



The mission of Einstein Charter Schools is to nurture students to be academically STRONG as well as socially and emotionally resilient.

# Attendance Policy

Updated: October 10, 2024

## Attendance

Einstein Charter schools comply with **RS 17:221**. Louisiana's attendance regulations outline the minimum and maximum age required by each state in which a student must be enrolled in and attend school.

## Compulsory Attendance Policy

### Overview:

In compliance with state law, Einstein Charter Schools require all students of compulsory school age to attend school daily and on time. Regular school attendance is critical for academic success, and it is the shared responsibility of parents/guardians, students, and the school to ensure students attend regularly. This policy outlines attendance expectations, procedures for absences, and the consequences of non-compliance.

### Attendance Requirements:

- 1. Compulsory Attendance Age:**
  - **2020-2021 School Year:** Students who have reached the age of **seven (7)** must attend a public or nonpublic school or participate in an approved home study program until their **18th** birthday.
  - **Starting in the 2022-2023 School Year:** Students who turn **five (5)** on or before **September 30** of the school year must attend school or be enrolled in an approved home study program. This requirement remains in effect until they turn **18** or graduate from high school, whichever comes first.
- 2. Enrollment Before Age Seven:** Any student under the age of seven who is enrolled in kindergarten or another school program is subject to the same attendance requirements as older students.
- 3. Home Study and Private School Exemptions:**
  - Parents/guardians who choose not to enroll their child in a public or private school may opt for a **Home Study Program**. This option must comply with the state's guidelines as outlined in **Chapter 33**.
  - Families choosing home study must submit an annual application to the Louisiana Department of Education and maintain proper records of the student's academic progress. The school must receive notification of any change in the student's enrollment status.

### Expectations for Parents/Guardians:

Parents/guardians play a critical role in ensuring compliance with the compulsory attendance law. They are expected to:



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- Ensure their child attends school daily, arrives on time, and remains for the full school day.
- Notify the school in writing when their child is absent, specifying the reason for the absence. In cases of illness or other excused absences, medical documentation may be required.
- Keep track of their child's attendance through the school's attendance records and report any discrepancies immediately.
- Cooperate with the school to resolve issues related to attendance, including participating in conferences or meetings if chronic absenteeism occurs.

## Types of Absences:

### 1. Excused Absences:

- Absences which are not considered for purposes of truancy, including absences incurred due to extenuating circumstances.
  - i. Illness or injury (with medical documentation if absent for more than three consecutive days)
  - ii. Death in the immediate family
  - iii. Observance of religious holidays
  - iv. Court appearances or other legal obligations
  - v. Family emergencies or other exceptional circumstances (at the discretion of the principal)

### 2. Unexcused Absences:

- Any absence not covered by the aforementioned excused reasons. Students with unexcused absences may be subject to disciplinary action, and the school reserves the right to require a conference with parents/guardians.

### 3. Suspensions/Expulsion:

- Any absence in which a student is not in attendance in the regular instructional setting due to disciplinary actions imposed by the school. the absence is not considered for purposes of truancy unless the student was assigned to an alternative site and is not in attendance at the assigned alternative site.

### 4. Tardiness:

- Students are expected to arrive on time. Excessive tardies (3 or more) may result in disciplinary action and will be considered when determining compliance with attendance regulations.

Students are expected to be in school each day. **Absent students cannot participate in athletic practices or games the day of the event/activity.** Dated, original notes from a parent/guardian (a maximum of 10) or doctor must be submitted to the homeroom teacher/front office immediately upon return, following the absence.

Only absences that have been verified by the school social worker or designee are considered excused according to state law attendance requirements.



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## Support for Students:

### 1. **Intervention for Chronic Absenteeism:**

- If a student is absent more than **5** days in a semester, the school will reach out to the parent/guardian to discuss the reasons for the absences. A meeting may be scheduled to create an **Attendance Improvement Plan** that outlines specific steps to address the root causes of absenteeism. Interventions may include counseling services, home visits, or referrals to community agencies.

### 2. **School's Role:**

- The school will track daily attendance and contact parents/guardians after **3 consecutive days of unexcused absences**. If a pattern of absences continues, a written notice will be sent. In the case of extreme or chronic absenteeism, the school may refer the family to the district's **Child Welfare and Attendance Office** for further intervention.

### 3. **Make-Up Work for Excused Absences:**

- Students who miss school due to absences are entitled to make-up work. Parents/guardians should request assignments from teachers, and students must complete missed assignments within a reasonable time frame (typically within the number of days missed). A student who is absent, including a suspended student, shall be allowed to submit missed assignments and tests and shall be eligible to receive the same academic credit and grades originally available when work is completed satisfactorily and in a timely manner.

## Legal Consequences:

### 1. **Non-Compliance with Attendance Laws:**

- Parents or guardians who fail to ensure regular attendance of their child may be subject to penalties under state law. These penalties may include:
  - Referral to a truancy officer
  - Participation in a truancy diversion program
  - Fines or other legal consequences

### 2. **Court Intervention:**

- In extreme cases of habitual absenteeism or non-compliance with state attendance laws, the school may file a formal complaint with the **Juvenile Court** system. Parents/guardians may be required to appear before a judge and comply with court-ordered measures to improve attendance.

## Requesting Exemptions:

Parents or guardians who believe their child has a legitimate reason for not attending school, such as religious beliefs or medical conditions, may request an exemption from the compulsory attendance law. Exemption requests must be submitted in writing to the principal, and proper documentation (e.g., medical records) may be required. Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis, and the final decision rests with the school.



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administration.

### Summary of Key Points:

- All students ages **5-18** are required to attend school regularly.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance.
- **Excused absences** require proper documentation.
- Chronic absenteeism will result in school intervention, and legal action may be taken if absences are not resolved.
- Make-up work will be provided for excused absences.

