



OGDEN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

Official Procedure

7. Students

7.01.PRC.1 Attendance Administrative Procedures

Effective/Revision Date: 9/22/22

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These procedures are established in accordance with the Attendance Policy established by the OPA Board of Directors.

DEFINITIONS

1. **ABSENCE:** A student's non-attendance at school for one school day or more than half of one school day.
2. **VALID EXCUSE or EXCUSED ABSENCE:** An absence resulting from
 - a. An illness
 - b. A death of family member or a close friend
 - c. A documented medical appointment or condition
 - d. A family emergency
 - e. An approved school activity
 - f. A pre-approved extended absence for a family activity or travel, consistent with school policy
 - g. A given absence permitted by an individualized education program or accommodation plan, developed pursuant to relevant law.
 - h. The principal has the discretion to consider other absences as "valid" excuses.
3. **TRUANT:** Absent from school without a valid excuse, including:
 - a. Being in the school and not being in the correct classroom with the teacher of record.
 - b. Reporting to school and then leaving school grounds without following proper check out procedures.
 - c. Failure to follow proper reporting procedures within the required time to validate or excuse an absence (see EXCUSED ABSENCES).
4. **HABITUAL TRUANT:** A school age minor who: (1) is at least 12 years old; (2) is subject to the requirements of §53A-11-101.5; and (3) (a) is truant at least ten times during one school year; and (b) fails to cooperate with efforts on the part of the school authorities to resolve the minor's attendance problem as required under §53A-11-103.

EXCUSING ABSENCES AND GENERAL ABSENCE PROCEDURES

Notification of Absences

In the event a student is absent, parents/guardians will be notified by phone on the day of the absence. Parents and students are responsible for excusing absences and tracking the total number of absences and tardies.

Excused Absences

An oral or written communication documenting a valid excuse must be received from the student's parent/guardian within two (2) business days of the absences in order for the absence to be excused. In the event of multiple consecutive absences, written communication must be received within two (2) business days of the student's return to school.

Once two business days have passed without a valid excuse, an absence automatically becomes unexcused and therefore a truancy. At that point, only the building principal may override the truancy and change the absence to excused. Secretarial staff shall refer all guardians wishing to excuse a truancy after 2 business days to the building principal. Secretaries shall not override a truancy themselves.

Excused absences may become unexcused if the Principal determines that absences have reached an excessive level and are adversely impacting the student's education.

Pre-approved, Extended Absence

A parent/guardian may request approval from the Principal prior to a student's extended absence. The Principal may excuse up to nine (9) days of the pre-approved absence, if the principal determines that the extended absence will not adversely impact the student's education. Students in grades 7-9 who plan to be absent for an extended period of time must complete a pre-approved absence form prior to the absence. Absences will not be excused until a completed form is submitted to the secretaries. Pre-approved absence forms are available in the front office.

Make-up Work

Make-up work is permitted for students who have absences. The teacher(s) will provide the student or the parent/guardian with any make-up work upon request. Make-up work must be completed within a reasonable time frame determined by the teacher.

Grounds for an Appeal

Parents or Guardians who believe that all or part of their child's absences and/or tardies should be considered excused may provide a written request to the building principal to review their case. The written request should include any documentation, such as a doctor's note. Appeals are considered on a case by case basis and the decision is solely under the discretion of the Building Principal; appeal decisions are final. The building principal shall respond to any appeal request in writing within 5 business days.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The school's Attendance Intervention Program is established to encourage good attendance and to facilitate the processing of chronically truant students.

Notification

Annual notification of school attendance policies and procedures will be provided to the parents of all students at the time of registration.

Excessive Excused Absences

1. After a student accrues 5 excused absences in a school year, OPA's Attendance Secretary will make a phone call to the student's guardian informing them of Utah's attendance laws and encouraging increased attendance. The Secretary shall use the Attendance Phone Script.
2. After a student accrues 10 excused absences in a school year, the student will be referred to the Attendance Administrator. The Attendance Administrator will send out an Attendance Warning letter. The Attendance Administrator will also contact the guardian to develop a plan to provide educational support or to help resolve the attendance problem.
3. When a student exceeds 15 excused absences in a school year, a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation will be sent to the student's guardian (see NOTICE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION VIOLATION).

Excessive Unexcused Absences (Truancies)

1. After 2 consecutive, unexcused absences, the OPA Attendance Secretary shall make a phone call to the student's guardian requesting an explanation for the absences. Three consecutive Truancies require a written note from the guardian.
 - a. If the Attendance Secretary is not able to contact the family, a home visit shall be initiated.
2. After 4 consecutive unexcused absences - regardless of whether or not the Attendance Secretary has been able to make contact with the family - a home visit shall be initiated.
3. When a student exceeds 5 truancies in a school year, a Truancy Notice of Compulsory Education Violation will be personally delivered to the guardian or sent to the student's guardian via certified mail (see NOTICE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION VIOLATION).

