

Board Office Use: Legislative File Info.	
File ID Number	26-0749
Introduction Date	4/2/2026
Enactment Number	
Enactment Date	



Board Cover Memorandum

To Budget and Finance Committee

From Rachel Latta

Meeting Date April 2nd, 2026

Subject Amended Board Policy 5113 Absences and Excuses

Ask of the Committee

Favorable recommendation of the proposed changes to Board Policy 5113 Absences and Excuses

Background

Daily attendance is tied directly to state funding as well as being a foundation for student belonging and academic success. This policy has not been updated since 2004.

This policy includes clearer definitions of excused absences and ways to verify absences. These changes are meant to align with current practice, provide clarity, gender neutrality.

Discussion

These updates are meant to bring our policy in line with current state law, California School Boards Association model policy, and current district practice.

Fiscal Impact

None.

Attachment

Board Policy 5113 Absences and Excuses (Red-lined and Clean Copy)

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board Policy

BP 5113 - Absences and Excuses

Students

The Governing Board believes that regular attendance plays an important role in student achievement. The Board ~~recognizes its responsibility under the law to ensure that students attend school regularly.~~ **Parents/guardians of children aged 6 to 18 are obligated to send their children to school unless otherwise provided by law.** The Board shall abide by all state attendance laws and may use appropriate legal means to correct the problems of **excessive chronic** absence or truancy.

In accordance with law, Board Policy, and administrative regulation, absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family, emergencies, and justifiable personal reasons, as specified in Education Code 48205.

When a student's absence from school is excused, the student's teacher shall determine identical or reasonably equivalent assignments and tests to those missed during the absence which the student shall be permitted to complete for full credit within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the teacher. (Education Code 48205, 48225.5).

(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)

(cf. 6154 - Homework/Makeup Work)

Student absence for religious instruction or participation in religious exercises away from school property may be considered excused subject to law and administrative regulation. (Education Code 46014)

Inasmuch as school attendance and class participation are integral to students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical and other appointments during non-school hours.

Students shall not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent, except in cases of medical emergency, or, as authorized pursuant to Education Code 46010.1, for a confidential medical appointment.

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

The Board shall, by resolution entered into its minutes, approve reasonable methods that may be used to verify student absences due to illness or quarantine. (5 CCR 421)

Excused Absences

~~Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law, Board policy and administration regulations. (Education Code 46010, 48216, 48205)~~

~~Inasmuch as class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.~~

~~At the beginning of each academic year, notifications shall be sent to the parents/guardians of all students, and to all students in grades 7 through 12, informing them that school authorities may excuse any student from school to obtain confidential medical services without the consent of the student's parent/guardian. (Education Code 46010.1)~~

~~(cf. 5145.6—Parental Notifications)~~

~~Students in grades K-6 shall not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency. Students in grades 7-12 shall not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency or confidential medical appointment.~~

~~Student absence for religious instruction or participation in religious exercises away from school property may be considered excused subject to law and administrative regulations. (Education Code 46014)~~

~~A student's grades may be affected by excessive unexcused absences in accordance with Board policy.~~

~~(cf. 5121—Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)~~

~~(cf. 6154—Homework/Makeup Work)~~

Subject to any applicable limitation, condition, or other requirement specified in law, a student's absence shall be excused for any of the following reasons:

1. Personal illness, including absence for the benefit of the student's mental or behavioral health (Education Code 48205)
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer (Education Code 48205)
3. Medical, dental, optometrical, or chiropractic service or appointment (Education Code 48205)
4. Attendance at funeral services for or grieving the death of a member of the student's immediate family or, as determined by the student's parent/guardian, a person so closely

associated with the student as to be considered the student's immediate family (Education Code 48205)

A student may be excused for this reason for up to five days for each incident. (Education Code 48205)

5. Jury duty in the manner provided for by law (Education Code 48205)

6. Illness or medical appointment of a child to whom the student is the custodial parent (Education Code 48205)

7. Upon advance written request by the parent/guardian and the approval of the principal or designee, justifiable personal reasons including, but not limited to: (Education Code 48205)

- a. Attendance or appearance in court
- b. Attendance at a funeral service
- c. Observance of a religious holiday or ceremony
- d. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than one school day each semester
- e. Attendance at an employment conference
- f. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization

8. Service as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Elections Code 12302 (Education Code 48205)

9. To spend time with an immediate family member who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Education Code 49701, and has been called to duty for deployment to a combat zone or a combat support position or is on leave from or has immediately returned from such deployment (Education Code 48205)

Such absence shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee. (Education Code 48205)

10. Attendance at the student's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen (Education Code 48205)

11. Participation in a cultural ceremony or event which relates to the habits, practices, beliefs, and traditions of a certain group of people (Education Code 48205)

12. For a middle school or high school student, engagement in a civic or political event, provided that the student notifies the school ahead of the absence (Education Code 48205)

Unless otherwise permitted by the Superintendent or designee, students shall be limited to one such school day-long absence each school year (Education Code 48205)

13. When a student's immediate family member or, as determined by the student's parent/guardian, a person so closely associated with the student as to be considered the student's immediate family has died: (Education Code 48205)

- a. To access services from a victim services organization or agency
- b. To access grief support services
- c. To participate in safety planning or take other actions, including, but not limited to, temporary or permanent relocation, to increase the safety of the student, an immediate family member of the student, or a person determined by the student's parent/guardian to be in such close association with the student as to be considered immediate family.

