



Advantage Academy

“Building Champions with a Future and a Hope”

www.advantageacademy.org

ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Effects of Truant Conduct

Truant conduct means missing school without permission. It includes missing a full day (without a state approved excuse), coming to class late, checking out early, or skipping a class completely. “Truant Conduct” is another term for “unexcused” absence. You might think that missing school once or twice is no big deal, but one of the most important things you can do to succeed in life is to attend school regularly and it’s the law. Regular and punctual attendance is the greatest factor in school/academic success; therefore, a student and their parent’s first concern should be to attend school and assigned classes regularly and on time. Students and their parents must recognize the positive correlation between regular school attendance and achievement. A student’s academic success is in direct relation to their attendance and absences and tardiness have detrimental effects on their grades. The primary responsibility for attendance rests with students and their parent(s)/guardian(s).

Being absent or tardy unnecessarily from school impairs a student’s opportunity to succeed in studies and also indirectly encourages the development of poor attitudes toward school, schoolwork, and other obligations. The primary ingredient of the learning process is direct instruction from the teacher and the interaction between students and teachers within the classroom. Communication between students, parents, and school district personnel is important to understanding how “Truant Conduct” or attendance issues play a role in a student’s overall academic success. For students to have the best educational experience possible and to take advantage of all the available opportunities we must all work together.

Frequent non-attendance, tardiness, ditching, or skipping school may be a sign that a student needs help. Left unchecked, truant conduct can have strong negative effects on a person’s life. When a child is habitually tardy or truant this is usually an indicator of underlying issues, which can result in educational failure, social isolation and delinquent activity. According to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, when a child does not regularly attend school and on time, he/she is at risk for dropping out, substance abuse, and teen pregnancy.

- ✓ Going to school makes a difference
- ✓ Truant conduct and chronic absenteeism leads to delinquency

References for Advantage Academy Attendance Policy:

State Attendance Requirements

State of Texas Law

Local Justice of the Peace Outlines

Board Policy (Local) – Attendance; Compulsory & for Credit

See Attendance/Tardy in the Student/Parent, High School and the Student Code of Conduct Handbooks

ADVANTAGE ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

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COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

TEC Sec. 25.085. (a) A child who is required to attend school under this section shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is provided. (b) Unless specifically exempted by TEC Sec. 25.086, a child who is at least six years of age, or younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached the child's 19th birthday shall attend school. (c) On enrollment in prekindergarten or kindergarten, a child shall attend school. (d) Unless specifically exempted by Section 25.086, a student enrolled in a school district must attend: (1) an extended-year program for which the student is eligible that is provided by the district for students identified as likely not to be promoted to the next grade level or tutorial classes required by the district under Section 29.084; (2) an accelerated reading instruction program to which the student is assigned under Section 28.006(g); (3) an accelerated instruction program to which the student is assigned under Section 28.0211; (4) a basic skills program to which the student is assigned under Section 29.086; or (5) a summer program provided under Section 37.008(l) or Section 37.021. (e) A person who voluntarily enrolls in school or voluntarily attends school after the person's 19th birthday shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is offered. A school district may revoke for the remainder of the school year the enrollment of a person who has more than five absences in a semester that are not excused under Section 25.087. A person whose enrollment is revoked under this subsection may be considered an unauthorized person on school district grounds for purposes of Section 37.107.

A student absent without excuse/permission from any scheduled or assigned class; required special programs, such as additional special instruction (termed "accelerated instruction" by the state); or required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law.

Advantage Academy and each teacher are required to record all absences. Students who arrive to class ten (10) minutes after the start of class will be counted absent for that class period.

MINIMUM ATTENDANCE for CLASS CREDIT

TEC Sec. 25.092. (a) Except as provided by this section, a student may not be given credit for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. (b) A student who is in attendance for at least 75 percent but less than 90 percent of the days a class is offered may be given credit for the class if the student completes a plan that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class*. (c) All Credit Recovery Plans must be authorized by the Attendance Committee with final approval from the Director of Administrative Services**.

