

Vision/ Mission Statement

Vision/Mission Statement:

The mission of the Cleburne County Schools is to empower and equip all graduates for global success. To accomplish our mission, we are committed to the following guiding principles:

- Maintaining high expectations and performance standards for all students and adults
- Ensuring academic accountability, fiscal responsibility, and clear communication
- Sustaining effective collaboration with families, community agencies, and business-industry partners
- Engaging in innovative instruction, proficient technology use, and expanded student opportunities
- Delivering quality instructions in safe, clean, well-maintained schools

The District Continuous Improvement Goals:

- All teachers will develop and deliver effective, strategic instruction daily
- All classrooms will be an “engaging student centered” learning environment
- All schools will promote meaningful parent and community involvement

Enrollment and Attendance Policy

ENROLLMENT

Students are admitted to the Cleburne County School System based upon an application submitted by the parent/guardian to the school for which they are zoned under such rules and regulations as the Board may prescribe. Children in foster care through the State Department of Human Resources shall immediately be enrolled in the Cleburne County School in which he/she resides.

All students should attend school regularly and be on time for all classes in order to receive the greatest benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline and individual responsibility. There is a direct relationship between poor attendance and achievement. Students who have good attendance generally achieve higher grades and enjoy school more.

ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTATION

All students enrolled in the Cleburne County School System must live with a legal custodial parent/guardian. Extenuating circumstances must be approved by the superintendent. All students enrolling in the Cleburne County School System shall provide the following information:

- **Certified Birth Certificate ***
- **Social Security Card ***
- **Proof of Immunization (Blue Form)**
- **Copy of Parent Driver License or State Issued ID**
- **Proof of Custody when warranted (see definitions below)**
- **2 Proofs of residence: (examples below, but not limited to)**
 - Copy of lease or mortgage agreement
 - Copy of current utility bills in a parent’s name (power, gas, water, telephone, etc.)
 - Property Tax Notice, Voter Registration Card

*(Preferred but not required)

LEGAL CUSTODY DEFINITIONS

Only the parent of record, legal guardian or parent with court approved custody shall be recognized and considered to be the legally authorized person in all school-related matters pertaining to an individual student. (The school system will afford a natural parent(s) of record the rights that the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 §99.3 affords him/her unless the court or a responsible party has provided the school system with a legally binding document that specifically revokes or extinguishes the parent(s) of record right to have knowledge of and participate in the child's schooling). **We do not accept custody papers that have only been notarized.** When the parent of record enrolls a student in school, the principal should be notified of any completed or pending legal action affecting the family and of any previous placement or expulsion at any school. The principal should be given a copy of the most recent court order creating or limiting the rights of the non-custodial parent(s) of record. Should neither parent(s) of record file a court order with the school, the school presumes that the person who enrolls the child in school is the custodial parent and that there are no restrictions on the other parent's rights.

HOMELESS, MIGRANT, IMMIGRANT, ENGLISH LEARNER STUDENTS, DISABLED

Children who are zoned to attend the Cleburne County School System and who are homeless, migrant, and non-English speaking, immigrant, or disabled will have access to a free, appropriate education. Students will not be prohibited from school attendance due to barriers such as:

- **Residency requirement • Lack of birth certificate • Legal custody requirements • Language Barriers**
- **Lack of Social Security Card • Lack of immunization • Transportation • Disabilities • Lack of school records or transcripts**

School administrators, with the assistance of local government agencies, shall take necessary steps to assist families to obtain documentation necessary for school admission. Homeless children/youth or students in foster care shall not be retained due to absences or the inability to pay fees or fines.

