



Attendance Policy

Policy Number: 3201

I. Purpose

Summit Academy is committed to providing a quality education for every student and recognize that regular student attendance is essential to the instructional process. Students learn the value of being punctual, present, and prepared. Frequent absences of students from the day-to-day classroom disrupts the instructional process and make it difficult for the student to receive maximum benefit from their educational experience. Also, frequent absences and tardiness prove disruptive for students, teachers, and staff. Excessive absences may lead to a student's permanent dismissal from Summit Academy.

Parents/guardians are expected to take a proactive role in ensuring their children attend school. We recommend families plan their vacations around the Summit Academy calendar. Medical and dental appointments should take place outside of school hours if possible. Parents should notify the school in advance of any absence. Parents/guardians and students are responsible for obtaining homework or assignments for the time period which the student is absent.

This policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of Utah's compulsory attendance laws, Utah Code Sections **53G-6-201** through **53G-6-208**, **53G-8-211**, Utah Admin Code **R277-607**, and shall be reviewed annually. Summit Academy will seek to accurately monitor and record attendance information, annually review attendance data, and consider revisions to the policy to encourage student attendance. This policy will be provided to parents/guardians annually and will be available for review by parents or interested parties.

II. Definitions

- a. "Minor" - means a person under the age of eighteen (18) years.
- b. "School-age minor" - means a minor who:
 - i. is at last six (6) years old, but younger than eighteen (18) years old; and
 - ii. is not emancipated
- c. "School-age child" - means a school-age minor under the age of fourteen (14).
- d. "Absence" or "Absent" - means a student's non-attendance at school for one school day or part of one school day/class period. A school-age minor may not be considered absent under this part more than one time during one day.
- e. "Required attendance" - means students must attend school at a 95% attendance rate.
- f. "Valid excuse" - or "excused absence" means an absence resulting from:
 - i. an illness, which may be either mental or physical;
 - ii. a death of a family member or close friend;
 - iii. a family emergency;
 - iv. an approved school activity;
 - v. a preapproved extended absence for a family activity or travel, consistent with school policy; or
 - vi. an absence permitted by an individualized education program or accommodation plan, developed pursuant to relevant law.
 - vii. The principal or designated administrator has the discretion to consider other absences as "valid excuses."



- g. "Truant" - means absent from school without a valid excuse.
- h. "Habitual truant" - means a school-age minor who:
 - i. is at least twelve (12) years old;
 - ii. is subject to the requirements of Section **53G-6-202**; and
 - iii. is truant at least five (5) times during one school year; and fails to cooperate with efforts on the part of school authorities to resolve the minor's attendance problem as required under Section **53G-6-206**.
- i. "Habitual truant citation" - is a citation issued only consistent with Section **53G-6-203**.
- j. "Unexcused absence" - means a student's absence from school for reasons other than those authorized by Summit Academy.
- k. "Tardy" - A student is tardy if he or she is not in their designated location when the late bell rings.

III. Policy

- a. Excused Absences:
 - i. An oral or written communication documenting a valid excuse must be received from the student's parents/guardian within three (3) business day of the absence in order for the absence to be excused. In the event of multiple consecutive absences, communication must be received within three (3) business day of the student's return to school.
 - ii. In the event of an unforeseeable illness or emergency, Summit Academy should be notified as soon as reasonably possible.
 - iii. In the case of a pandemic or other outbreak of a highly communicable disease, exceptions to the Attendance Policy will be made so the student will not be penalized for remaining home due to illness. This exception is made in order to encourage students to remain home when ill. Absences will be recorded as excused.
- b. Preapproved Extended Absences:
 - i. A parent/guardian may request approval from the principal or designated administrator prior to a student's extended absence of up to ten (10) days per school year. The principal or designated administrator may approve the absence if they determine that the extended absence will not adversely impact the student's education.
 - ii. Absences that are not approved are considered unexcused.
- c. Tardiness:
 - i. A student is tardy if he or she is not in their seat in their assigned classroom when the late bell rings. In general, tardiness will be handled on an individual basis with the teacher.
- d. Notification of Absences and Tardies:
 - i. In the event a student is absent, parents/guardians will be notified by phone on the day of the absence. Parents/guardians and students are responsible for tracking the total number of absences and tardies. Student attendance information is available through Summit Academy's official student information system. If absences or tardiness trends cause concern, a parent meeting with a designated administrator may be arranged to find resolution and encourage regular, timely attendance.
 - ii. If attendance issues significantly impact student academic success, the principal or designated administrator may require a student repeat the assigned grade.



- e. Grounds for an Appeal:
 - i. Students or their parents/guardians who believe that all or part of the absences and/or tardies should be considered excused may provide a written request to the designated administrator to review their case.

IV. Notice of Compulsory Education Violation

Summit Academy considers ALL forms of absence a violation of Compulsory Education policy.

Summit Academy may issue a "notice of compulsory education violation" to a parent/guardian of a student who is under the age of fourteen (14) if the student is truant at least five (5) times during the school year.