*If a student attends less than 75% of the days a class is offered or does not complete an approved Recovery Plan, the student will lose credit for that class and/or will not be advanced to the next grade level. A student under the jurisdiction of a court in a criminal or juvenile justice proceeding may not receive credit under this subsection without the consent of the judge presiding over the student's case.

**The Campus Attendance Committee will provide student's a Recovery Plan if appropriate and only if there are or were extenuating circumstances that lead to the student's excessive absences. The Attendance Committee will use state approved guidelines when determining whether there were extenuating circumstances.

Driver License Attendance Verification

To obtain a driver's license, a student between the ages of 16 and 18 must annually provide to the Texas Department of Public Safety a form obtained from the school verifying that the student has met the 90 percent attendance requirement for the semester preceding the date of application. The student can obtain this form at the campus. Requests are typically processed within 24 hours. Students should remember that the school is typically closed during spring and winter break, as well as holidays and should plan accordingly.

All absences, both excused and unexcused, count against the 90% attendance requirement

EXCUSED ABSENCES

TEC Sec.25.087. (a) A person required to attend school, including a person required to attend school under Section 25.085(e), may be excused for temporary absence (partial day) resulting from any cause acceptable to the campus principal and superintendent of the school in which the person is enrolled. (b) A school district shall excuse a student for temporary absence resulting from health care professionals if that student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment. A school district shall also excuse a student from attending school for the purpose of observing religious holy days, including traveling for that purpose.

A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be counted as if the student attended school for purposes of calculating the average daily attendance of students in the school district. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection shall be allowed a reasonable time to make up school work and/or assignments missed on those days. If the student satisfactorily completes the school work, the day of absence shall be counted as a day of compulsory attendance.

In accordance with Compulsory Attendance Laws, the State Board of Education and established local attendance policies, Advantage Academy will code an absence as **EXCUSED** for the following reasons when valid documentation is provided prior to the absence or within three (3) days of the absence.

Parent Note is valid documentation for these excused absences:

- Illness or Injury of a student
- Serious Illness or Death in the immediate family of a student

Parent note is NOT valid documentation for these excused absences: (professional or official note is required)

- Medical/Dental Appointment involving a student
- Quarantine of a student and family

Assigned ISS: do not count as absences.

Assigned OSS: are coded as excused absences. This option will not be available when OSS is the result of a “reportable offense”, which is a violation that requires law enforcement to be contacted.

Documentation/Notes must include:

- 1) the date of the note;
- 2) the student's name;
- 3) the date of the absence, tardy or early check-out;
- 4) the specific reason for the absence, tardy or early check-out; and
- 5) the parents' or professional's signature.

A student with a documented chronic or other reoccurring illness such as asthma should have a current letter from the student's physician on file in the attendance office and school nurse's office stating that there may be days when coming to school is impossible, but a doctor's visit is unnecessary. Additionally, in this case, the parent must write an excuse note each time the student is absent due to these documented health problems. It is the responsibility of the student to complete assignments on missed days.

Only 3 parent/legal guardian excuses for absences will be accepted per semester, after which only professional institute excuses will be accepted.

APPROVED EXEMPTIONS

If a parent/guardian desires to take a child out of school for one of the following reasons, he/she must make prior arrangements with the Campus Principal to do so. However, prior arrangements and/or approval are limited to two

days per school year and will not be granted during six-week tests, semester exams, state mandated or locally authorized testing periods. Exemptions will also not be granted on school days deemed *required* or *mandatory* by the school district or campus principal due to their importance in the student's educational process. **Parent(s) must meet with the Campus Principal or designee personally to obtain approval for such arrangements.** Prior arrangements and/or approval cannot be obtained by note or phone call. The following are approved exceptions to state and local attendance requirements:

Religious Holy Days: On days designated as "religious holy days" from a recognized religion or church denomination, a student's parents may request an attendance exemption for their student to be absent from school for personal and family observance with prior approval.

Required Court Appearances: A student who obtains prior approval for a required court appearance will have that absence coded "exempt" if the student submits court paperwork upon his or her return to school.

Activities Related to Obtaining United States Citizenship: All activities related to or in connection with a student receiving his/her United States citizenship may be coded "exempt" with prior arrangements and approval.

