

## SECTION III. ATTENDANCE

### **Students**

#### **Attendance and Truancy**

The Ansonia Board of Education believes that regular attendance is essential to the overall academic, social and emotional development of students. Parents and school personnel must work together to help students take advantage of their educational opportunities. In this respect, parental guidance is essential to encouraging regular school attendance.

The Ansonia Board of Education requires that each parent or other person having control of a child **five (5) years of age through eighteen (18) years of age**, who resides in Ansonia, shall cause such child to attend school regularly during the hours and terms that the Ansonia Public Schools are in session, except as follows:

1. The student has graduated from high school;
2. The student is age five (5) or six (6) and a parent or other person having control of the student has personally appeared at the Ansonia Board of Education office and signed an option form setting out his/her election not to enroll the student in school for that given year in accordance with Board policy;
3. The student is age seventeen (17) and a parent or other person having control of the student has personally appeared at the Board of Education office or the high school office and signed an option form setting out his/her election not to enroll the student for that given year in accordance with Board policy; or
4. The parent or other person having control of the student shows that the student is elsewhere receiving equivalent education in studies taught in the public schools and/or has completed the necessary home-schooling paperwork with the Superintendent's Office.

#### **Truancy**

The Ansonia Board of Education will monitor the attendance of students who are between the ages of five (5) and eighteen (18), inclusive, in order to identify students who are truant. The Ansonia Board of Education will enlist the cooperation of parents and, when necessary, the juvenile justice system, in order to address the problem when it arises.

A "truant" is defined as a student enrolled in Ansonia Public Schools between the ages of five (5) and eighteen (18), inclusive, with four or more unexcused absences in any calendar month or ten unexcused absences within any school year.

It is the responsibility of the Ansonia Public Schools to notify parents/guardians annually, in writing, of their obligation concerning this policy. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the school is provided with up-to-date daytime contact information minimally a telephone number and current address.

**Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes**

10-184 Duties of parents (as amended by PA 98-243 and PA 00-157)

10-185 Penalty

10-199 through 10-202 Attendance, truancy - in general

10-198a Policies and procedures concerning truants (as amended by PA 11-136)

Action taken by State Board of Education on January 2, 2008, to define "attendance"

Action taken by State Board of Education on June 27, 2012, to define "excused" and "unexcused"

Policy adopted: April 7, 2004  
Policy revised: December 6, 2006  
Policy revised: August 10, 2011  
Policy revised: October 3, 2012

**ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
Ansonia, Connecticut

## **Students**

### **Attendance and Truancy (continued)**

#### **Grades 9-12**

Ansonia Public Schools defines the following attendance procedures:

**“Daily Absence”** is when a student enrolled in Ansonia Public Schools is absent from school for more than one half or up to an entire day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent. Daily attendance reporting has bearing on reporting done to the Connecticut State Department of Education.

**“Period Absence”** is determined by a student’s presence (or lack thereof) in each class for which he/she is scheduled on the school day in question.

A student’s absence from school shall be considered “excused” if written documentation of the reason for such absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student’s return to school and meets the following criteria:

- A. For absences one through nine, a student’s absences from school are considered “excused” when the student’s parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation to school officials.

Such documentation includes a signed note from the student’s parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent/guardian regarding the absence, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate. Documentation should explain the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. Separate documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absenteeism.

- B. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student’s absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:
1. Student illness (must be verified by a licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of the absence);
  2. Student’s observance of a religious holiday;
  3. Death in the student’s family or other emergency beyond the control of the student’s family;
  4. Mandated court appearances (documentation required);
  5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by the district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation required);
  6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and to be in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

**Students****Attendance and Truancy (continued)****Grades 9-12 (continued)**

When the school in which a child is enrolled receives no notification from a parent or other person having control of the child is aware of the child's absence, a reasonable effort shall be made by school personnel or volunteers under the direction of school personnel to notify by telephone and by mail such parent or other person having control of the child.

"Tardy" is defined as any time after the scheduled start of the school day. "Early departure" is defined as a departure any time prior to the scheduled end of the school day.

Students who enter Ansonia High School after the start of the school year will be required to abide by this policy. The maximum number of unexcused absences shall be prorated on the basis of the number of the student's full months of enrollment in the Ansonia Public Schools.

**Attendance and Possible Retention – Grades 9-12**

For Grades 9-12, students with more than nine (9) absences (including excused and/or unexcused absences) in a half-year or one semester course and students with more than sixteen (16) absences (including excused and/or unexcused absences) in a full year course will not receive credit toward graduation. Each course in which the student is enrolled will be treated individually.

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**Students****Attendance and Truancy (continued)****Grades 9-12 (continued)**

Parents will be notified by letter after the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) day of absence, the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) day of absence, and the twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) day of absence.

The appeals process for all other absences will be handled in the following manner: Appeals for half-year or one semester courses will take place within five (5) working days after the date indicated on the report card. Similarly, appeals for full year courses will take place within five (5) working days after the date indicated on the report card.

Appeals may take the form of medical evidence and/or written documentation of extenuating circumstances surrounding the absences. Appeals must be requested within the time frame; failure to request a timely appeal will negate all rights and no appeal hearing will be granted.

After presentation of written notice, the attendance committee may request a parent to attend the informal hearing or may grant or deny the appeal based on written documentation only. The attendance committee will consist of school administrator(s), guidance counselors and other faculty designee(s).

**Truancy**

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 10-198a, the Ansonia Public Schools enact the following procedures concerning truants:

The School administration will:

1. Meet with the parents of each student who is truant, or other persons having control of such student, and appropriate school personnel to review and evaluate the reasons for the student being a truant, provided such meeting shall be held not later than ten school days after the student's fourth unexcused absence in a month or tenth unexcused absence in a school year. The

Superintendent must file a "family with service needs" petition with the Superior Court if the parent or other person responsible for the education of the student fails to attend this meeting or otherwise fails to cooperate with the school in attempting to solve the truancy problem;

2. Coordinate services with and referrals of such students to community agencies providing child and family services;
3. Provide notification annually at the beginning of the school year and upon any enrollment during the school year to the parent or other person having control of each student of the obligations of the parent or such other person pursuant to section 10-184(4);
4. Obtain annually at the beginning of the school year and upon any enrollment during the school year, from the parent or other person having control of each student, a telephone number or other means of contacting such parent or such other person during the school day; and
5. Make a reasonable effort to notify, by telephone, whenever a child enrolled in school in any such grade fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the student's parent or other person having control of the student is aware of the student's absence.

Parents or other person having control of a student are strongly encouraged to contact school authorities if they have any questions/concerns regarding their student's attendance.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-184 Duties of parents

10-198a Policies and procedures concerning truants (as amended by PA 98-243 and P.A. 11-135)

10-199 through 10-202 Attendance, truancy - in general

46b-149 Family with Service Needs

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