This notice shall:

1. Be served on the parent/guardian by personal service of certified mail
2. Direct the parent/guardian of school age child to:
 - a. meet with Summit Academy designated administration to discuss the student's attendance problems; and
 - b. cooperate with the principal or designated administrator to secure regular attendance by the school-age child;
3. State that it is a class B misdemeanor for the school-age child's parent or guardian to intentionally or recklessly;
 - a. fail to meet with the designated school authorities to discuss the student's attendance problems; or
 - b. fail to prevent the school-age child from being truant five (5) or more times during the remainder of the school year;

If Summit Academy personnel have reason to believe that, after a notice of compulsory education violation is issued, the parent or guardian has failed to make a good faith effort to ensure that the child receives an appropriate education, the issuer of the compulsory education violation shall submit to the Division of Child and Family Services the report required by Utah Code Section **53G-6-202(8)** (also in accordance with the School's Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy).

V. Truancy Intervention Program

Summit Academy's Truancy Intervention Program, in accordance with Utah Admin Code **R277-607**, is established to encourage good attendance and to facilitate the processing of habitually truant students through evidence-based alternative interventions. Those efforts may include documented earnest and persistent efforts to resolve a student's attendance problems as follows:

- Annual notification of Summit Academy's attendance policies will be provided to the parents of all students at the time of registration.
- When a student's attendance is negatively affecting the student's learning, the classroom teacher will notify the student and/or the student's parent(s) of the concern. The teacher will set up a conference with the student and/or the student's parent(s) to identify and resolve any problems that prevent the student from attending school. The student's progress will be monitored.
- If meeting with the student and parent(s) does not adequately address the problems and the student's learning continues to suffer, then the school counselor or principal / designated administrator will work with the teacher and parent(s) in finding a solution to the problems that are preventing the student from attending to his/her learning. Efforts to resolve the problems may include, but are not limited to, the following:



- making adjustments to the curriculum or the schedule,
- counseling of the student by Summit Academy authorities,
- considering alternatives proposed by the parent, or
- providing the parent with a list of community resources to help the family.
- The principal or designated administrator may consult with a parent/guardian to determine if mitigating circumstances such as medical or psychological problems indicate the use of intervention methods for resolving the attendance problems.
- In the event that the preceding interventions fail, a certified letter will be sent to the parent(s) requesting a formal meeting with the administrator to resolve the attendance problems. A copy of the letter and mailing certificates will be kept by Summit Academy.
- The principal or designated administrator will notify the student and parent/guardian of the actions Summit Academy may take should the student be truant in the future.
- Summit Academy's attendance review team will meet monthly to review attendance data which will inform actions and tiered interventions. This team shall consist of administrators, student support services, and those on the multi-disciplinary team.

VI. Habitual Truancy Citation

Consistent with Section **53G-6-203**, a habitual truancy citation may be issued to a student who is habitually truant.

1. The notice of truancy:
 - a. may not be issued until the school-age minor has been truant at least five (5) times during the school year;
 - b. may not be issued to a school-age minor who is less than twelve (12) years old;
 - c. may not be issued to a minor exempt from school attendance as provided in Section **53G-6-204** or **53G-6-702**;
 - d. shall direct the school-age minor and the parent/guardian of the school-age minor to:
 - i. meet with Summit Academy's designated administrator/s to discuss the school-age minor's truanancies; and
 - ii. cooperate with Summit Academy's board in securing regular attendance by the school-age minor; and
 - e. shall be mailed to, or served on, the school-age minor's parent/guardian.
2. Nothing in this section prohibits Summit Academy from taking action to resolve a truancy problem with a school-age minor who has been truant less than five (5) times, provided that the action does not conflict with the requirements of this policy.

Habitual truancy citations will only be issued after Summit Academy has made earnest and persistent efforts to resolve student attendance problems, which efforts may include those set forth above in section V. Truancy Intervention Program.

Habitual truancy citations will be served on the parent/guardian by personal service or certified mail. The parent/guardian will have the right to appeal a truancy citation in writing to the principal or designated administrator within ten (10) days of being issued.



Summit Academy will refer a student to whom a habitual truancy citation has been issued to juvenile court if the student refuses to participate in an evidence-based alternative intervention described Section **53G-8-211(3)(a)**, including:

- a mobile crisis outreach team;
- a receiving center operated by the Division of Juvenile Justice Services;
- a youth court or comparable restorative justice program; or
- other evidence-based interventions created and developed by Summit Academy or other governmental entities as set forth in Section **53G-8-211(3)(a)(v)**.

A court referral, as described in Section **53G-8-211(4)**, will include a recommended disposition containing the following:

- a) documentation of attendance and academic achievement;
- b) documentation of school efforts to improve attendance;
- c) copies of truancy citations, including all mailing certificates;
- d) a report of evidence-based alternative interventions used by Summit Academy before referral, including outcomes;
- e) the name and contact information of Summit Academy representatives assigned to actively participate in the court process with the student and the student's family; and,
- f) student background as requested by the prosecuting agency.

VII. References

- a. Utah Code Sections **53G-6-201** through **53G-6-208**,
- b. Utah Code Section **53G-8-211**
- c. Utah Admin Code **R277-607**

VIII. Attachments

None Applicable

IX. Revision History and Approval Date

Version 1: June 27, 2019: Original Date of Approval

Version 2: July 16, 2020: Updated to include excused absences due to a pandemic or other outbreak of a highly communicable disease.

Version 3: March 16, 2023: Review to remove tardies become absences with addition of Attendance team meets monthly.