

Lincoln Charter School	Section J-11 Revised 05.2013
Lincolnton, North Carolina	Policy Manual

### **Attendance**

It is the belief of the Board that school attendance is important not only for success in school, but also for developing behavior patterns which impact success in life. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory according to State Law: the State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of seven (or younger if enrolled) and 16 years of age attend school. Parents or legal guardians have the legal and social responsibility for ensuring that students attend school and remain at school each day. The following Lincoln Charter School Board policy and procedures are designed to ensure that every student meets the requirements of North Carolina' compulsory attendance law, G.S. 115C-378, as well the attendance requirement of the School.

#### A. Attendance Records

School officials will keep an accurate record of attendance, including accurate attendance records in each class. Attendance records will be maintained by the classroom teacher, principal, and data operator responsible for maintain attendance records in the required State data base in use at the time. Absences must be reported to the data operator. Attendance records will be used to enforce the Compulsory Attendance Law of North Carolina. If truancy is suspected, the case must be investigated by school personnel and may be referred to the school social worker. Violations of the Compulsory Attendance Law will be reported pursuant to legal requirements.

#### B. Attendance Standards

1. A student must attend school a minimum of one-half of the school day in order to be counted present for the entire day.
2. Detailed laws, regulations, and policies concerning compulsory school attendance are found in attachment J-11a "North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law".

#### C. An absence is excused if the following conditions exist:

1. A student is unable to attend school when the student or his/her child is ill, injured, has a medical appointment, or is isolated by order of the State Board of Health or any County Health Department. The principal shall require written documentation from the parent, guardian, emancipated student, or doctor, of the reason the student was absent. At the principal's discretion, other family illness may be accepted as an excused absence. Emancipated students

are those that are eighteen (18), married, or emancipated by court order. A principal may allow students under eighteen (18) who do not live at home, to write their own absence notes if the parent gives written consent.

2. Death in the immediate family.
3. A student who is called to court under subpoena or court order.
4. Religious observance, as suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parents.
5. A student is unable to attend school due to a catastrophic event or natural disaster.
6. Local School Board Policy: LEAs may excuse temporary or occasional absences up to five days during one school year for other reasons in accordance with local school board policies, provided that the student has been in attendance for at least one-half of a school day during the current school year.
7. Absence related to deployment activities: - A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting for the purpose of visiting said parent or legal guardian. ( G.S. 115C-407.5 Article V (E) )
8. Child Care: Absences due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent are to be coded excused (lawful). (G.S.115C-375.5)

D. A student's participation in official school-related activities as defined in this section shall not result in an absence. School-related activities must be approved in advance by the principal. Assignments missed for these reasons will be completed by students at the discretion of the teacher. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

E. Absences not classified as excused in section (C) above are unexcused and unlawful absences.

1. Parents shall be notified in writing when their child has accumulated three unexcused absences.

2. After not more than six unexcused absences, the principal shall notify the parent/guardian that he/she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the state and the Board of Education. Once the parents are notified, the school social worker/counselor may work with the child and his/her family to analyze the causes of the absences and

determine the steps to eliminate the problem. The school social worker may request that a law-enforcement officer accompany him/her if the counselor believes that a home visit is necessary.

3. After ten accumulated unexcused absences in a school year, the principal shall review any reports to or investigations produced by the school social worker/counselor pursuant to G. S. 115C-381. The principal shall confer with the student and his/her parent/guardian to determine whether the parent/guardian has been notified of the student's absences and has made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If the principal determines that the parent/guardian has not met his/her obligations, the principal or designee may notify the district attorney. Evidence that shows that the parent/guardian was notified and that the child has accumulated ten absences which cannot be justified under the Board's established attendance policies shall constitute a prima facie case that the child's parent/guardian is responsible for the absences. If the principal determines that the parent has met his/her obligations the principal may file a complaint with the juvenile court counselor indicating that the student is habitually absent from school without a valid excuse.

F. The Chief Administrator, or his designee, shall establish and communicate to students and parents their procedures for making up work following an unexcused absence. Make-up work shall be graded at a standard consistent with the original work.

Absences resulting from out-of-school suspensions are considered unexcused, and the same policy for make-up work applies. Full credit must be given for quarter, semester or grading period examinations in the case of short-term suspensions.

G. Any school work missed due to an excused absence may be excused or will be made up at the discretion of the teacher.

H. A student with a chronic health problem may not be held accountable to the attendance policy if absences are excused. Documentation of chronic health problems must be provided in writing.