

# **ASTEC Charter Schools Attendance Policy**

(Board Approved January 23, 2023)

## **Attendance Age Requirements**

All children between the ages of five (5) years on or before September 1, and twenty-one (21) years on or before September 1, shall be entitled to attend school free of charge in the district in which they reside.

### **Pre-School Attendance Age (4-Year-Old Program)**

Children who have reached the age of four (4) years on or before September 1 and who have not attended a public school or kindergarten shall be entitled to attend early childhood programs at any public school in the state where such programs are offered. Four-year-old children are not required to attend an early childhood education program.

### **Kindergarten Attendance Age**

Children who have reached the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 of the school year may be admitted to kindergarten classes approved by the State Board of Education.

### **First-Grade Attendance Age**

Children who have reached the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the school year may be admitted to first-grade classes approved by the State Board of Education.

### **Enrollment Items**

An official birth certificate or other proof of birth is required as proof of age at the time of enrollment in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, or if not previously verified, in first grade. Proof of address in the form of a utility bill is required for non-transfer students. An up-to-date immunization record is also required at the time of enrollment.

### **Maximum Age**

The maximum age is set by Oklahoma School Law. Termination of school attendance before graduation from high school or before reaching the age at which attendance is not compulsory may be permitted by mutual consent of the superintendent, principal, parents, or guardian, and in some cases, the county judge. (70-1-114)

Enrollment of Military Children

Students shall be allowed to continue their enrollment at grade level in the receiving district commensurate with the grade level from the sending school, regardless of age. This could result in underage military children enrolling in kindergarten and/or first grade. (See Board Policy FB-AB) [70-18-111: Underage pupils in kindergarten and first grade who have been in legal school attendance in a public or private school in another state or in a Department of Defense School for military dependents may be legally enrolled and attend an Oklahoma school.

**Attendance Requirements**

Students are subject to compulsory school attendance and truancy laws as required by the statutes of the State of Oklahoma and regulations of the state Board of Education.

**Excused Absences**

School attendance committee may excuse absences for students who are absent because of an accident or injury, death in the family, emergencies, or other extenuating circumstances. Students that have received the superintendent's prior approval will receive a limited number of excused absences for school-sponsored activities.

These are the types of absences the attendance committee MAY consider for \*students in good standing:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Confirmed Illness by a doctor</li> <li>● Accident or Injury</li> <li>● Death in the Family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Religious Holy Days</li> <li>● Participation in a Military Funeral Honors Ceremony</li> <li>● Emergency Situations</li> <li>● Suspensions</li> </ul>
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\*A student in good standing has limited absences and limited tardies and who is making the grade of a “C” or better.

“Excused absences may be granted to a student by the school attendance committee upon receipt of a; certificate from a duly licensed and practicing physician for physical or mental disability; due to “an emergency and at the request of the parent, guardian, custodian or other person having control of the student; and at the written request of the parent, guardian or person having custody or control of the student to observe religious holy days and for the days which the student must

travel to and from the site where the student will observe the holy days. A written request must be presented in writing at least two weeks before the absence.” (Reference: 70 O.S. §10-105)

## **Unexcused Absences**

An unexcused absence is defined as any absence in which a student is absent from class without the approval of the school attendance committee.

When are students considered truant, and what is considered excessive absences?

Oklahoma Statute [70 O.S. § 1101 defines “child in need of supervision” and “deprived child” as one who, among other things, Being subject to compulsory school attendance, the child is willfully and voluntarily absent from school for fifteen (15) or more days or parts of days within a semester or four (4) or more days or parts of days within four weeks without a valid approved excuse, as defined by the local school board.

The Board of Education has designated the superintendent, all building headmasters, and other specified certificated employees as members of the attendance committee for ASTEC Charter Schools. It shall be the duty of each school and the District to maintain attendance records and to provide them to the District Court and other appropriate authorities if necessary.

## **Attendance Requirement for Receiving Grades and/or Credits**

- For grades PK-8: A student must be present 93% of the quarter
- For grades 9-12: A student must be present 93% of the semester.

Except for suspensions, school activity absences, religious holy days, confirmed illnesses, and committee-approved emergencies, all absences will be counted.

Grades PK-8: If a student is absent more than 7% of the quarter (3 absences), an “F” will be recorded if that was the grade earned. If the student has earned a passing grade, an “NC” will be recorded. Note: PK students are also required to adhere to attendance requirements. In case of extenuating circumstances, the superintendent or designee makes the decision.

Grades 9-12: If a student is absent more than 7% of the semester (6 absences), an “F” will be recorded if that was the grade earned; if the student would have earned a passing grade, an “NC” is recorded. In extenuating circumstances, the superintendent or designee will make the final decision.