Educational Opportunity (college/university visits): A junior or senior student may apply for an attendance exception to visit a college or university. Prior approval must be obtained within established time frame. Visits require additional documentation (attendance proof) from the college or university to verify visit.

ATTENDANCE EXEMPTIONS for CHILDREN of MILITARY FAMILIES

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain district requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements.
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, students who have a parent, legal guardian, or stepparent that is an Active Duty member of the uniformed services and who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting of at least four months may be granted an attendance exemption with prior approval from the campus principal or designee. The district will permit five excused absences per school year for these purposes. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment. Exemptions will not be granted during six-week tests, semester exams, state mandated, locally authorized testing periods, or on school days deemed *required* or *mandatory* by the school district or director.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An absence that is not excused by state law or local policy including approved exemptions and an absence that is not approved for extracurricular activities shall be designated as **UNEXCUSED** (permission to be absent will not be accepted in these instances). All absences not included under "Excused Absences Defined" or "State Approved Exemptions" or that do not meet the required definition of the above will be coded as **UNEXCUSED**.

Examples of an unexcused absence: (list is non-inclusive)

- car trouble/flat tire
- missing ride
- overslept
- caring for a family member

- busy traffic
- personal business
- notes not submitted within 3 school days of an absence

Students are responsible for acquiring, completing and turning in assignments and/or acquiring and responding appropriately to any information given in a missed class. Students are required to make up all work missed for all absences, EXCUSED, EXEMPT or UNEXCUSED.

TRUANCY (State)

TEC Sec. 25.093. PARENT CONTRIBUTING TO TRUANCY: If a parent with criminal negligence fails to require their child to attend school as required by law under Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 25.085 and the child has absences for the amount specified under Section 25.094, the parent commits an offence.

TEC Sec. 25.094. TRUANT CONDUCT: An individual commits an offence if that individual is 12-18 years of age, is required to attend school under Section 25.085 and fails to attend school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.

TEC Sec. 25.0951. SCHOOL DISTRICT CASE OR REFERRAL:

(a) If the child’s parent or the child or both commits an offence, the school’s truancy prevention facilitator or other appropriate school official shall (1) file a case in a county, justice, or municipal court for an offense under Section 25.093 or 25.094, as appropriate; or (2) refer the student to a juvenile court in a county with a population of less than 100,000 for conduct that violates Section 25.094; or (3) refer the student to a juvenile court for conduct indicating a need for supervision under Section 51.03(b)(2), Family Code.

(b) In this section, "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

(c) A student shall not be referred to truancy court if the truancy is a result of pregnancy, foster care, homelessness, or being the principal income earner for the student’s family.

(d) A court shall dismiss a complaint or referral made by a school district under this section that is not made in compliance with this section.

Administrative Withdrawals

Administrative withdrawals apply to students who are withdrawn by the district: **(a)** after the student has been absent on ten (10) consecutive school days or more without proper notification or contact and repeated efforts by school administrators has been made but failed; **(b)** if the student is 19 years of age; is voluntarily enrolled in school; and has more than five unexcused absences in a semester. The district will issue a letter, warning the student of attendance revocation after the student has failed to attend school without excuse three times. Upon revocation, the student’s presence on school property would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing; and **(c)** if the district discovers, when verifying enrollment information, that provided enrollment information has been falsified, or proof of identification or immunization records were not provided.

TRUANCY PREVENTION MEASURES (local)

TEC Sec. 25.0915. REQUIREMENTS. (a) A school district shall adopt truancy prevention measures designed to: (1) Address truant conduct by a student in the school setting; and (2) Minimize the need for referrals to juvenile court and complaints filed in county or justice court alleging truancy. (b) Each referral to juvenile court or case filed in county or justice court alleging “Parent Contributing to Truancy” by a parent or “Truant Conduct” by a student must be accompanied by a statement from the student’s school certifying that: (1) The school applied truancy prevention measures adopted under Subsection (a); and (2) the truancy prevention measures failed to meaningfully address the parents or students conduct related to truant conduct.

