

DeKalb County School System

Student Attendance Administrative Protocol and Procedures

In compliance with the mandates of House Bill 1190 and O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.2, which require creation of a student attendance protocol, the Student Attendance Protocol Committee makes the following suggestions and recommendations to the Superintendent for implementation in the elementary, middle schools, and high schools of the DeKalb County School System.

Identifying – Taking Attendance

For the purpose of maintaining an accurate account of daily attendance, attendance shall be taken daily using SmartWeb or other methods approved by the individual school's principal. The principal of each school shall be responsible for ensuring that attendance is taken in a timely manner and that accurate records are kept.

Attendance shall be taken in every class period (elementary attendance shall be taken once daily). Schools must provide the parent, guardian, or person having control or charge of the child enrolled in the school the Code of Student Conduct which provides a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with the compulsory attendance law. The parent/guardian or person having charge of the child shall sign for the Code of Student Conduct indicating receipt of the possible consequences and penalties.

Each school shall keep a record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure daily. An absence, tardiness or early departure shall be entered as "excused" or "unexcused", as noted in the following sections, along with the stated reason. A copy of the appropriate documentation presented to make the excused/unexcused determination will remain on file in the attendance office or with the homeroom teacher for a period of no less than two years.

Reporting/Investigating – Teachers, Assistant Principals, Counselors, Social Workers

Each school will notify the parent/guardian when a student is absent. A teacher, parent-volunteer, paraprofessional, secretary, automated calling system, or other designee will call the student's home daily to report absences.

The following procedures to all unexcused absences:

Number of Unexcused Absences	School Action Per Occurrence
1 - 2	School notifies the parent of absence.
3 - 5	School notifies the parent of absence and refers student to the counselor or assistant principal who will then meet with the student and/or parent for the purposes of discussing the reasons for absences and signing an attendance contract.
6 - 7	Letter sent to parent/guardian informing him/her of the student's absences and the administrative and legal consequences of continued absence from school.
8+	Counselor will make a referral to the school social worker to conference with the parent/guardian and student for assessment and/or possible referral to Juvenile Court, Solicitor-General's Office, DFACS, or other agency.

Compliance

All schools will fully comply with the reporting requirements of O.C.G.A.20-2-690.1 and will fully cooperate with the court system and prosecuting agencies.

Tardiness

Tardy procedures and dealing with the chronic tardiness of students who are repeatedly late to school, class, or required school activity.

The following apply to all unexcused tardies:

Number of Tardies	Consequences Per Occurrence
1 - 2	Student receives a warning. Teacher is responsible for contacting the parent(s).
3 - 6	Student receives 1 day detention or comparable consequence. Referred to the counselor who is responsible for contacting the parent(s).
7 - 10	Student receives a discipline referral and 1 day ISS or comparable consequence. School to schedule a student/parent conference for the purpose of signing an attendance contract.
11+	Student receives a discipline referral and ISS or comparable consequence pending a local formal hearing. Parent contacted and referral to counselor and social worker. Student is given choice of 10 days ISS, alternative school/program placement, or comparable consequence.

Footnote: Skipping is addressed in the Code of Student Conduct.

Best Practices/Options/Incentives

- A. The teacher may post an attendance board in class so that students can see their attendance record.
- B. The parent may attend class with chronically truant or tardy student in hopes of improving attendance.
- C. The school may develop a demerit system for tardiness.
- D. Businesses may offer incentives for regular attendance (i.e., movie tickets, food coupons, and other discounts).
- E. Schools may develop local school attendance committees.
- F. The Student Truancy Attendance/Review Team (START) program involves bring in the parents of students who have had 10 or more unexcused absences in for a meeting with the Solicitor-General's Office/Juvenile Court, school counselors, and school social workers. During that conference, intervention options are determined with the parent with the goal of having their child regularly attend school.
- G. Schools and/or school social workers may make referrals to the DeKalb Truancy School.
- H. DeKalb Department of Public Safety is collaborating with local law enforcement to operate truancy sweeps and other efforts to combat truancy.

**DEKALB STUDENT ATTENDANCE TASK FORCE
(DSATF)**

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Shawn LaGrua (Chair)	DeKalb Solicitor-General
Alison Burleson	Solicitor-General's Office
Latara Tankerseley	Solicitor-General's Office
Alan Traylor	DeKalb District Attorney's Office
Lori Duff	DeKalb District Attorney's Office
Mary Crawley	Teacher, DeKalb Truancy School
Jane McKinzey	Teacher, Tucker High School
Jacqueline Henry	Teacher, E.L. Miller School and ODE
Barry Kirk	DeKalb Juvenile Court
Donnette Crooks	DeKalb Juvenile Court
LaTonya Mitchell	DeKalb Juvenile Court
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Ann Johnson-Pratt	School Social Worker, Dekalb Schools
Don Wessels	School Social Worker, Dekalb Schools
Kathy Swilley	School Social Worker, Dekalb Schools
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Charlotte Kinsey	FTE/Attendance Coordinator, DeKalb Schools
Garry McGiboney	Deputy Superintendent, Support Services
Terry Morris	Former Board Member, Community Advocate
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Gary Anderson	Decatur City Schools
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Lisa Herring	Assistant Director of Counseling, DeKalb Schools
LaRico Pope	DeKalb Juvenile Court
Winston Bethel	Magistrate Court
Kathy Herren	DeKalb DFCS

NAME	ORGANIZATION
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Sylvester Nelloms, Jr.	Principal, Martin Luther King, Jr. High School
Rebecca Davis	Prevention/Intervention, DeKalb Schools
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Melanie McLendon	MIS, DeKalb Schools
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