



POLICY TITLE:	
<b>Attendance and Truancy Policy</b>	
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED:
August 18, 2008	August 19, 2013 August 18, 2014 December 19, 2016
LEGAL AUTHORITY:	
D.C. Code § 4-1345.01(1)(L); § 38-1802.11(a)(1)(B)-(C); 5 DCMR 2101.9	

**PURPOSE**

This policy establishes truancy and chronic truancy levels for DC public charter schools.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

A truant student is defined as a school-aged student (ages 5-17) with an unexcused absence.

A chronically truant student is defined as a school-aged student who accrues 10 or more unexcused absences within a single school year.

**CHRONIC TRUANCY FORMULA**

The chronic truancy calculation is: Any student who earned ten or more unexcused absences at a single school (note: count resets when changing schools) divided by the number of students ever enrolled (for at least 10 days) at the school that school year.<sup>1</sup>

A students who turn 5 after September 30 is not calculated in a school’s chronic truancy rate. Once a student turns 18, any additional absences accrued are not calculated into a school’s truancy rate. These provisions are consistent with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education’s attendance regulations.

A school must maintain a chronic truancy rate at or below the thresholds listed below, or may be subject to a Notice of Concern:

- Traditional LEAs serving grades pre-kindergarten (PK) through 8<sup>th</sup> grade: 30%
- Traditional LEAs serving grades 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>: 35%
- LEAs designated as Alternative by DC PCSB: 45%

In cases where a school reaches the thresholds above, but has demonstrated year to date improvement in in-seat attendance and/or truancy rates, the DC PCSB Board may at its discretion decide not to issue a Notice of Concern.

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<sup>1</sup> In DC’s Truancy Taskforce, the term “Truancy Rate” is synonymous to the “Chronic Truancy Rate” definition in this policy. There are not different business rules for each term in regards to a whole school rate.



Attendance data will be reviewed by the 30<sup>th</sup> of each month for the preceding month. Once a school exceeds the chronic truancy threshold, DC PCSB will notify the school. A school will also be provided data indicating the total number of unexcused absences, total number of excused absences, percentage of instructional days lost for all students, and the number/ names of all students who were chronically truant (defined as 10 or more days) so that they can verify the rate.

#### Issuing a Notice of Concern

Once a school exceeds the truancy rate threshold, the school will be notified that it is subject to receiving a Notice of Concern at the next scheduled DC PCSB board meeting.

#### Lifting the Notice of Concern

After DC PCSB staff has notified an LEA it has exceeded the truancy threshold for its type of school, a review period of at least two months will begin in order for the school to work on strategies to improve student attendance, which may lead the PCSB Board to lift the Notice of Concern. To this end, there will be two attendance periods of review, a *baseline* period and *review* period:

- The *baseline* period will cover the time leading up to the notification
- The *review* period will comprise a minimum of two months following notification

The DC PCSB Board may vote to lift a Notice of Concern at any time following the initial two-month review period based upon achieving two out of three of the following:

- Improvement<sup>2</sup> in the percentage of In-Seat Attendance for the whole school (defined as total # days present/ total # days enrolled for all students)
- Improvement in attendance for the majority of students who were defined as chronically truant (10 days) in the baseline period.
- Maintaining a chronic truancy rate lower than 30%, 35%, or 45% for PK-8<sup>th</sup> grade, high school, and alternative schools, respectively excluding those already counted as chronically truant in the baseline period.

When considering whether to vote to lift a Notice of Concern, the DC PCSB Board may take into consideration factors such as documented due diligence in areas of school-parent communication, interventions, and best practices.

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<sup>2</sup> "Improvement" is defined as any positive movement of greater than or equal to one percentage point.



DC PCBS Board will not issue a Notice of Concern after its May board meeting, as there would be insufficient time to allow a school to improve prior to the end of the school year. If a school does not improve by the end of the year, the DC PCSB Board may nonetheless lift a Notice of Concern in order for the school to start fresh the next year.

It is DC PCSB Board's discretion to determine whether to lift a Notice of Concern if a school's truancy rate decreases only due to truant students being *expelled* or *withdrawn*.

**Board Approval Acknowledged By:**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darren Woodruff". The signature is written in a cursive style.

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Darren Woodruff  
DC PCSB Board Chair

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