



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

NO: 6166

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CATEGORY: **Students, Attendance Accounting**

EFFECTIVE: **1-29-62**

SUBJECT: **Attendance Accounting, K-12**

REVISED: **7-1-09**

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. To outline administrative procedures governing attendance accounting in all schools, including active enrollment reports, other reports, and end of school year requirements.
2. This procedure does not cover enrollment, registration, summer school attendance \procedures, transfer/withdrawal from school, students leaving school grounds, and/or promotion/placement policies.
3. **Related Procedures:**

Enrollment estimates, forecasts, and reports	6190
Independent study	4316
Transfer and withdrawal, 7-12	6146
Truancy and habitual truancy	6150

B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS

1. **Reference:** Board Policy H-3600; Education Code Sections 44809, 46000-46014, 46140, 46300, 46305, 48205; California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Sections 300, 303, 306, 400-405, 420-424.
2. **Education Code Section 46014** refers to permissive release time for religious education in those districts where the Board of Education has granted specific approval. *The San Diego Unified School District Board of Education has not granted such approval.*
3. **Teacher's Responsibility**
 - a. **In all classes for elementary schools, Education Code 44809 states,** “. . . There shall be recorded in each school register the absence and attendance of each pupil enrolled in the classes taught by the teacher. . . .”
 - b. **In all secondary schools and continuation schools,** each teacher shall be required to submit to the principal, *at least once each school day*, a report of attendance *for each period of the day* in which he/she conducts classes, listing the names of all students absent in *any* period. (California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 401)

- c. **In all classes for adult education, ROP centers and programs**, attendance shall be reported to the principal *at least once a week*.

C. GENERAL

1. **Originating Office.** Suggestions or questions concerning this procedure should be directed to the Pupil Accounting Office, Office of Resource Development, Financial Operations Division.
2. **Legal Requirements.** The importance of accounting for student attendance is dictated by legal requirements that can be separated into two basic categories:
 - a. District accountability for the whereabouts of students enrolled in district programs.
 - b. State funding formulas for public education that are based on student attendance and apportioned absences.

Each site must maintain a Daily List of Absences (*Master Absence List*). Specific state laws and district regulations govern the entire attendance accounting procedure and sites are expected to develop and maintain auditable records of student enrollment and attendance.

3. **Accountability.** The principal is responsible for administration of the attendance taking process. This includes being accountable for teacher daily posting of attendance and assuring that designated personnel develop and maintain auditable records on student attendance according to district requirements documented in the attendance manual(s). The district details the oversight and responsibilities for the attendance function in the *Attendance and Enrollment Handbook*.
4. **Definitions**
 - a. **Attendance accounting:** Recording of a student's presence in or absence from school, which is computed to provide a basis for allotment of state apportionment funds to the district.
 - b. **Attendance period:** First period during the day in which *all* students are scheduled (usually first or second period of the day); attendance is taken and *Master Absence List* is prepared after all absences have been recorded.

- c. **Excused absences eligible for state apportionment:** Specific full day absences counted when computing average daily attendance for apportionment purposes.
- (1) **Independent Study Agreement.** Provided the student entered into a five-(5) day written agreement prior to absence from school. (See Procedure 4316 and *Attendance and Enrollment Handbook*.)
 - (2) **Saturday School.** Make-up work provided by individual school sites.
- d. **Absences not eligible for state apportionment:** All full-day absences other than those listed in C.4.c. Such absences are classified as:
- (1) **Personal absences.** A student shall be excused from school for justifiable personal reasons including, but not limited to: court appearances, attendance at special religious ceremonies, attendance at religious retreats (not to exceed four [4] hours per semester), employment conferences, school-initiated absences (*including absences due to no bus transportation after the student is actively enrolled*), and other family emergencies, *provided* student's absence is requested in writing by the parent/guardian and approved by principal or designee. The student shall be allowed to make up all missed assignments and tests that reasonably can be provided; assignments and tests need not be identical to those missed during such absences. (Education Code Section 48205)
 - (2) **Unexcused absences.** Absences for reasons other than those listed in C.4.d.(1)., or personal emergency that school authorities find could have been handled in some other manner even though approved by parent/guardian.
 - (3) **Truant.** Absence or tardiness for reasons that are not acceptable to the school *nor* approved by the parent/guardian; absences where evidence shows that parent/guardian (a) has misrepresented facts regarding the absence with the intent to have it excused, or (b) has refused to cooperate to keep the student in school as required by law. **Note:** Tardiness does not affect state apportionment. (Refer to Procedure 6150.)
 - (4) **Verified illness or quarantine.**
 - (5) **Verified medical, dental, optometrical, or chiropractic appointments.** (If the student is absent for the entire day.)

