



## STUDENT ATTENDANCE PPSD POLICY

<b>General Belief</b>	<p>The Providence Public School Board (hereinafter referred to as “the Board”) expects that all Providence Public School District (hereinafter referred to as “PPSD” or “the District”) students will receive equitable access to a free and appropriate public education that prepares them for college, career, and life. It is the belief of the Board that attending school every day, on time, is a critical factor in academic and social success. It is the Board’s goal to promote a culture of attendance and raise awareness among all stakeholders about the importance of attendance. This policy sets clear expectations for attendance behavior while offering guidance to schools and the District on supporting students and families. The Board understands that there are valid reasons why students may miss school on occasion. To the extent these reasons are identified, the school may ultimately be able to help reduce the frequency of unexcused absences through supports and interventions.</p>
<b>Purpose and Scope</b>	<p>In alignment with the District’s strategic goal of maximizing learning time, the District seeks to ensure that every student attends school on time every day. It is the purpose of this policy to set guidelines and expectations regarding student attendance. Further, the Board seeks to ensure support and intervention for students who are exhibiting patterns of chronic or excessive absences as well as tardiness. Parents/guardians are urged to assist the school by supporting the attendance policy.</p> <p>Research indicates that chronic absence negatively impacts literacy development and that students who are not reading proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to dropout. Research also indicates that the negative impact of absences starts early in the school year;<sup>1</sup> if a student is absent several days in September they are more likely to be chronically absent for the year.<sup>2</sup> The negative impact also starts in the early years of schooling. Findings show that as early as first grade, students’ attendance is an indicator of their likelihood to graduate.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>Across the District, the implementation of programs and transformation of practices can reduce student absences and therefore reduce lost instructional time. For example, there is research indicating that children who have a “mentor-like” relationship with someone other than a family member are more likely to be engaged in their learning and in their school community, have better school attendance, have stronger social-emotional regulation skills and are less likely to have behavior problems.<sup>4,5,6</sup></p> <p>The Board expects each school to promote attendance and to implement a strategically organized attendance team. Attendance teams will monitor student attendance to identify students who are demonstrating a pattern of absenteeism</p>



**Compulsory Attendance Law:** The Rhode Island Compulsory Attendance law, RIGL § 16-19-1, states that every child who has completed or will have completed six years of life on or before September 1 of any school year and has not completed 18 years of life shall regularly attend some public day school during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session in the city or town in which the child resides. Pursuant to RIGL § 16-2-27, the compulsory attendance law is also applicable to students who have attained five years of age on or before September 1 of any school year and who are enrolled in Kindergarten. There is no compulsory attendance or truancy for students in pre-Kindergarten.

**Early Dismissal:** A student will be considered to have departed early from school when she/he is in attendance by period/block 2 of a particular school day and then leaves the building or

absences if the school has been notified by the parent or an authorized representative who can justify the student's absences were due to hardship [see McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.)].

**Truant**





4. **Needed Supports Notification:** Reasonable efforts must be made by the school to notify the parent/guardian when their child is identified in need of supports and these outreach efforts must be documented.

#### **Supports and Interventions**

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that students and parents/guardians are connected with internal and/or external supports that are aligned to meet their specific needs and promote a student's continuous enrollment and attendance. Providing appropriate supports and/or interventions may be for attendance and tardiness concerns.

The District is responsible for providing schools with sufficient supports in order to meet the needs of the student. This includes providing an attendance toolkit of best practices and resources; support from specialists, community partners, and truancy officers; continuous access to attendance data; and support for school-based attendance teams.

#### **Tutoring/Home Instruction**

Students who are unable to attend school due to temporary confinement to home or hospital due to injury, illness or other extenuating circumstances shall be eligible for instruction services. A parent or guardian who requests instruction services for their child for medical reasons must submit documentation from a





improvement planning process (SIP) as mandated by Rhode Island Department of Education's state plan to comply with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

1. The Board shall receive quarterly reports of attendance by school.
2. Training opportunities will be provided on the development of an Attendance Team and once established, additional training on data gathering and analysis will be provided.
3. Consistent messaging must be established in school about the importance of attendance and the supports available to make sure students are in school every day, all day.
4. Violation of any part of this policy or the fraudulent misrepresentation of student attendance data may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
5. Violation of any aspect of this policy that results in truancy may lead to family court action for students and families.

**Compliance  
with Laws,  
Confidentiality  
Requirements**

Rhode Island General Law §16-2-27 on kindergarten eligibility states that every

	<p>they are unable to attend school or arrive on time. Schools should encourage daily attendance and provide the necessary supports as appropriate and applicable.</p> <p>The Superintendent will ensure that all PPSD personnel and all PPSD contractors comply fully with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and with all Board policies. In the event any part of any policy is unlawful, the Superintendent will report such event to the Board as soon as practicable and request of the Board a modification of this policy.</p>
<b>Appeals Process</b>	<p>Parents/guardians who feel aggrieved because of action taken as a result of the attendance policy or regulations may appeal said action to the school administration at which the action was taken. Further appeals may be taken to the Superintendent and finally to the School Board. Further appeals after the School Board decision may be taken through the process as defined in Title 16 of the General Laws of Rhode Island.</p>

**Legal Reference** RI General Law §16-2-27