Students in Foster Care

A student in foster care will enroll or remain in the student's school of origin, unless it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in such student's best interest. If it is not in a student's best interest to stay in the school of origin, a student in foster care may be enrolled in any school in the system that serves the attendance area in which the student is living, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. The school system will immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain relevant academic and other records. *[Reference: 20 U.S.C.A §6311(g)(1)(E)]*

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Transfer students shall be admitted upon presentation of the most recent report card or a release form from the last school attended. The principal or principal designee is responsible for contacting the last school the transferring student attended to secure a transcript and other applicable records. The parent of any student eligible for special education services should inform school officials or designee. Consent for special education services must be signed by parent. Special education services will commence in accordance with regulations of IDEA. Placement and admission of students transferring from non- accredited settings, from alternative schools, correctional centers and mental health facilities who are subject to disciplinary sanctions, on probation or in need of transitional placement, shall be considered on a case-by-case basis by the local school administration. The local administration will contact the Juvenile Probation office to investigate proper placement upon admission.

ENROLLMENT/TRANSFER REQUESTS

Students requesting to enroll in the Cleburne County School System through the Department of Human Resources and Juvenile and/or Family Court will be referred to the principal's office or designee for enrollment validation. The appropriate officials from the agencies listed above will accompany the student to the office and must have the following:

- academic records, including special education records
- transfer or withdrawal forms
- immunization record
- any other record deemed appropriate for enrollment

ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND PROPER BEHAVIOR. . . It's the law

Expectations of Parents Regarding Attendance and Behavior in Public Schools, Alabama Code §16-28-12.

(a) Each parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of any child between the ages of six and 17 required to attend school or receive regular instruction by a private tutor who fails to have the child enrolled in school or who fails to send the child to school, or have him or her instructed by a private tutor during the time the child is required to attend a public school, private school, church school, denominational school, or parochial school, or be instructed by a private tutor, or fails to require the child to regularly attend the school or tutor, or fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in any public school in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education pursuant to this section and documented by the appropriate school official which conduct may result in the suspension of the pupil, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) and may also be sentenced to hard labor for the county for not more than 90 days. The absence of a child without the consent of the principal teacher of the public school he or she attends or should attend, or of the tutor who instructs or should instruct the child, shall be prima facie evidence of the violation of this section."

"(b) Each local public board of education shall adopt a written policy for its standards on school behavior. Each local public school superintendent shall provide at the commencement of each academic year a copy of the written policy on school behavior to each parent, guardian, or other person having care or control of a child who is enrolled. Included in the written policy shall be a copy of this section. The signature of the student and the parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of the child shall document receipt of the policy."

"(c) Any parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of any child enrolled in public school who fails to require the child to regularly attend the school or tutor, or fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education and documented by the appropriate school official which conduct may result in the suspension of the pupil, shall be reported by the principal to the superintendent of education of the school system in which the suspected violation occurred. The Superintendent or his or her designee shall report suspected violations to the district attorney within 10 days. Any principal or superintendent or his or her designee intentionally failing to report a suspected violation shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor. The district attorney shall vigorously enforce this section to ensure proper conduct and required attendance by any child enrolled in public school.

Admission to public school shall be on an individual basis on the application of the parent, legal custodian, or guardian of the child to the local Board of Education at the beginning of each school year, under such rules and regulation as the Board may prescribe. Children may be issued certificates of exemption by the Superintendent of Education, as outlined in the Alabama State Code § 16-28-6.

Most parents and guardians understand their child's need for a quality education, and voluntarily compel their child's regular attendance and proper behavior. The law now mandates this compliance. The law of the State of Alabama is clear in its purpose "to hold the parent, guardian, or other person in charge or control of a child responsible and liable for such child's non-attendance and improper conduct as a pupil." Failure to require a child to regularly attend school or to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in accordance with written district policy can result in prosecution and imposition of criminal penalties against the parent or guardian.

Every child between the ages of six and 17 years old shall be required to attend a public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor for the entire length of the school term in every scholastic year except that, prior to attaining his/her 16th birthday every child attending a church school is exempt from the requirements of this section, provided such child complies with enrollment and reporting procedure. Admission to public school shall be on an individual basis on the application of the parent, legal custodian, or guardian of the child to the local Board of Education at the beginning of each school year, under such rules and regulations as the Board may prescribe. Children may be issued certificates of exemption by the Superintendent of Education, as outlined in the Alabama State Code §16-28-6.

