

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

F. PHILIP HANDY, *Chairman*

T. WILLARD FAIR, *Vice Chairman*

Members

DONNA G. CALLAWAY

ROBERTO MARTÍNEZ

PHOEBE RAULERSON

KATHLEEN SHANAHAN

LINDA K. TAYLOR

John L. Winn
Commissioner of Education



MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents

FROM: Cheri Pierson Yecke, Ph.D.

DATE: August 30, 2006

Contact Information:

Kimberly Davis
Gria Davison
(850) 245-0551
(850) 922-3727
Kimberly.Davis@fldoe.org
gdavison@tempest.coedu.usf.edu
K12: 2006-124

SUBJECT: 2006 LEGISLATIVE CHANGES REGARDING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The 2006 Legislature passed Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 772 to amend Chapter 1003, Florida Statutes (F.S.), related to school attendance. The revisions provide authorization; clarification; and new requirements of school districts related to local school district attendance policies, compulsory school attendance, and school attendance enforcement. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide summary and general information related to the revised sections of law in Chapter 1003, F.S.

The bill amends Section 1003.02, F.S., (District school board operation and control of public K-12 education within the school district.--) to authorize:

- District school boards to establish policies that require referral to a school's child study team for students with fewer than five (5) absences in thirty (30) days or ten (10) absences in ninety (90) days as required by Section 1003.26 (1)(b), F.S.
- School district attendance policies, including accumulated tardies and early departures, to be recorded as unexcused absences

The bill amends Section 1003.21, F.S., (School attendance.--) to clarify that students who have attained the age of 16 years and who have not graduated are subject to compulsory school

CHERI PIERSON YECKE, Ph.D.
CHANCELLOR, K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

attendance until they formally terminate enrollment with the district school board. In regard to termination of school enrollment, the bill requires that:

- School guidance counselors of students terminating school enrollment or other school personnel conduct an exit interview with the student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to drop out of school and what actions could be taken to keep the student in school
- The student be informed of opportunities to continue his or her education in a different environment, including adult education and GED test preparation
- A student terminating school enrollment complete a survey intended to provide data on the student's reasons for terminating enrollment and the actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled in school
- The Department of Education prescribe the survey format

The bill amends Section 1003.26, F.S., (Enforcement of school attendance.--) to require school districts to promote attendance and to support school attendance enforcement by local law enforcement agencies. The bill provides required and authorized school child study team interventions, including referral to other agencies for family services or recommendation to file a truancy petition.

Department staff has developed the attached technical assistance related to the survey format and exit interview to assist districts with implementing this legislation. For questions related to the survey and/or exit interview formats, please contact Kimberly Davis via e-mail at Kimberly.Davis@fldoe.org or via telephone at (850) 245-0551. For questions regarding this memorandum, please contact Gria Davison via e-mail at gdavison@tempest.coedu.usf.edu or via telephone at (850) 922-3727.

CPY:gd

Attachments

cc: Assistant Superintendents for Instruction
Student Services Directors
School Social Work/Attendance Supervisors
School Guidance Supervisors
Dropout Prevention Coordinators