In keeping with TEC Sec. 25.0915., The Truancy Prevention Measures adopted by Advantage Academy are intended to increase attendance rates, decrease truant conduct and lower the drop-out rate of students. The goal of these prevention measures is to partner with parents in addressing the problem of getting their children to school regularly and on time. Established truancy prevention measures will be communicated and shall provide ample opportunities for parents and their child(ren) to discuss attendance issues with the school in order to make better and more informed decisions. Most truant conduct issues will be resolved using these measures.

Truant Conduct Warning Notices

TEC Sec. 25.095. Advantage Academy shall notify parent in writing at the beginning of the school year that if the student is absent from school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year that the school shall file a complaint with a municipal court or justice against the student, the student's parent, or both. Subsequently, multiple avenues shall be utilized to inform parents of unexcused absences such as; electronically generated notifications; phone calls, and truant conduct warning letters sent home with student (letter must be signed by parent and returned to attendance office).

Parents will receive systematic truancy warning notices and truant conduct warning letters at set intervals whenever their child has an unexcused absence. Notifications shall inform the parent (a) of his/her duty to monitor the students' attendance, (b) that the student is required to attend school and (c) that the parent and student are subject to prosecution.

Failure to respond to truancy prevention measures will be duly noted and provided as documentation to the court upon the filing of a truancy complaint. Advantage Academy will file truancy cases on parents and students who exhibit truant conduct by accumulating unexcused absences.

Students who continue to display truant conduct as a result of chronic and problematic attendance will be placed on an *Attendance Contract*. The *Attendance Contract* is violated when a student accrues a subsequent unexcused absence. Upon a violation of the *Attendance Contract* Advantage Academy shall; (a) file a case against the student's parent, the student, or both in a county, justice, or municipal court as appropriate; and/or (b) dismiss student from the credit recovery program and that student shall lose the opportunity to regain credit; and/or (c) apply a Code of Conduct infraction to the student with local consequences to be served.

Only 3 parent/guardian excuses for absences will be accepted per semester, after which only professional institute excuses will be accepted.

Truancy Prevention Process

- Parent/guardian will receive an ***automated phone*** call for each absence.
- Attendance Clerk: person to person phone calls will be required at designed intervals indicating attendance issues.
- Conference calls from campus administration (student will be present with admin).
- Notifications will be presented to parents/guardians at designed intervals indicating ***First Warning*** (3 absences) and ***Second Warning*** (6 absences).
- Unexcused Absence 4: Student will receive 3 hours of school-based community service.
- Unexcused Absence 6: Student will be referred to counseling, mediation, mentoring, or community-based services aimed at addressing the student's truancy.
- When a student:
 - ***Acquires Nine (9) Absences****
 - ***Acquires Three (3) Unexcused Absences within a Four (4) Week Period*****
 - ***Falls Below the ninety (90) Percent Attendance Requirement******

An **administrative conference** with campus administration & the attendance clerk will be scheduled and student will be placed on an ***Attendance Contract*** indicating ***Third Warning***.

Students who are placed on an Attendance Contract yet continue to exhibit chronic and problematic truant conduct and violate the *Attendance Contract* (acquisition of subsequent unexcused absence(s)) will

*** (1)** cause the school to file a case against the student's parent, the student (between the ages of 12 and 18), or both to a truancy court for the following: **"Parent Contributing to Truancy" and/or "Truant Conduct" i.e. the student has failed to attend school without excuse on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.** Student will also continue to be subject to the Attendance Contract, the school's Truancy Prevention Measures and Process. *or*

**** (2)** cause the student to receive a Code of Conduct Infraction *Level I Persistent Truancy*; School-Based Community Service 5 hours; continue to be subject to the Attendance Contract and the school's Truancy Prevention Measures and Process. **"Student has acquired three unexcused absences within a four week period."** *or*

***** (3)** cause the student to receive a Code of Conduct Infraction *Level I Persistent Truancy*; School-Based Community Service 5 hours; continue to be subject to the Attendance Contract and the school's Truancy Prevention Measures and Process. **"Student has fallen below the 90 percent attendance requirement"**

Subsequent Unexcused Absences will carry at various levels: Code of Conduct infractions; parent conferences for referral to out-side counseling, community-based services, mentoring, etc.; *school-based* community service; dismissal from credit recovery programs; and the filing of a court case against the student's parent, the student (between the ages of 12 and 18), or both for "truancy conduct" "parent contributing to truancy."

