

**ABSENCES AND EXCUSES****Students**

Pursuant to Education Code Section 42238.8, the determination of an absence as "excused" or "unexcused" is not relevant for accounting purposes. However, verification of excused absences is relevant for purposes of enforcement of compulsory education laws and for the determination of whether a student is truant pursuant to the CalWORKS program.

**Excused Absences**

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness (Education Code Section 48205)
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer (Education Code Section 48205)
3. Medical, dental, optometrical, or chiropractic appointment (Education Code Section 48205)
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family, which shall be limited to one day if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state. (Education Code Section 48205)  
*Immediate family* shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/daughter-in-law, brother, sister, or any relative living in the student's immediate household. (Education Code Sections 45194, 48205)
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law (Education Code Section 48205)
6. The illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child to whom the student is the custodial parent (Education Code Section 48205)
7. **Upon advance written request by the parent/guardian and the approval of the Principal** or designee, justifiable personal reasons including, but not limited to: (Education Code Section 48205)
  - a. Appearance in court
  - b. Attendance at a funeral service
  - c. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion
  - d. Attendance at religious retreats not to exceed four hours per semester
  - e. Attendance at an employment conference
  - f. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization

8. Service as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Elections Code Section 12302 (Education Code Section 48205)
9. Participation in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction in accordance with district policy (Education Code 46014)
  - a. In such instances, the student shall attend at least the minimum school day.
  - b. The student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four days per school month.

### **Method of Verification**

When a student who has been absent returns to school, he/she shall present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. Absences shall be verified by the student's parent/guardian, other person having control of the minor, or the student, if age 18 or older. (Education Code Section 46012; 5 CCR 306)

The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Written note, fax, or email from parent/guardian or parent representative.
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
  - a. Name of student
  - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative
  - c. Name of verifying employee
  - d. Date(s) of absence
  - e. Reason for absence
3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. The employee shall document the verification and include the information specified in item #2 above.
4. Physician's verification.
  - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, district staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
  - b. When a student has had 14 absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed in #1-3 above, any further absences for illness shall be verified by a physician.
5. Confidential medical services
  - a. Students seeking confidential services shall be referred to the school nurse or a counselor. The school nurse or counselor will provide authorization for the student to be excused from school for confidential medical services. The school nurse or counselor will provide the attendance office with the information necessary to

record the absence as excused, except the fact that the student sought confidential medical services shall not be included in the pupil record. If the school nurse or counselor chooses to verify the confidential medical appointment did in fact occur, the school nurse or counselor must verify using a method that safeguards the student's privacy as much as possible. This may include confirming with the student orally, requesting a written confirmation of the time and date of the appointment from the medical provider, or any other appropriate method the school nurse or counselor wishes to employ.

- b. If there is no school nurse or counselor on campus, the attendance office staff member will authorize the absence as excused. The appointment can be verified with the student orally or by requesting that the student provide a written confirmation of the time and date of the appointment. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying their appointments, District staff members shall not ask the purpose of such appointments.
- c. When students volunteer confidential medical information to a District staff member, the staff member should suggest that the student consult their parent/guardian or another trusted adult. Information obtained shall be handled in the manner described in BP/AR 5022.