

REGULATION JHB

Las Cruces Public Schools

Related Entries: JEA, JEA-R, JHB

Responsible Office: Associate Superintendent for Instruction

Students in Need of Early Intervention for Attendance

I. PURPOSE

To outline procedures for implementing *Policy JHB: Students in Need of Early Intervention for Attendance*.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Truancy* is the unexcused absence of a student from school or class.
- B. *A student in need of early intervention* is a student who has accumulated five unexcused absences within a school year.
- C. *Habitual Truant* is a student who has accumulated the equivalent of ten or more unexcused absences within a school year.
- D. *Unexcused Absence* is an absence from school or classes for which the student does not have an allowable excuse pursuant to the Compulsory School Attendance Law NMSA (22-12-1 NMSA 1978), or rules of the Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education. An unexcused absence of two or more classes up to 50 percent of an instructional day shall be counted as one-half day absence, and the unexcused absence of more than 50 percent of an instructional day shall be counted as one full-day absence.
- E. *Early identification* is the process by which school districts promptly determine and identify students who have excessive absences and tardiness from classes or school. Early identification includes the school district's or individual school's defined system for recording, reporting and summarizing daily attendance of its students and then providing that data to the district's administration.
- F. *Prevention* is school-based innovative or proven successful programs, including alternative programs, whether school-based or non-school based, that encourage regular and on-time attendance for students.
- G. *Intervention* is the partnering that schools engage in with parents and state agencies to implement administrative remedies, provide services and programs that aggressively reduce truancy in a school district.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Absences, intervention and notification - all grades

Schools shall identify students who have attendance problems as early as possible. The school shall immediately notify the student's parent/guardian when the school has concerns regarding the student's unexcused absences [22-12-8 NMSA 1978]. Notice must be given in a language and in a manner that is understandable to the student and to the student's parent/guardian.

1. The parents/guardians of all students will be contacted by the school district's automated telephone attendance system each time a student is absent from class.
2. Following a student's third unexcused absence, the school shall:

Mail the parent/guardian an attendance alert letter.
3. Following the student's fifth unexcused absence in a 20-day period, the school will:
 - a. Send the parent/guardian a parent notification letter that contains a web link to the New Mexico Compulsory School Attendance Law, or provide a copy, if requested.
 - b. Contact the student and parent(s) to arrange for a parent-school conference to discuss the student's unexcused absences and possible interventions that focus on keeping the child in an educational setting.
 - c. Identify the causes for the student's unexcused absences, identify what actions can be taken that might prevent the student's unexcused absences, identify possible school district and community resources to address the cases for the student's unexcused absences, and establish a corrective action plan to address the unexcused absences. The corrective action plan must contain follow-up procedures to ensure that the causes for the student's unexcused absences are being addressed.
4. Following the student's seventh unexcused absence in a 20-day period, the school will:
 - a. Send the parent/guardian a parent notification letter that contains a web link to the New Mexico Compulsory School Attendance Law, or provide a copy, if requested.
 - b. Contact the student and parent/guardian to arrange for a parent-school conference to discuss the student's unexcused absences and possible interventions that focus on keeping the child in an educational setting.

- c. Advise the student and parent/guardian that the school district has the responsibility to refer the student as an habitual truant to the Juvenile Probation and Parole Office (JPPO).
5. At 10 unexcused absences, the student is an “habitual truant” and the following procedures shall be applied:
- a. The school shall send the parent notification letter and a copy of the New Mexico Compulsory School Attendance Law either by mail or have them personally delivered to the parent/guardian. The notice shall include a date, time and place for the parent to meet with Las Cruces Public Schools to develop intervention strategies that focus on keeping the student in an educational setting.

If the letter is personally delivered, a parent/guardian signature must be obtained.

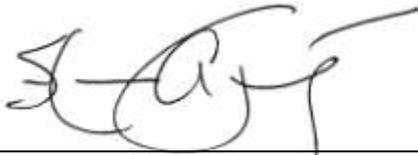
- b. Parent/guardian will be requested to attend a conference to discuss the student’s habitual truancy. A translator shall be made available, at school district expense, at the conference, at the request of the parent/guardian.
- c. The school shall send the habitual truant referral packet to the office of the Superintendent of Schools, which shall review the contents of the packet and notify the parent/guardian by certified mail or via a process server of the referral of the packet to the JPPO.
- d. All referral packets with all documentation shall be sent to the LCPS Department of Community Relations. The Department of Community Relations shall notify the parent/guardian and submit a referral to the JPPO.
- e. If there is another unexcused absence after delivery of a written notice of habitual truancy, the student will be reported to the JPPO within seven days from the date of the unexcused absence.
- f. If a determination has been made by the JPPO that the student’s habitual truancy was caused by the student’s parent/guardian, and no charges have been filed against the student’s parent/guardian, the school district may contact the district attorney’s office to determine what action will be taken.
- g. For each student identified as an habitual offender, the school district shall document the following:
 - i. Attempts of the school to notify the parent that the student had

unexcused absences;

- ii. Attempts of the school to meet with the parent to discuss intervention strategies; and
- iii. Intervention strategies implemented to support keeping the student in school.

History: Formerly Procedure 300-1 and Procedure 300-6; updated September 2009

Legal Ref: 22-12-7 through 22-12-9, 22-8-2, NMSA 1978



Associate Superintendent for Instruction

November 17, 2009

Date