If a parent/guardian does not attend conferences or fails to complete the truancy prevention measures implemented by the school, the court will see this as "a gross deviation from the standard of care that an ordinary person would exercise" and criminal negligence will be found.

DISTRICT TARDY PROCESS

3 Unexcused Tardies = Discipline Referral (level I - Persistent Tardiness). Consequences determined by Discipline Administrator.

Only 3 parent/guardian excuses for tardiness will be accepted per semester, after which only professional institute excuses will be accepted.

Late Arrival (Start of School)

Students who arrive late to school are required to bring a signed parent note and/or other appropriate documentation to the front office in order to obtain an Admit to Class Pass. The note should include the parent's/guardian's name and contact number for verification.

Late Arrival (each class period)

A student is considered tardy during the school day if: He/she is not in his/her scheduled classroom/assigned area of instruction when the class bell rings.

: 01 to: 09 – **REPORTED TARDY**

: 10 – **COUNTED ABSENT** (*applies to students first scheduled and last scheduled period only*)

EARLY CHECK OUT

Students are required to be in attendance the entire time a class is being offered. If it is necessary for a student to leave school early, he/she must have written excuse from their parent. Students should bring the written excuse to the school office prior to first period and secure an Excuse from Class Pass. Excuses will not be accepted from students during the class period. Before the student is approved to leave school property, a parent/ guardian must

sign the student out from the office. If an early check-out student returns to school the same day, the student must sign back in through the office.

A student who checks-out/leaves ten (10) minutes before the end of class without an accepted written excuse will be reported as absent (unexcused) for that class.

Advantage Academy and each teacher are required to record and report early checkouts

All accumulated unexcused absences will be recorded in accordance with Compulsory Attendance Laws

MAKE UP WORK for ABSENCES

After an absence, missed assignments, projects and tests make-up opportunities shall be made available to students. For any day/class missed, the teacher will assign the student make-up work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or class missed. The student is responsible for requesting missed assignments and making arrangements for the make-up work. This must be done the first day the student returns to class. Students will have one day for each day of absence to make up work. For extended absences, the student must make special arrangements with the Campus Principal.

- a. Work that was assigned prior to an absence must be turned in on the first day a student returns to class or that work will be considered late. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any project in accordance with time lines previously approved by the teacher and communicated to the student.
- b. All missed tests must be taken on the first day back or at the discretion of both teacher and campus principal.
- c. Make-Up work must be turned in within the same number of days as the student was absent. *For example*, If a student is absent on a Monday and returns on Tuesday, his or her make up work is due on Wednesday (One day absent = one day for make-up work).
- d. Students must complete all missed assignments, projects and tests. If the make-up work is turned in on time, the student will be eligible for gaining full credit. If make-up work is not turned in by the designated day, the student is subject to a grade penalty. *For example*, if the student turns the make-up work in one day after the designated turn in day, he/she will receive a grade of no higher than 80%. if the student turns the make-up work in two days after the designated turn in day, he/she will receive a grade of no higher than 70%. Failure to turn in missed work by the end of the second day after the designated turn in day will result in a grade of zero.
- e. Students who participate in field trips or extracurricular activities are required to obtain and have their assignments completed upon arriving to class the next school day.
- f. When students are absent from school and assignments are requested for pickup, please call the campus attendance clerk before 10:00a.m. to allow the teacher sufficient time to prepare and have the assignments in the office for after school pickup. Assignments will not be available for pickup prior to the end of the school day.