## **Excessive Absences Appeal Procedure:**

With each absence, a student is to submit evidence to the Dean of Students/Elementary Headmaster as to the reasons for his/her absences, such as hospitalization, chronic illness, or

other possibly valid circumstances. If a student exceeds the allowed absences, this evidence will be presented to the committee composed of an administrator, a counselor, and one of the student's teachers. This committee will decide whether the student shall be granted a waiver/extension due to the circumstances, or be given no credit for his/her class(es).

If a waiver/extension is granted, additional requirements could be in effect, including but not limited to, attendance at summer school, an attendance contract with academic requirements, etc. If at any time a student has not completed his/her academic requirements as set forth in board policy, [see below] retention [at the elementary level] and/or loss of credit for the semester resulting in no credit and the necessity to repeat said course or courses [at the secondary level] can occur.

Responsibilities of students and their parent, guardian, custodian or person having control of a child concerning attendance:

- Each child who has reached the age of five (5) years or is under the age of eighteen (18) years and who has not finished four (4) years of high school work must be enrolled.
- In the event of a student's absence, the absence will be considered to be accruing toward truancy as defined in Oklahoma Statutes. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to notify the school when a student is absent.

When a parent/guardian continues with the family vacation during the school year, the following procedures must be followed:

- The parent(s) will contact the Dean of Students/Elementary Headmaster in advance.
- The parent(s) and the Dean/Elementary Headmaster will discuss the duration of the absence, the procedure for students to complete their work, and the date such work is due to the teacher(s). (The Dean/Elementary Headmaster will share this information with the teacher(s) involved. The teacher(s) will not be obligated to initiate arrangements with the student.)
- The student will be held responsible for making specific arrangements with the teacher(s) for assignments.

Parents are encouraged to schedule student appointments after the school day or when school is not in session. A school calendar is available on the website and in the student handbook to assist with scheduling of appointments that don't conflict with school days. Parents should consult with their school counselor regarding chronically ill students.

Grades 9-12

- a) Students are responsible for assigned work missed during any absence.
- b) Classwork missed due to an absence may be made up for credit.

In grades K-8, students will make up assignments missed during any absence.

### **Excessive Unexcused Absences**

Oklahoma Law states that a student is truant if they have four or more days or parts of days within a four-week period without a valid excuse OR 15 or more days or parts of days within a semester. Before a student becomes truant, ASTEC Charter Schools will initiate intervention as follows:

Once a student has three (3) unexcused absences within four consecutive weeks, a counselor, along with the school headmaster, will initiate the following process and document each step thoroughly in the student management system.

- 1) Principal (or his/her designee) makes contact with a parent by phone and mails a letter to the parent discussing the number of unexcused absences, time frame, and request for a meeting to address the issue before it gets to the point of truancy. [The headmaster or his/her designee and/or counselor will document the outcome of the phone call into the student management system. If no phone contact can be made, the counselor may need a home visit.
- 2) Meet with a parent, headmaster (or his/her designee), or counselor to discuss services available to remedy the attendance situation. The counselor establishes a plan for improved attendance through an ACS Attendance Contract. Principal and/or behavior management specialists document services and interventions offered, along with parent response/consent into the student management system.
- 3) If the family is non-compliant and attendance issues persist, staff members, continue to make contact to support intervention, documenting each attempt into the student management system, until the law has been violated [4 unexcused absences within a consecutive four-week period or 15 in a semester). At this point, the headmaster makes a referral to the district attorney's office for truancy.

### **Referral to District Attorney for Truancy**

Referral is to be initiated by the headmaster upon information and documentation provided by the counselor or Dean of Students.

The Dean of Students, counselor, headmaster, and teacher will gather all documentation. t Documentation will include but not be limited to

- Headmaster's letter to the parent regarding the number of absences and requesting a meeting to establish a plan of correction
- Attendance reports
- Information from the student management system

- Phone logs related to student's absences
- Any police reports
- Attendance contract if present
- Counselor's report (school and private, if applicable)
- Any other supporting documentation pertaining to the case

The letter to the district attorney will be generated and signed by the headmaster and superintendent. All supporting documentation will be included with the letter and sent to the district attorney's office. Narrative information will be entered into the student management system; that referral has been sent to the district attorney's office.

The school headmaster[or designee] will notify the superintendent's secretary and the district homeless liaison of the referral via email, including a copy of the letter to the DA in the interoffice mail.

The District Attorney's office will be addressing truancy once a month regularly. A counselor and headmaster will follow up with the district attorney's office, as needed, to ensure the case is being addressed.

All district personnel will cooperate with requests made by the district attorney's office about the truancy case.