Such absence shall be excused for not more than three days for each incident. (Education Code 48205)

14. Participation in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction at the student's place of worship or other suitable place away from school property as designated by the religious group, church, or denomination (Education Code 46014)

Absence for student participation in religious exercises or instruction shall not be considered an absence for the purpose of computing average daily attendance if the student attends at least the minimum school day and is not excused from school for this purpose on more than four days each school month. (Education Code 46014)

15. For a student who holds a work permit authorizing work in the entertainment or allied industries for a period of not more than five consecutive days, work in such industry (Education Code 48225.5)

For this purpose, student absence shall be excused for a maximum of up to five absences each school year. (Education Code 48225.5)

16. Participation with a nonprofit performing arts organization in a performance for a public school audience (Education Code 48225.5)

A student may be excused for up to five such absences each school year provided that the student's parent/guardian provides a written explanation of such absence to the school. (Education Code 48225.5)

17. Other reasons authorized at the discretion of the principal or designee based on the student's specific circumstances (Education Code 48205, 48260)

For the purpose of the absences described above, immediate family means the student's parent/guardian, sibling, grandparent, or any other relative living in the student's household. (Education Code 48205).

Method of Verification

Student absence to care for a child for whom the student is the custodial parent shall not require a physician's note. (Education Code 48205)

For other absences, the student shall, upon returning to school following the absence, present a satisfactory explanation, either in person or by written note, verifying the reason for the absence. Absences shall be verified by the student's parent/guardian, other person having charge or control of the student, or the student if age 18 or older. (Education Code 46012; 5 CCR 306)

When an absence is planned, the principal or designee shall be notified prior to the date of the absence when possible.

The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Written, digital, or audio message from parent/guardian or parent representative

2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative

The employee shall subsequently record the following:

- a. Name of student
- b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative
- c. Name of verifying employee
- d. Date(s) of absence
- e. Reason for absence

3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated

The employee shall document the verification and include the information specified in Item #2 above.

4. Physician's verification

- a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, district staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may request a note from the medical office to confirm the time of the appointment
- b. If a student shows a pattern of chronic absenteeism due to illness, district staff may require physician verification of any further student absences

Parental Notifications

At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Notify parents/guardians of the right to excuse a student from school in order to participate in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction at their places of worship, or at

other suitable places away from school property designated by a religious group, church, or denomination (Education Code 46014, 48980)

2. Notify students in grades 7-12 and the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the district that school authorities may excuse any student from school to obtain confidential medical services without the consent of the student's parent/guardian (Education Code 46010.1)

3. Notify parents/guardians that a student shall not have a grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence if missed assignments and tests that can reasonably be provided are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time (Education Code 48980)

Such notice shall include the full text of Education Code 48205. (Education Code 48980)

(cf. 5112.1 - Exemptions from Attendance)

(cf. 5112.2 - Exclusions from Attendance)

(cf. 5113.1 - ~~Truancy~~ Chronic Absence)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

1740 Employment of personnel to supervise attendance (county superintendent)

2550-2558.6 Computation of revenue limits

37201 School month

37223 Weekend classes

41601 Reports of average daily attendance

42238-42250.1 Apportionments

46000 Records (attendance)

46010-46014 Absences

46100-46119 Attendance in kindergarten and elementary schools

46140-46147 Attendance in junior high and high schools

48200-48208 Children ages 6-18 (compulsory full-time attendance)

48210-48216 Exclusions from attendance

48240-48246 Supervisors of attendance

48260-48273 Truants

48292 Filing complaint against parent

48320-48324 School attendance review boards

48340-48341 Improvement of student attendance

49067 Unexcused absences as cause of failing grade

ELECTIONS CODE

12302 Student participation on precinct boards

FAMILY CODE

6920-6929 Consent by minor

VEHICLE CODE

13202.7 Driving privileges; minors; suspension or delay for habitual truancy
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE
601-601.4 Habitually truant minors
11253.5 Compulsory school attendance
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
306 Explanation of absence
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ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS
66 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 245, 249 (1983)
COURT DECISIONS
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Management Resources:

CDE MANAGEMENT ADVISORIES
0114.98 School Attendance and Cal-WORKS, Management Bulletin 98-01
CSBA ADVISORIES
0520.97 Welfare Reform and Requirements for School Attendance
WEB SITES
CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

7/14/04; 4/22/206A

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