

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The School Board shall excuse from attendance at school:

1. Any student who, together with his parents, by reason of bona fide religious training or belief is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school.
2. On the recommendation of the juvenile and domestic relations court of the city or county in which the student resides, and for such period of time as the court determines appropriate, any student who, together with his parents, is opposed to attendance at a school by reason of concern for the student's health as verified by competent medical evidence, or by reason of such pupil's reasonable apprehension for personal safety when such concern or apprehension in that pupil's specific case is determined by the court, upon consideration of the recommendation of the principal and division superintendent, to be justified.

The School Board may excuse from attendance at school:

1. On recommendation of the principal and the division superintendent and with the written consent of the parent or guardian, any student who the school board determines, in accordance with regulations of the Board of Education, cannot benefit from education at school; or
2. On recommendation of the juvenile and domestic relations district court of the city or county in which the student resides, any student who, in the judgment of the court, cannot benefit from education at school.

The School Board may allow the compulsory attendance requirements to be met pursuant to an individual student alternative education plan developed in conformity with guidelines prescribed by the Board of Education under the following conditions:

1. The student must be at least sixteen years of age.
2. There shall be a meeting of the student, the student's parents, and the principal or his designee of the school in which the student is enrolled to develop the plan, which must include the following:
 - Career guidance counseling;
 - Mandatory enrollment and attendance in a general educational development preparatory program or other alternative education program approved by the school board, with attendance reported to the principal or his designee;
 - Counseling on the economic impact of failing to complete high school; and
 - Procedures for re-enrollment.

3. A student for whom such an individual student alternative education plan has been granted but who fails to comply with the conditions of the plan shall be in violation of the compulsory attendance laws, and the superintendent or attendance officer shall seek immediate compliance with such laws.

The compulsory attendance requirement does not apply to the following children:

1. Children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases when the physical incapacity is established by a written statement from a physician or nurse practitioner attending the child, giving the reasons for the student's inability to participate in school. (See Policy JHCC).
2. Children whose immunizations against communicable diseases have not been completed. (See Policy JHCB)
3. Any child who will not have reached his sixth birthday on or before September 30 whose parent or guardian notifies the School Board that he does not wish the child to attend school until the following year because the child, in the opinion of the parent or guardian, is not mentally, physically or emotionally prepared to attend school.
4. Children under 10 years of age who live more than two miles from a public school, unless public transportation is provided within one mile of the place where they live, and children between 10 and 17 years of age, inclusive, who live more than two and one-half miles from a public school, unless public transportation is provided within one and one-half miles of the place where the children live. Distances shall be measured or determined by the nearest practical routes usable for either walking or riding, from the entrance to the school grounds, or from the nearest school bus stop, to the residence of the children.

Any parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of a child being exempted or excused from school attendance shall comply with the immunization requirement provided in § 32.1-46 Code of Virginia in the same manner and to the same extent as if the child has been enrolled in and is attending school.

Any request for exemption from attendance shall be presented annually in writing to the superintendent or his/her designee.

All other exemptions granted by the Waynesboro School Board shall be in accordance with existing state law.

Alternative Education Programs

The Superintendent, pursuant to regulations adopted by the school board, may in accordance with the procedures set forth in Va. Code § 22.1-276.01 et seq. and School Board policy and upon a finding that a school-age child has been (i) charged with an offense relating to the Commonwealth's laws, or with a violation of school board policies, on weapons, alcohol or drugs, or intentional injury to another person; (ii) found guilty or not innocent of a crime that resulted in or could have resulted in injury to others, or of an offense that is required to be disclosed to the superintendent of the school division pursuant to subsection G of Va. Code § 16.1-260; (iii) suspended pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-277.05; or (iv) expelled from school attendance pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-277.06, 22.1-277.07, or subsection B of § 22.1-277, require a student to attend an alternative education program as provided by Va. Code § 22.1-209.1:2 or 22.1-277.2:1.

Prior to requiring a student to attend an alternative education program, the Superintendent shall provide: (1) written notice to the student and his parent/guardian that the student will be required to attend an alternative education program and (2) written notice to the student and his parent/guardian of the right to a hearing before the superintendent or designee regarding the placement. The decision of the superintendent or his designee regarding such alternative education placement shall be final unless altered by the school board, upon timely written petition, as established in regulation, by the student or his parent, for a review of the record by the school board.

Whenever a court orders any pupil into an alternative education program, including a program of general educational development, offered in the public schools, the School Board shall determine the appropriate alternative education placement of the pupil regardless of whether the pupil attends the public schools it supervises or resides within its school division.

Adopted: August 13, 2008

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-3, 22.1-254, 22.1-271.4, 22.1-277, 22.1-277.2:1, 32.1-46; 54.1-2957.02.

Cross Refs.:	JEA	Compulsory Attendance
	JGD/JGE	Student Suspension/Expulsion
	JHCB	Immunization of Students
	JHCC	Communicable Diseases
	IGBH	Alternative School Programs
	IKF	Standards of Learning Tests and Graduation Requirements