In order to receive credit, student must earn a passing grade on make-up work

LOSS of CREDIT DUE to EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Secondary Students

Loss of credit is tabulated on an individual course basis. A student may not receive credit for a class or may be retained (up to 8th grade) unless he/she has been in attendance for at least 90% of the days the class is offered during the semester. If a student is in attendance for at least 75% but less than 90%, a student can earn credit for a class if the student completes a recovery plan authorized by the Attendance Committee that provides for the student to meet the requirements of the course. Students who drop below the 90% attendance requirement will be placed on an Attendance Contract. Continued absences may place the student in danger of losing credit and/or not being advanced to the next grade level.

Elementary Students

A student may not be promoted to the next grade level unless he/she has been in attendance for at least 90% of the days during the school term. If a student is in attendance for at least 75% but less than 90%, a student may earn promotion if the student completes a recovery plan approved by the Attendance Committee that provides for the student to meet the academic and attendance requirements. Parents of elementary students will receive notice at designed intervals indicating the ***First, Second*** or ***Third*** truant conduct warning for absences.

CREDIT RECOVERY (attendance)

Campus Attendance Committees will review students' attendance records each reporting period (3, 6 and 9 weeks) and may authorize a Credit Recovery Plan for students who have fallen below the 90% attendance requirement but remain above 75%. Credit Recovery Plans will only be approved for students who can show that extenuating circumstances lead to or contributed to the unexcused/excessive absences. When absences are made up in a recovery situation the designation should be changed from "UNX" (unexcused) to "EXC" (excused).

Restoring Lost Credit*

Students may restore credit through available recovery options or other mutually agreed upon arrangement between parent, student, campus, and district administration. All recovery decisions must be authorized by the campus principal and receive approval by the district before being implemented.

- * **Under no circumstances will absences to be removed from the school attendance data base.**
- * **Students are allowed to make up a maximum of (5) five unexcused absences and cannot be failing overall or any subject course.**
- * **In order to receive credit students must earn a passing grade on recovery make up work.**
- * **Credit Recovery does not exempt the student or his/her parent from attendance law prosecution.**

Students who fall below the 90% attendance requirement will be placed on an Attendance Contract. All credit recovery work to remove excessive absences must be completed within a nine-week period following the end of the semester in question and in accordance with Board Policy.

Attendance Committees will attempt to address student attendance concerns at the campus level. Ongoing attendance issues will be referred to the District Administrative Officer who shall determine what actions are appropriate.

The actual number of days a student must be in attendance in order to receive credit depends on whether the class is for a full semester or full year. Example; if the school year has 180 calendar days; 90% is 162 days. Therefore, a student must attend 162 days to receive credit. If a student does not attend 162 days, a Loss of Credit Notification letter will be sent to the parent.

Note: All absences, both excused and unexcused, count against the 90% attendance requirement.

ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE'S

Attendance Committees are appointed by the Board of Directors and are comprised of a *minimum* of one campus administrator, one teacher and the campus attendance clerk. Committees will review students' attendance records during each reporting period (3, 6 and 9 weeks). Reviews shall include the following:

- **Students' school attendance records;**
- **Students' class attendance records;**

- **Students' attendance in accelerated instruction programs such as required tutoring or other extended learning opportunities;**
- **Students' grades; and**
- **Students' progress in any prior approved recovery plan.**

In determining extenuating circumstances for unexcused or excessive absences, the Attendance Committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that its decision is in the best interest of the student.
- The student and parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or recover credit.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons (parent and professional excuse notes) for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over than which the student or the student's parent could have exercised any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the class or subject.

If makeup work is completed, absences for reasons listed above under "Approved Exemptions" will be considered days of compulsory attendance for this purpose.

Attendance Committee's may also require the following for a student to complete an approved Recovery Plan:

- Complete additional assignments.
- Attend additional learning opportunities.

STUDENTS of SPECIAL PROGRAMS

As with all students, regular attendance is expected of special programs students. Exceptions to this directive may be made, however, only with respect to the individual needs of such students and must be part of the students (IEP) documentation. If a special programs student begins to exhibit truant conduct/attendance problems, the school's Special Programs Department will be notified and should conduct an Admission Review Dismissal (ARD). If the documentation from the ARD reflects that the absences were not related to the student's disabilities, the student will face the same consequences as any other student in relation to compulsory attendance laws.

