



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

**ANNUAL NOTICE TO INDEPENDENT, PRIVATE, AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOL OF
D.C. ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS (June 28, 2018)**

TO: Independent, Private and Parochial School Leaders
FROM: Hanseul Kang, State Superintendent
DATE: July 1, 2019
SUBJECT: Annual Notice of Attendance and Reporting Requirements

The School Attendance Clarification Amendment Act of 2016 (DC Law 21-140; 63 DCR 8207) (“Attendance Clarification Act”) became effective on July 26, 2016. The Attendance Clarification Act imposed new requirements and changed a number of previously existing requirements related to attendance and truancy in the District of Columbia, including requiring the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to send written notice by July 1 of each year to each educational institution outlining the attendance and reporting required by District of Columbia law.

For this purpose, “educational institution” means “a school in the District of Columbia Public Schools system, a public charter school, an independent school, a private school, a parochial school, or a private instructor.” D.C. Code § 38-201(2A). You are receiving the attached notice because you have been identified as the leader of an independent, private or parochial school located in the District of Columbia. If you believe that you have received this letter in error, please contact Sheryl Hamilton at Sheryl.Hamilton@dc.gov.

This notice includes:

1. A listing and copy of attendance and truancy laws that apply to independent, private, and parochial schools;
2. Information regarding reporting requirements; and
3. Selected attendance, truancy, and dropout prevention resources.

Please direct any questions regarding the content of this document to Whitney Meagher at Whitney.Meagher@dc.gov. Thank you for your continued efforts to support the education of children in the District of Columbia.

Attendance and Truancy Requirements that Apply to Independent, Private, and Parochial Schools

Compulsory school attendance requirements can be found in Title 38, Subtitle I, Chapter 2, Subchapter I of the D.C. Code, "School Attendance" (D.C. Code §§ 38-201 through 213). The DC Code is available at: <https://code.dccouncil.us>. An unofficial copy of the compulsory school attendance subchapter is included with this notice. Please review and refer to the requirements outlined in each of the following code sections:

- § 38-201. Definitions.
- § 38-202. Establishment of school attendance requirements.
- § 38-203. Enforcement; penalties.
- § 38-204. Census of minors.
- § 38-205. Report of enrollments and withdrawals.
- § 38-206. Penalty for failure to provide correct information.
- § 38-207. Authority of police over truant child.
- § 38-208. Truancy procedures; inter-agency coordination.
- § 38-209. Reporting requirements.
- § 38-210. [Does not exist in D.C. Code].
- § 38-211. [Repealed].
- § 38-212. [Repealed].
- § 38-213. Court jurisdiction.

Reporting Requirements

1. **Report only full school day unexcused absences to child welfare and juvenile justice.**
Only the accrual of 10 (ages 5-13) or 15 (ages 14-17) unexcused **full school day** absences are required to be counted for the purposes of requiring a referral to child welfare and juvenile justice agencies, respectively. A full school day is defined as the entirety of the instructional hours regularly provided on a single school day. Educational institutions have discretion regarding making a referral if the 10th or 15th unexcused full-day absence is accrued during the final 10 school days of the school year. See §§ 38-201(2B) & 38-208(c)(1).
2. **Report annual enrollment, and changes in enrollment, to OSSE.**
Each public, independent, private and parochial school is required to report the information (name, address, sex and date of birth) of all DC minors who reside permanently or temporarily in the District and who are currently enrolled in their school to OSSE by Oct. 5 of each year and to report to OSSE by the 5th of every month any enrollment changes (new enrollments and withdrawals). See §38-205.

3. Report truant students to OSSE within two business days.
DC law requires educational institutions to notify OSSE, within two business days, of the 10th unexcused absence of any minor student. OSSE is then required to provide the student's parent with a truancy prevention resource guide that covers certain topics, if the parent has not already received the truancy prevention resources before the 10th unexcused absence. See D.C. Code §38-208(b).
4. Reporting to the Metropolitan Police Department is no longer required.
Educational institutions are not required to notify MPD regarding the accumulation of unexcused absences. MPD is required to take into custody minor students suspected of being truant during school hours and deliver them to the public, independent, private, or parochial school in which they are enrolled. If the student is enrolled, the school is required to receive the minor from the MPD officer during the hours when the school is in operation. For minors not currently enrolled in school, MPD is required to take the minor to the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) placement office. See §§ 38-207 & 38-208.
5. Report to OSSE and publicly share a required summary of annual attendance data.
Educational institutions must send the report required by § 38-203(i) to OSSE within 60 days of the end of each school year and must make the report readily available.

Attendance and Truancy Resources

The truancy prevention resource OSSE is required to send to parents can be found on the OSSE website here: <https://osse.dc.gov/page/attendance-and-truancy-support-leas>

Show Up, Stand Out

www.showupstandout.org

Show Up, Stand Out is a free program from the DC Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants. Show Up, Stand Out has partners working with more than 50 DC elementary and middle schools in DC to help get children to school every day.

Every Day Counts! Attendance Resources

<https://attendance.dc.gov>

This Every Day Counts! website is sponsored by the Truancy Taskforce, a partnership of diverse District of Columbia agencies and stakeholders that collectively advance and coordinate strategies to increase student attendance and reduce truancy. The taskforce is co-chaired by the Deputy Mayor of Education and Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services.

National Attendance, Truancy and Dropout Prevention Resources

Attendance Works

www.attendanceworks.org

Attendance Works is a national and state initiative that promotes better policy and practice around school attendance. This organization promotes tracking chronic absence data for each student beginning in kindergarten, or ideally earlier, and partnering with families and community agencies to intervene when poor attendance is a problem for students or schools. They offer free tools and fee-for-service consulting to build capacity to monitor and address chronic absence. A collection of success stories from programs and districts across the country can be found in the “What Works” section. Key reports and work include:

- Preventing Missed Opportunity: Taking Collective Action to Confront Chronic Absence, Attendance Works and Everyone Graduates Center, September 2016. Available at: <http://new.every1graduates.org/preventing-missed-opportunity-taking-collective-action-to-confront-chronic-absence/>
- Portraits of Change: Aligning School and Community Resources to Reduce Chronic Absence, Attendance Works and Everyone Graduates Center, September 2017. Available at: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/portraits-of-change/>

Everyone Graduates Center

<http://new.every1graduates.org>

The Everyone Graduates Center is a research program of the Johns Hopkins University School of Education that seeks to identify the barriers that stand in the way of all students graduating from high school prepared for adult success, develop strategic solutions to overcome the barriers, and build local capacity to implement and sustain them. The center is involved in a number of projects including the development and evaluation of “tools and models that prevent students from falling off the graduation track and enable schools and communities to intervene effectively if they do.” Key reports and work include:

- Balfanz, R. and Byrnes, V. (2012). The Importance of Being in School: A Report on Absenteeism in the Nation’s Public Schools. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools. Retrieved from: http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/FINALChronicAbsenteeismReport_May16.pdf
- Balfanz, R. and Byrnes, V. (2013). Meeting the Challenge of Combating Chronic Absenteeism: Impact of the NYC Mayor’s Interagency Task Force on Chronic Absenteeism and School Attendance and Its Implications for Other Cities. Johns Hopkins University School of Education and the Everyone Graduates Center. Retrieved from: <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NYC-Chronic-Absenteeism-Impact-Report.pdf>