### Compulsory School Attendance (Minutes)

Please note below the Compulsory Attendance Law which all Einstein schools are mandated to follow:

- A. Elementary students shall be in attendance a minimum of 60,120 minutes (equivalent to 167 six-hour days) a school year. In order to be eligible to receive grades, high school students shall be in attendance a minimum of 30,060 minutes (equivalent to 83.5 six-hour school days), per semester or 60,120 minutes (equivalent to 167 six-hour school days) a school year for schools not operating on a semester basis.

### Attendance Requirements for Promotion

Students with more than 10 absences per year may be considered for retention.

### Tardiness

Students arriving at school after the morning tardy bell will be considered tardy to school. Students arriving to school after the stated school start time after 30 minutes of the tardy bell must be accompanied by a parent/guardian regardless of reason to be checked in by office personnel. Tardy students will receive appropriate disciplinary action for repeated tardiness.

### Early Dismissal and Check-Out

An early dismissal or check-out from a school day is also considered an absence in the classes missed. Early dismissal or check-out from school requires that the legal parent/guardian be present and provide a current form of legal identification at the time of the early dismissal or check out. Parent/legal guardian/designee must be listed on the student's emergency card.

### Withdrawal

Einstein kindly requests that parents/guardians inform the front office manager, data manager, and/or counselor at least one week prior to moving or transferring from the school, or as soon as possible. The parent must sign several forms before the withdrawal procedure can be finalized, and all financial and



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material obligations to the school must be resolved before the withdrawal will be completed. A student who seeks re-admittance to the school must go through the NOLAPS Common Application Process (NCAP) central enrollment system process.

## Interventions

The interventions outlined below are aligned with state law and polity and represent best practices based on the number of unexcused absences:

Days	Intervention
1 to 4 Unexcused Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School documents outreach efforts to reach out to parent/guardian.</li> <li>When the number of unexcused absences increase, refer case</li> </ul>
5 or more Unexcused Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School sends written notification to parents and/or legal guardians</li> <li>School refers to local parish policies regarding any additional requirements</li> </ul>
15 Unexcused Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School requests that the student be discharged for non-attendance</li> </ul>

- Students, families, and teachers have experienced trauma, secondary trauma, collective trauma, systemic trauma and may need additional support.
- We prioritize our capacity to provide consistent interventions and Einstein's internal capacity to effectively engage in distance learning as well as in person learning.
- The Social Worker/Attendance Compliance Personnel will utilize one or more interventions below to effectively re-engage habitually absent students into learning.

Until a student transfers to another school or is declared truant by a local court, the student will continue to be enrolled in the school. Schools must also refer to local parish policies regarding any additional requirements to report cases for truancy to the Families in Need of Service (FINS) Office or the local District Attorney's Office.



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Number of Absences (one absence = one day of school)	Standard Attendance Interventions
2-9 Absences School Level Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher/school make various attempts to engage families by robocall, direct calls and document their attempts to address attendance issues;</li> <li>• Teacher makes a referral to school Social Worker/attendance compliance personnel using an internal tracker;</li> <li>• School Social Worker/attendance compliance personnel makes attempts through telephone call, letter, or home visit, attendance contract with family/guardian;</li> </ul>
10+ Absences (Summons Conference Process)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher/school make various attempts to engage families by robocall, direct calls and document their attempts to address attendance issues;</li> <li>• Attendance compliance personnel will create an Attendance Contract or schedule home visit &amp; complete home visit log with documented plan;</li> <li>• Attendance compliance personnel will make a referral to Municipal Court after recommended school level interventions for absenteeism;</li> <li>• If attendance barriers/challenges are identified the summons request may be rescinded;</li> </ul>

## Remote Instruction Policy

- A. **Remote Instruction** Remote instruction refers to an educational model where students and educators are not physically present in a traditional classroom environment. Instruction is delivered through the use of computers, technology, and the internet, allowing for both synchronous (live) and asynchronous (self-paced) learning. This model is often used during emergencies or when in-person learning is not feasible.
- B. **Hybrid Instruction** Hybrid instruction combines face-to-face, in-person teaching with remote learning. This model provides flexibility for students to engage in both types of instruction, ensuring continuity of education in a blended environment.



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- C. **Attendance** Attendance during remote or hybrid instruction is crucial and is monitored regularly. A student is considered "in attendance" when:
- Attendance is checked and recorded on each school day and at the beginning of each class period in accordance with R.S. 17:232.B.(1).
  - At least one of the following requirements is met:
    - The student logs into synchronous (live) online instruction at the designated time for the course in which they are enrolled. Specific login requirements and instructional expectations vary by grade level and will be communicated by Einstein Charter School.
    - The student provides evidence of participation in an asynchronous (self-paced) instructional activity. The LEA will define acceptable evidence of participation, which may include completing assignments, engaging in class discussions, or submitting required work.
- D. **Remote Attendance Policy** The remote attendance policy applies to students enrolled in courses typically conducted in person but have temporarily shifted to remote delivery due to:
- The initiation of continuous learning,
  - Situations that render the school site inaccessible for daily instructional activities, or
  - A student's temporary inability to physically attend the school site.
  - This policy ensures that learning can continue without interruption during unforeseen circumstances.
- E. **Communication of Remote Learning Requirements** The requirements for attendance and participation in remote learning will be outlined in the LEA's official policy and communicated to students, parents, and legal guardians:
- At the beginning of each school year, and
  - Upon the initiation of remote instructional delivery, whether due to planned or emergency circumstances.

Parents and students will receive guidance on how remote instruction will be conducted, including expectations for attendance, participation, and completion of assignments.