

Proposed El Dorado County SARB Policy on Excessive Absences/Tardies¹

Introduction

Excessive absences and/or tardies constitute an irregular attendance pattern that adversely affects the child's ability to learn. Excessive absences and/or tardies are defined as patterns of absences and/or tardies due to prolonged or repeated illness as reported by the parent/guardian such as:

- A. Absences/Tardies of 10 or more days in a school year for illness without written verification by a medical professional;
- B. Any other pattern of repeated absences and/or tardies that adversely affects the child's academic progress (such as a prior SARB history).

Procedure

- A. At the commencement of the school year each school district may provide to the parent or guardian of each child in the district written notice of the procedure set forth below (see attached example).
- B. Once a child has 10 absences and/or tardies in a school year each school may provide to the parent or guardian of the child in question written notice reminding the parent or guardian of the procedure set forth below, and specifically indicating that any further absence/tardy not accompanied by a note from a neutral medical professional will be designated as "unexcused" (see attached example).
- C. The manner in which a school may designate a particular absence/tardy as "excused" or "unexcused" will depend upon the categorization of the child in question. Those designated as Category One children may have absences listed as "excused" or "unexcused" by a variety of methods. Those designated as Category Two children shall have all absences/tardies listed as "unexcused" unless written verification is provided by a neutral medical professional (i.e., not a friend or relative of the child's parent(s)/guardian).

1. Category One

- a. Children will fall within Category One in the following instances:
 - i. The child has no more than 10 absences and/or tardies in a given school year;
 - ii. The child has not exhibited a pattern of repeated absences and/or tardies that adversely affect the child's academic progress (such as a prior SARB history).
- b. If a child falls within Category One, the following person(s) are permitted to designate the absence as excused or unexcused:
 - i. Any attendance supervisor employed by the school or school district;
 - ii. The principal of the school of enrollment;

¹ Tardies being defined as being late by 30 or more minutes; see Educ. Code section 48260.

- iii. Any school employee designated by the district Superintendent or principal.
- c. If a child falls within Category One, the following methods may be used to verify that the child's absence/tardy is excused;
 - i. A written note from
 - (A) A parent or guardian;
 - (B) A medical professional;
 - (C) The student if 18 or older (Education Code section 46012).
 - ii. Oral communication, in person or by telephone, between any of the persons listed in "b" above with any of the persons listed in "c/i" above, shall be sufficient provided that the person listed in "b" above documents and maintains a record of the following:
 - (A) The name of the child;
 - (B) The name of the person providing the excuse;
 - (C) The name of the person receiving the excuse;
 - (D) Date(s) of absence;
 - (E) Reason for absence.
- d. Documentation related to the verification of absences/tardies, whether in the form of a written note or in the form of a memorialized conversation as set forth in "c" above, shall be maintained for a minimum of one year after it was generated.

2. Category Two

- a. Children will fall within Category Two in the following instances:
 - i. The child has 10 or more absences and/or tardies in a given school year;
 - ii. The child has exhibited a pattern or repeated absences and/or tardies that adversely affect the child's academic progress (such as a prior SARB history).
- b. If a child falls within Category Two, the following person(s) are the only persons permitted to designate the absence/tardy as excused:
 - i. The attendance supervisor employed by the school district;
 - ii. The principal of the school of enrollment.
 - iii. Any school employee designated by the district
- c. If a child falls within Category Two, the **only** method that may be used to verify that the child's absence and/or tardies is excused shall be a written note from a neutral medical professional (defined as a PA, RN or MD who is not related to, or a friend of, the child and/or parent(s)/guardian). Any other absence/tardy must be designated "unexcused."
- d. Documentation related to the verification of absences/tardies for children in Category Two shall be maintained for a minimum of three years after it was generated.

- E. The school may submit a case to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) at any time that it believes that the child's ability to learn is being jeopardized by excessive absences and/or tardies. If SARB determines that available community resources cannot resolve the problem, or if the child and/or parent(s)/guardian have failed to respond to SARB directives, SARB may then request that a petition on behalf of the child be filed in juvenile court an/or that a complaint against the parent(s)/guardian be filed by the District Attorney's Office (Education Code section 48263, Penal Code section 272).