Excessive Tardies

1. Grades 7-9:

- o Procedures are outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook.
- 2. Grades K-6:
 - o After a student receives 3 unexcused morning tardies, the OPA Attendance Secretary shall make a phone call to the guardian encouraging prompt attendance and requesting an excuse.
 - o After a student receives 10 morning tardies, the OPA Attendance Secretary shall send a Tardy Letter to the guardian.
 - o After 15 morning tardies, the family shall be referred to the Attendance Administrator for follow-up.

NOTICE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION VIOLATION

The school may issue a “Notice of Compulsory Education Violation” to a parent/guardian of a student who is under the age of fourteen (14) if the student is truant at least five (5) times or absent for any reason at least fifteen (15) times during the school year.

The school reserves the right to consider specific circumstances when deciding whether to send a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation for excused absences.

This Notice Shall:

1. Direct the parent/guardian to contact the school authorities to discuss the student’s attendance problem and cooperate with the principal and Board to secure regular attendance by the student.
2. Designate the school authorities with whom the parent is required to meet.
3. State that it is a class B misdemeanor for the student’s parent or guardian to intentionally or recklessly fail to meet with the designated school authorities to discuss this student’s attendance problems, or fail to prevent the student from being truant an additional nine (9) more times during the remainder of the school year.
4. Be served on the parent/guardian by personal service or certified mail.

The Notice of Compulsory Education Violation requires recipients to schedule a meeting with school administration to discuss remediation or to acknowledge receipt via phone call. If the recipient does not contact the school within 10 days of receipt, the administration will attempt to contact them. If contact attempts fail, the administration will refer the case to the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS). If an immediate concern regarding student safety is present, administration may also call the local police department to complete a well-child check.

HOME VISIT PROCEDURES

Home visits will be deployed in the event of excessive, unexcused absences, as described previously. If at any time during the year, an OPA Administrator has concern regarding student absences - including excused absences - a home visit may be initiated.

Initial Home Visit

The purpose of an initial home visit is to check on the student and family, and to provide necessary support to ensure the child is able to attend school. A home visit shall involve at least two adults from the school (Visitors):

1. Elementary Home Visit: The Academic Mentor and the Elementary Counselor
2. Junior High Home Visit: The Academic Mentor and the Junior High Counselor

During an initial Home Visit, the following tasks shall be performed:

1. Visitors go to the residence listed as a primary residence in the School's Student Information System.
2. Visitors speak to an adult at the household, asking first for Guardian, then for another adult if the guardian is not available.
3. If no adult is available, Visitors can speak to the oldest individual at the house.
4. Visitors shall only enter the home if invited to do so by a legal guardian who is 18 or older.
5. Visitors should ask questions that help them assess the following:
 - a. Reasons the child has not been attending school
 - b. Any unknown issues related to the child
 - c. Any unknown issues related to the family situation
 - d. How the school can support the family
6. Visitors shall develop a plan to improve attendance and address any issues discussed.
7. If there is no one at the residence, a door tag shall be left to notify the family of the visit.
8. A home visit shall be logged into the Student Information System, with the following information:
 - a. Date and time of visit
 - b. Name(s) of individuals the Visitors spoke to and relationship(s) to child
 - c. Information learned
 - d. Outcomes/plan to improve attendance
 - e. Relevant follow-up tasks
 - f. If there is no one home, items b-e will be omitted from the entry

Follow Up Home Visit

If an initial home visit does not assist in improving attendance for the student, there shall be a follow up visit within 14 days (approximately two full weeks of school). A follow up visit shall involve at least two adults from the school (Visitors):

3. Elementary Follow Up Visit: One individual from the initial visit and one member of the Administrative Team. There shall be one male and one female on the visiting team.
4. Junior High Home Visit: One individual from the initial visit and one member of the Administrative Team. There shall be one male and one female on the visiting team.

The follow up visit shall follow the same procedures as the initial visit, adjusting to meet the specific needs found on the first visit.

Safety Procedures During Home Visits

1. If, at any time during a home visit, the safety of the Visitors is in question, the Visitors shall immediately leave.
2. If, at any time, the safety of a child is in question, the Visitors shall follow up with at least one of the following tasks:
 - a. Call DCFS to make a report about the situation: (855) 323-3237.
 - b. Call the Ogden Police to ask for a wellness check.

Document History

Board Approved:	12/12/2012	
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Admin Revised:	10/01/2018	<i>Revised timelines and letters issues.</i>
Admin Revised:	10/26/2021	<i>Revised timelines and letters. Removed pre-excused absence form.</i>
Admin Revised:	01/14/2022	<i>Added pre-excused absence form requirement for Junior High.</i>
Admin Revised:	09/22/2022	<i>Added home visit procedures and clarified timelines</i>

Legal References

Utah Code §53A-11-101.5
Utah Code §53A-11-103