children from one school to another.

General Supervision

The general supervision of the activities of the attendance department shall be the responsibility of the Scituate Chief Truant Officer who is answerable to the Superintendent of Schools. The Scituate Chief Truant Officer is responsible for the school attendance of students according to local and state law.

Appointment of Truant Officer(s)

The Scituate School Resource Officer will serve as the district truant officer. If there is not a School Resource Officer assigned to the schools, the School Committee shall annually, in the month of December appoint a truant officer(s) based on the recommendation of the Scituate Police Chief. The appointed truant officer(s) shall by virtue of appointment be clothed with the power of special constables. The Committee shall fix compensation for the truant officer(s), which shall be payable from the appropriation for public schools. The School Committee may also furnish all necessary supplies and clerical assistance for the proper and efficient performance of the duties of the truant officer. The Committee may appoint truant officers on a tenure similar to other employees in lieu of the annual appointment above mentioned in this section and may fix their compensation from time to time.

8010: STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICYPhilosophy:

Attendance at school is mandated by Rhode Island General Law 16-19-1. The learning experiences that occur in the classrooms of Scituate schools are meaningful and essential parts of each student's education. Time lost from class is irretrievable. Daily class interactions among and between students and teachers present unique learning opportunities inadequately duplicated by makeup work assigned to students that have been absent from class.

The professional staff of Scituate schools teach and expect responsible student behavior, including regular class attendance as an essential part of a student's course of study. Therefore, this policy establishes limits on student absences to emphasize the primary importance of the classroom learning experience and to better foster each student's personal responsibility for daily attendance.

Student Attendance Policy:

1. It is the expectation that a phone call by a parent/guardian will be made to the school on the day the student is absent.
2. A reasonable attempt will be made by the school to contact the parent/guardian of any student that is absent (if a parent/guardian phone call is not received.)
3. If contact with the parent/guardian is not made within 24 hours, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.
4. Students absent from school/class will be considered excused for the following reasons (proper documentation is required):
 - Illness/injury
 - Doctor/Dentist appointments
 - Court appearance
 - School sponsored activities
 - College visits (grade 12 students only)
 - Religious observance
 - Extenuating personal/family circumstances with administrator approval
5. Parent phone calls for student illness will be marked as excused up to 3 times per quarter, per student (at the middle/high school level) or 4 times per trimester (at the elementary level). Additional absences require medical documentation to be considered excused.
6. Chronic absences may result in referral to truancy court by the School Resource Officer (truancy officer).
7. Students on suspension (in-school or out of school) are not considered unexcused absent.

8010: STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Appeal Procedure:

1. The parent/guardian can initiate an appeal of a student's attendance record by submitting a written request (with supporting documentation for each absence under appeal) to the school principal.

Teacher Expectations:

1. Teachers are expected to take daily attendance (and class period attendance where appropriate).
2. Teachers will notify administration when a student is not in class and not listed as absent on the daily attendance sheet.

Administrator Expectations:

1. A list of absent students will be generated for each school day.
2. The building administrator or his/her designee will notify teachers of the status of unexcused absence referrals.

Tardy to School Policy

Tardiness to school can only be excused by verification from a parent/guardian in writing or via phone call. Students will be excused from being tardy for the following reasons (proper documentation is required):

- Illness/injury
- Doctor/Dentist appointments
- Court appearance
- School sponsored activities
- College visits (grade 12 students only)
- Religious observance
- Extenuating personal/family circumstances with administrator approval

Students with an unexcused tardy to school may be subject to school disciplinary action.

Adopted 7/1/2003
Revised 12/1/2015

Chairperson

Approval Date