School attendance **is required** of all children. Students are expected to report to school on time and attend school the full day. All students are subject to the same attendance policies. Parents should make every effort to schedule doctors' and dentists' appointments after school hours. Absences are either excused or unexcused.

Note: It is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with their correct mailing address and telephone number. Any changes made during the school year will require a written request with the parent's signature and will need to be sent to the appropriate school personnel.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

A written excuse will be required of all students after an absence and is to be presented upon the day of return to school. The principal of the local school or his/her designee will determine the excused or unexcused status of an absence. If an acceptable reason for excusing an absence is not presented **within three (3) days of the return of the child to school**, the absence will be coded as unexcused as required by law. Generally, an excuse written by a parent or a person acting as a parent listing one of the "Basis for Granting Excused Absence Status" will be accepted in order to gain excused absence status. If, however, there are experiences from the past which cast doubts upon the validity of an excuse from a parent, the principal, at his/her discretion, may require a doctor's statement before excused status is granted in regard to illness.

- 1) After a tenth (10th) parent absence in any one year, a student in grades K-12 may continue to be excused for a sickness on the basis of a parent or guardian's statement as long as there is no reason to doubt the validity of the parent or guardian's word; however, no make-up work will be given without a doctor's statement to cover the period of absence. Thus, in order for a student to pass, academic grades must be sufficient to overcome class work missed while absent if the absence(s) is/are due to illness that is not verified by a physician.
- 2) Students should be punctual in attendance. Students in grades 7 – 12 will be counted absent if they miss more than half of a class due to tardiness or early departure. Students in grades K-6 will be counted absent if they miss more than half of a day due to tardiness or early departure, arriving after or departing prior to 11:00 a.m. After the second (2nd) tardy or early departure, a parent note will not be accepted unless the note complies with one of the seven "Basis for Granting Excused Absence Status".

Basis for Granting Excused Absence Status

1. Personal illness of the student
2. Student sent home by school nurse due to illness
3. Inclement weather, which would be dangerous to the life or health of the child as determined by the principal
4. Legal quarantine
5. Death in immediate family
6. Emergency conditions as determined by the principal
7. Prior permission of principal upon request of the parent or legal guardian

PROVISIONS FOR MAKE UP WORK

It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements for all make up work. All teachers are required to permit make up work missed because of excused absence in accordance with board policy. The Board of Education recognizes that students should be provided a time to make up work, especially tests missed, due to an excused absence. All make up work shall be completed within two (2) days after an absence. The principal in the case of a prolonged illness may grant up to a two (2) week make up period. Students will be given make-up work upon return to school; however, to be counted as a grade, students must turn in an excuse within 3 days of their return to school. No make-up work will be given after the 10th absence without a doctor's excuse; however, the building administrator may approve giving make-up work to students with special circumstances out of their control. Students will receive the grade of zero for any graded work missed after the 10th absence unless a doctor's excuse is provided. Thus, in order for a student to pass, academic grades must be sufficient to overcome zeros received while absent if a physician does not verify the absence due to illness.

STATE TRUANCY DEFINITION

A parent, guardian or other person having charge of any child officially enrolled in Alabama public schools (K-12) shall explain in writing the cause of any and every absence of the child no later than three (3) school days following return to school. A failure to furnish such explanation shall be evidence of the child being truant each day he is absent. The child shall also be deemed truant for any absence determined by the principal to be unexcused based upon the State Department of Education's current School Attendance Manual. Seven unexcused absences within a school year constitutes a student being truant for the purpose of filing a petition with the Court. 290-0-02(7)(c)

TRUANCY PROCESS

These steps will be followed to meet the requirements of the Alabama State Truancy Law for Students in all grades K-12.

First unexcused absence:

Step 1: Form letter sent home notifying parents of laws/procedures and dates of unexcused absences.

Fifth unexcused absence:

Step 2: Complaint form signed by Principal sent to District Attendance Officer who will mail a letter notifying the parents of the date and time of the mandatory early warning program conference. This conference will be held once a month at a time designated by the Juvenile Probation Officer in the Cleburne County Courthouse. Those who will attend the conference include but are not limited to: All Principals or Designee who have signed complaints; parents of truant juvenile; District Attendance Officer; 7th -12th grade students who have been truant (younger students may attend at the option of the parents and school); District Attendance Officer and/or School Resource Officer. Attendance at this Conference is mandatory except where prior arrangements have been made or an emergency exists. Failure to appear at the early warning program may result in the filing of a petition against the parent (failure to cooperate), or truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.

