

**Section 9-8.1. Parental responsibility; parent contact required; when absences can be excused; superintendent to establish regulations.** — A. School attendance is directly related to academic achievement and the development of good habits which are important in the world of work. Optimum student attendance is a cooperative effort and the School Board expects parents and students to take an active role in accepting the responsibility for good attendance.

Each parent/guardian in charge of a child within the compulsory attendance age shall be responsible for such child's regular and punctual attendance at school as required under the provisions of law.

B. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact a parent/guardian of each absent student every day and a log will be kept of call attempts.

C. When a student is absent from school, the student's parent or guardian must inform the school of the reason for the absence no later than upon the student's return to school. Absences can be excused for any of the following:

- (1) for middle and high school students, one school day per school year to engage in a civic event;
- (2) a maximum of two school days per academic year for participation in a 4-H educational program or activity. No credit will be provided for a student whose participation in a 4-H educational program or activity occurs during Scheduled Standards of Learning assessments or during any period of time that the student is suspended or expelled from school. The student's principal or assistant principal may request a representative of 4-H to provide documentation of a student's participation in order for the student's absence to be excused;
- (3) subject to guidelines established by the Virginia Department of Education, students who are members of a state or federally recognized tribal nation that is headquartered in Virginia will be granted one excused absence per academic year to attend such nation's pow wow gathering provided that the student's parent provides the student's school advance notice of the absence in the manner required by the school;
- (4) ~~(2)~~ funeral, illness (including mental health and substance abuse illnesses), injury, legal obligations, medical procedures, suspensions, religious observances, and military obligations.

D. The superintendent, by regulation, will establish procedures for appropriate interventions when a student engages in a pattern of absences for less than a full day, the explanation of which, if it were a full-day absence, would not be an excused absence. The superintendent's regulations will also include procedures for excusing students who are absent by reason of observance of a religious holiday. Such regulations will ensure that a student is not deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, when the student was not able to do so initially because of the student's absence from school, if the absence is verified in an acceptable manner and deemed excused. (Adopted February 9, 1995;

Revised January 14, 1999; Revised January 11, 2018; Ordinance Number 17/18-36, Effective Date: January 11, 2018; Ordinance 22/23-11, Revised/Effective: November 10, 2022)

**Legal Authority** - Virginia Code §§ 22.1-227.1, 22.1-254, 22.1-258, 22.1-260, 22.1-279.3, 46.2-323 and 46.2-334.001, and 54.1-3900 (1950), as amended; 8 VAC 20-730-10 and 8 VAC 20-730-20.