MARRIED STUDENTS

Students 17 years or younger, who are married, divorced, or widowed are emancipated from their parents have the same rights and responsibilities as unmarried students. Compulsory laws state that these students are expected to attend school and can be prosecuted for truant conduct. Parents and legal spouses will not be prosecuted. However, parents of a student who lives with a partner and is not legally married can be prosecuted as well as the student.

STATE FUNDING

For attendance accounting purposes attendance is taken each period throughout the entire school day. However, the state determines attendance (funding) for the day based on whether students are present in 3rd period 10:00am+- (according to Advantage Academy's yearly academic schedule).

PRE-K and KINDER GUIDELINES

In order to achieve academic success, Pre-K students must attend school on a regular basis. Regular school attendance is expected of all students and is a necessary factor in achieving success. Texas law does not require children of Pre-Kinder and Kindergarten age to be enrolled in school. However, if a parent chooses to voluntarily enroll **a child in Pre-Kinder or Kindergarten, the child is obligated to attend school and is under the compulsory attendance law.** Withdrawing after enrollment obligates the child to be enrolled in another public or private school immediately.

Board approved guidelines require the school's voluntary enrollment programs to maintain attendance rates. In order to meet this requirement, Advantage Academy must maintain the average daily attendance as close to the enrollment as possible. Upon enrollment, the law places the responsibility of the child's attendance on the Parent/Guardian or other person legally responsible for the child. (a) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) shall assure the attendance of the child in regularly assigned classes during regular school hours as established by the school board. (b) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are required to follow the attendance procedures established by the District and State and to work closely with school administration regarding absences.

1. A person who **voluntarily enrolls** in school shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is offered.
2. **Full-Time** Pre-K and Kinder students are expected to attend school from 7:50am to 3:15pm.
3. A student is considered tardy during the school day if: He/she is not in his/her scheduled classroom/assigned area of instruction at the required start time: 01 to: 09 – **REPORTED TARDY (unexcused): 10 – COUNTED ABSENT (unexcused).**
4. A written statement from a physician, parent (3 only per semester), or legal guardian (3 only per semester) for each absence must be provided to the attendance clerk immediately or within three (3) days after the student returns to school. After three days, the absence will be coded as **Unexcused.**
5. A pre-k or kinder student left on campus more than 15 minutes after scheduled dismissal time will be noted as **Unattended.** Parent will receive an **Unattended Warning Notice.** Local officials will be contacted concerning students who are persistently noted as **Unattended.**

Pre-K students are required to follow the attendance procedures established by the State as well as those implemented by the District. Local attendance procedures include Truancy Prevention Measures and Attendance Contracts. Parents/Guardians may receive attendance calls and warning letters when student is truant.

The school district may remove and/or revoke the enrollment of a voluntarily enrolled student who continues to exhibit truant conduct and acquires unexcused absences.

COURT ACTIONS (what happens)

A student between the ages of 12 and 18, or the student's parent or both will receive a notification via mail of summons to appear before a justice of the peace or municipal-court judge for a court hearing.

- Upon the 10th absence (or partial absence), in 6-month period, the school shall file a case.
- School has 10 days after the 10th absence to file.
- Cases submitted more than 10 days after the 10th absence may be rejected.

PARENT – “Parent Contributing to Truancy”

- Fine only
- First offense \$100.00; Second offense \$200.00 up to \$500.00 for 5th offense (maximum)
- Prosecuted by Justice of the Peace for school's precinct

STUDENT – “Truant Conduct”

- Decision to prosecute is up to County D.A. (still file with JP)
- Each county has a “Truant Conduct Prosecutor”
- No fine
- \$50.00 Court fees (maximum) which can be waived
- Failure to comply with court order is \$100.00 fine and suspension of driver's license
- After 2 instances, the student can be referred to probation

17 and 18 year olds cannot be held in contempt and face jail time for violating the court order after found guilty of Truant Conduct.

If a parent/guardian does not attend conferences or fails to complete the truancy prevention measures implemented by the school, the court will see this as “a gross deviation from the standard of care that an ordinary person would exercise” and criminal negligence will be found.