Seventh unexcused absence:

Step 3: Petition filed against the child and/or parent/guardian with the Cleburne County Circuit Clerk or truancy charge filed with the Juvenile Probation Officer.

10th parent excused absence, or 10th tardy, or combination of 10 excused/ unexcused absence or tardy which is cumulative for both semesters of the school year.

A mandatory conference will be held once per semester at a time and place designated by the Director of Attendance. The meeting will include parents, student 13 and up, Principals, and Director of Attendance. Non-attendance at the conference will result in a meeting to be held at the Cleburne County Courthouse under the supervision of the Juvenile Court Judge.

CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT

Students arriving late to school (checking-in/this includes tardies to school) or leaving school early (checking-out) may do so only with the parent physically coming to the school or a verified written permission of the parents/guardians turned in to the office upon students' arrival. Students must attend 51% of the day to be counted present for the day or 51% of a period to be counted present for the class period.

Basis for Granting Excused Tardies (CHECK-INS and CHECK-OUTS)

1. Student illness with doctor excuses
2. Serious family illness
3. Death in the immediate family
4. Inclement weather
5. Legal reasons with documentation
6. Emergency conditions as determined by principal and/or Superintendent, or prior permission of the Principal. (Sanctions may include In-School Suspension (ISS) or other sanctions determined by local schools or other sanctions as deemed necessary by administrator. In high schools, excessive check-ins, check-outs and/or tardies may warrant revocation of driving privileges).
7. Parent notes are accepted at school administrator discretion

HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 8-12) TARDY POLICY

Tardies to School (Unexcused Check-Ins)

I. Tardies to School (Check-ins and Check Outs)

1. Tardies (late arrivals) will be documented on a "per semester" basis.
2. All students who arrive late to school must be checked in through the school office.
3. Late arrival (tardy) will be excused in situations of:
 - a. Student illness with doctor excuse
 - b. Serious family illness
 - c. Death in the immediate family
 - d. inclement weather
 - e. Legal reasons with documentation
 - f. Parent note (as determined by school administrator)
 - g. Emergency conditions (as determined by principal or superintendent)
4. Late arrival (tardy) will be **unexcused** when one of the above listed criteria is not met and provided to administration at the time of the tardy.
5. Upon arriving late to school, students will be allowed to enter class upon the first two **(2) unexcused tardies** after checking in at the office.
6. Upon arriving late to school on the **3rd and subsequent unexcused tardies**, students in grades 8-12 will be given choice of corporal punishment or in-school suspension.
7. Any class work missed due to being tardy will be the responsibility of the student.
8. Upon the **eighth (8th) unexcused tardy** the student will be given Out of School Suspension (OSS) for an entire day.

II. Tardies to Class

1. **Unexcused tardies** to class for grades 8th – 12th may be send immediately to ISS for the remainder of that class period. This stipulation may apply in lower grades if the grade level is departmentalized and if ISS is available.
2. The ISS Aide will be responsible for providing an appropriate work assignment **for unexcused tardies to class**.
3. Students will be responsible for discussing making up the classwork missed while in ISS by the next school day.
4. Make-up work for **tardy to class** must be completed within the agreed upon time specified by the teacher/and/or school administrator.
5. Teachers have discretion with regard to the specific make-up work assigned, requiring students to complete scheduled tests and similar evaluative assignments while in ISS, rather than scheduling tests.
6. The school principal will establish test procedures during ISS, so that students cannot avoid or Postpone scheduled test.

III. Disciplinary Action

The ISS Aide or other school official shall maintain a record of all students referred to ISS for tardiness. When a student has accumulated more than four (4) incidents of tardiness in a semester (includes tardies to school and to class), the student shall be subject to additional disciplinary action.