- (6) **Attendance of funeral services for a member of the immediate family** (one day for services in California, three [3] days for services outside California). If the death of a family member living in the student's immediate household is involved, the student may be absent as many days as necessary; the above limitations do not apply.
 - (7) **First five (5) days of absence due to exclusion for noncompliance with immunization requirements.**
 - (8) **Jury duty.**
 - e. **Tardiness:** Late arrival (does not affect state apportionment). Schools may code tardiness as either excused (tardy due to doctor appointment or late bus) or unexcused. Special circumstances apply to unexcused tardies when over thirty (30) minutes of school is missed. (Refer to Procedure 6150.)
5. **Special Classifications**
- a. **Students in Juvenile Hall, Polinsky Center, court schools, or other temporary agencies** are carried on school's roll and in enrollment count until disposition or placement is made.
 - b. **Students who are preapproved to go on a short term absence from school** may enter into an Independent Study Agreement. The students remain on the enrollment of the school and receive attendance credit based on work assignments completed. (See Procedure 4316.)
 - c. **Students who are absent pending exemption** are carried on school's roll and in enrollment count until the date that the parent/guardian signature is received.
 - d. **Refer to *Attendance and Enrollment Handbook*** for students who are in the Home and Hospital Program and are enrolled for less than minimum day, or are concurrently enrolled in nonpublic schools.
6. **Release of Students for Religious Instruction.** Uniform application of this policy in all schools is strongly recommended (B.2.).
- a. **Absences** may be honored and are recorded as "personal absence."

- b. **Regular (e.g., weekly) or repeated absences before, during, and at end of school day** cannot be honored and are recorded as “unexcused.” Parents/guardians should be informed of this policy and urged to arrange for such activities after school.
- c. **Attendance at religious retreats** shall not exceed four (4) hours per semester.

7. **State and Local Requirements vs. Disciplinary Considerations**

- a. **State and Local Requirements.** District accounting procedures must be acceptable to the California Department of Education and are subject to state audit; final attendance accounting is coordinated by the Financial Operations Division. Year-round schools have the same requirements as traditional calendar schools, except for due dates on various reports (see attendance accounting manual). *The following state and local requirements must be met in order to substantiate claims for funds:*
 - (1) All absences *must be verified* by authorized school personnel with either a parent or guardian through personal contact, note, or telephone call. Home contacts may be made by teacher, clerk, counselor or other person designated by the principal. Parents/guardians are responsible for contacting the school in writing or by phone regarding their child’s absence from school. If a parent/guardian has not contacted the child’s school regarding their child’s absence in writing or by phone within five (5) days, the school will consider the student unexcused (U). The school is responsible for notifying parents when a student is absent and correcting the attendance codes in the District student information system.
 - (2) The school office should maintain a chronological list of all incoming telephone calls that verify student absences.
 - (3) All absent students must be listed on the *Master Absence List* in alphabetical order by grade. Reasons for nonattendance must be posted to an auditable record. Absence verifications received from telephone calls should be written on the *Phone Contact List*.
 - (4) Each day all full-day absences must be summarized on the *Master Absence List*.

- b. **Disciplinary Considerations.** Disciplinary considerations vary for many reasons. The extent of detailed attendance information recorded is governed by needs of the particular school.
8. **Verification.** School sites are required to obtain verification for all full-day absences for illness or quarantine, medical appointments, attendance at funeral services for a member of immediate family, and jury duty. (Quarantine must be directed by the San Diego County Department of Health Services.)
 - a. **First-Day Absentees.** Telephone calls are made to homes of all first-day absentees whose parents/guardians have not contacted the school; reason for nonattendance is noted on *Master Absence List*. Attendance personnel follow up on student absences using those methods designated by principal in the site plan.
 - b. **Students Eighteen Years of Age.** A student's living arrangement determines his/her legal residence for attendance purposes. *Provided* a school secures from the parents (or guardians) a written statement that the student is no longer in their custody or control, a student may sign his/her own excuse for absence, and may be released from school for legal reasons on his/her own cognizance. Attendance of students eighteen years of age or older is a privilege, not a requirement. Irregular attendance should be referred to a vice principal, who may in turn, utilize services of a district counselor.
9. **Return to School After Absence (Period or Full Day).** Student reports to classroom or attendance office, as outlined in the site plan. If an absence has not been satisfactorily verified by telephone, student submits a note from parent/guardian.
10. **Monthly Reports.** The signed Gain/Loss and Monthly Accumulative Attendance Report (MAAR) reports are due to the Pupil Accounting Office from school site attendance and enrollment staff. See "Reports" section of the *Attendance and Enrollment Handbook* for monthly procedures.
11. **Active Enrollment.** Active Enrollment reports are required for planning, staffing, budgeting, and state reporting purposes (see Procedure 6190). School site enrollment staff will print the report on the Active Enrollment date of each month and reconcile it with site records on the student information system, sign it and keep on file in the school office.

12. **State Reports.** Required reports to the California Department of Education from the district shall be prepared and submitted by the Pupil Accounting Office based on school-supplied data for the designated reporting period.
13. **Other Reports.** At the end of each school month, some positive reporting schools and special programs are required to furnish attendance information.
14. **Summer Drops.** *Expected* students who do not return to school upon opening of school are presumed to be “summer drops.” School sites must process all summer drops and no shows no later than the end of the second week of school.
15. **Close of School Year Requirements**
 - a. **Transfers.** School secretary prepares transfers for students who *permanently* leave school *prior* to last day of school. Transfers are not prepared for those students leaving school prior to last day of school whose families retain residence and indicate they will return next year. (Refer to Procedure 6146.)

D. IMPLEMENTATION (Refer to *Attendance and Enrollment Handbook* and *Zangle User’s Guide*)

E. FORMS AND AUXILIARY REFERENCES

1. Attendance and Enrollment Handbook http://www.sandi.net/pupil_acct/

F. REPORTS AND RECORDS (Refer to Section C.)

1. All records must be retained on school site and may be audited at any time. *At the completion of the school year, records must be kept for a four (4) year period at the school site.*

G. APPROVED BY



General Counsel, Legal Services
For the Superintendent of Schools