

**SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Agenda Item# 4.1

Meeting Date : May 3, 2021

Subject : Public Hearing: Adopt Revision of Board Policy 5113, Absences and Excuses

- Information Item Only
- Approval on Consent Agenda
- Conference (for discussion only)
- Conference/First Reading (Action Anticipated: _____)
- Conference/Action
- Action
- Public Hearing

Division : Legal Services

Recommendation : Approve revision to Board Policy 5113.

Background/Rationale : Education Code 48205 establishes the conditions under which students may be lawfully absent from school, including personal illness or 1 y. District students face mental health challenges throughout their education. In order to recognize the mental health issues of students and help reduce stigmatizing attitudes of prejudice and exclusion, revisions to the policies concerning absences and excuses are necessary and specifically, the definition of "health reasons" in the context of excused absences. No prior updates to BP 5113 have occurred since its adoption in 2002. Such updates and enactment include language in the CSBA Gamut model policies. The District plans to adopt AR 6173, which includes language in the CSBA Gamut model regulations.

Documents Attached:

1. BP 5113 (Redlines)
2. AR 5113

Estimated Time of Presentation : 5 Minutes S9.96Pmeny: 5[oTc 0 Tw l]TJ 0 B002 70.0 0 T3(zTf 1) T--0.,nusss Approved by : Jorge A. Aguilar, Superintendent



California Education Code 48205 establishes the conditions under which students may be lawfully absent from school, including personal illness or injury.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion closely links mental health and physical health. The 2008 federal Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) put care and treatment of mental health and substance use disorders on equal footing – or “parity” – with physical health care.

The recent California Healthy Kids Survey of District students indicated that on average one in five students has considered suicide in the past 12 months. Striving for Zero, California's Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention urges all Californians to play a role in suicide prevention and promoting health and wellness.

The current version of Board Policy 5113 was adopted in 2002 and has not yet since been revised. The proposed revisions to Board Policy 5113 are based on the updates provided by the California School Boards Association (CSBA). Further, the revised board policy now recognizes the mental health issues of students and helps to reduce stigmatizing attitudes of prejudice and exclusion by including mental health reasons in the context of excused absences under Education Code 48205.

The District plans upon the revision of Board Policy 5113 to adopt the enclosed administrative regulation concerning absences and excuses. AR 5113 is based on the updates provided by the CSBA and follows the Education Code. AR 5113 furthermore addresses excusing absences for illness or medical appointments (physical and/or mental health).

Pursuant to Education Code 48205(a):

- (a) Notwithstanding Section 48200, a pupil shall be excused from school when the absence is:
 - (1)



- (5) For the purpose of jury duty in the manner provided for by law.
- (6) Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the pupil is the custodial parent, including absences to care for a sick child for which the school shall not require a note from a doctor.
- (7) For justifiable personal reasons, including, but not limited to, an appearance in court, attendance at a funeral service, observance of a holiday or ceremony of the pupil's religion, attendance at religious retreats, attendance at an employment conference, or attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization when the pupil's absence is requested in writing by the parent or guardian and approved by the principal or a designated representative pursuant to uniform standards established by the governing board.
- (8) For the purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Section 12302 of the Elections Code.
- (9) For the purpose of spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Section 49701, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the superintendent of the school district.
- (10) For the purpose of attending the pupil's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.
- (11) Authorized at the discretion of a school administrator, as described in subdivision (c) of Section 48260.

Board Resolution 3174, passed on December 10, 2020, provides "that the Superintendent review all relevant Board policies and SCUSD regulations and explore the possibilities and impact of explicitly permitting excused mental health days[.]"

The proposed policy is intended to create practices that permit the excusal of mental health days.

Pursuant to the District's core beliefs under Board Policy 0100, the District believes "that all people excel in an environment that is SAFE, and offers everyone UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITIES for continuous growth and PERSONAL SUCCESS." As such, the goal is for the District to establish sound policy that recognizes the mental health issues of studente0(ha)4(tS)10()hlpn uel

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion closely links mental health and physical health; and the 2008 federal Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) put care and treatment of mental health and substance use disorders on equal footing or "parity" –

6920-6929 Consent of minor for medical treatment

VEHICLE CODE

13202.7 Driving privileges; minors; suspension or delay for habitual truancy

Sacramento City USD
Administrative Regulation
AR 5113
Students

Absences And Excuses
Excused Absences

- c. Observance of a religious holiday or ceremony
- d. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours per semester

Such absence shall be excused provided that the student holds a work permit authorizing such work and is absent for a period of not more than five consecutive days and up to five absences per school year (Education Code 48225.5)

13. Participation with a nonprofit performing arts organization in a performance for a public school audience (Education Code 48225.5)

A student may be excused for up to five such absences per school year provided that the student's parent/guardian provides a written explanation of such absence to the school. (Education Code 48225.5)

14. Other reasons authorized at the discretion of the principal or designee based on the student's specific circumstances (Education Code ~~48205~~, 48260)

For the purpose of the absences described above, immediate family means the student's parent/guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the student's household. (Education Code 48205)

Method of Verification

Student absence to care for a child for whom the student is the custodial parent shall not require a physician's note. (Education Code 48205)

For other absences, the student shall, upon returning to school following the absence, present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. Absences shall be verified by the student's parent/guardian, other person having charge or control of the student, or the student if age 18 or older. (Education Code 46012; 5 CCR 306)

When an absence is planned, the principal or designee shall be notified prior to the date of the

2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:

- a. Name of student
- b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative
- c. Name of verifying employee
- d. Date(s) of absence
- e. Reason for absence

(cf. 5113.11 Attendance Supervision)

3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. The employee shall document the verification and include the information specified in item #2 above.

4. Physician's verification.

a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, district staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may request a note from the medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.

b. If a student shows a pattern of chronic absenteeism due to illness, district staff may require physician verification of any further student absences.

(cf. 5113.1 Chronic Absence and Truancy)

Parental Notifications

At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Notify parents/guardians of the right to excuse a student from school in order to participate in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction at their places of

worship, or at other suitable places away from school property designated by a religious group, church, or denomination (Education Code 46014, 48980)

2. Notify students in grades ~~7~~⁷⁻¹² and the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the district that school authorities may excuse any student from school to obtain confidential medical services without the ~~consent~~^{consent} of the student's parent/guardian (Education Code 46010.1)

3. Notify parents/guardians that a student shall not have a grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence if missed assignments and tests that can reasonably be provided are ~~sati~~