

# School Attendance – What every parent needs to know.

Dear Parents and Guardians,

To improve consistency among schools as it pertains to coding student absences, please review the following information provided by the ACCPS Board in the Parent Handbook (pg. 14) and BOE Policy AR901.1 on Compulsory Attendance and Lawful Absences. Whenever your child is absent, you must provide a note of explanation within three days of your child's return to school. Absences due to illness in excess of 5 days shall be verified by a physician's note.

## COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE POLICY OF AACPS:

- A. **PURPOSE:** To establish procedures regarding student attendance within Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS), including ages for compulsory attendance in compliance with State education law and regulations.
- B. **DEFINITIONS:**
  1. **Lawful absence** – students enrolled in public schools are considered lawfully absent from school for any portion of the day, only under the following conditions:
    - a. Death of a family member: i. Three school days shall be considered excused upon the death of a family member; ii. The Principal may grant extra days for extenuating circumstances.
    - b. Illness of the student; The Principal or a Pupil Personnel Worker shall require a physician's certificate from the parent(s)/guardians(s) of a student reported continuously absent for illness.
    - c. Court appearance: A copy of the court document for a court summons is required;
    - d. Hazardous weather conditions which would endanger the health or safety of the student when in transit to and from school;
    - e. Work approved or sponsored by a school, the school system, or the Maryland State Department of Education, accepted by the Superintendent, Principal, or designee;
    - f. Observance of a religious holiday;
    - g. State of emergency;
    - h. Suspension from school;
    - i. Lack of authorized transportation, which does not include students denied authorized transportation for disciplinary reasons;
    - j. Other emergencies or set of circumstances, which, in the judgment of the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, constitute a good and sufficient cause for absence from school; or
    - k. Deployment related absences such as visitation with a parent(s)/ guardian(s) who is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, or is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat supporting position.
  2. **Unlawful absence** – any time a student does not attend school that does not qualify as the above listed reasons for a lawful absence.