

# Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Policy 5.07 Preschool Attendance	Effective: 6/28/24
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## **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE**

### POLICY

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities recognizes attendance in a preschool program is not mandatory per the State of Ohio. Children are not required to be enrolled in a school program until they are 6 years of age by their school district's entry date (August 1 or September 30) at which time they would enter kindergarten.

Many parents, however, choose to enroll their children in preschool programs prior to attending kindergarten. For children with significant complex needs, school districts may refer these children to the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities to receive our intense therapy and specialized education services in order to help prepare them for kindergarten. In order for students enrolled in the Stark DD Preschool Program to grow and progress in their readiness skills for kindergarten, regular attendance at preschool is crucial.

Absences from preschool will be determined to be excused, unexcused or "no show/no call off". Procedures will be established as to what constitutes excused, unexcused or "no show/no call off". These procedures will also outline communication with parents concerning a child's attendance and at which point students may be withdrawn from preschool by the SCBDD Early Childhood Director.

<b>Historical Resolution Information</b>	<b>Reviewer(s):</b>
<b>Date</b> 5/28/24	Early Childhood Director Superintendent
<b>Resolution Number</b> 05-26-24	

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### PROCEDURES

- I. Parents are requested to call the school and bus garage any time a student will be absent from school. As our bus routes are personalized to each child, this saves valuable time, gas and effort when the transportation staff is alerted that a child is not attending school on a particular day.
- II. Alianna's Law, enacted in 2019 by the Ohio state legislature, requires every school notify a parent when a child is absent and has not been called off by a parent. Stark DD Preschool shall contact parents of "no show/no call off" students by 11:10am each day. When children habitually are in the "no show/no call off" status, this takes up considerable office staff time.
- III. Each school year, Stark DD Preschool Program serves several students who may miss many days of school due to medical issues, even hospitalizations. The school nurse shall work closely with the parents and even medical professionals of these students to monitor their health and well being as well as receiving documentation of the medical situations the children are experiencing. School days missed under these circumstances shall be considered excused.
- IV. Excused days may also include an occasional illness requiring a child to remain at home while dealing with/recovering from various respiratory illnesses and gastrointestinal issues as well as many others as per our agency's Health Plan. Once again, these illnesses shall be monitored closely by the school nurse.
- V. Other examples of excused time from preschool shall include doctor/dental appointments, outpatient therapy, out of town family travel, contagious illness of family member, various family needs, occasionally missing the bus and no parent transportation available, etc.
- VI. Even if the parent calls the school, children who habitually miss the bus and are not brought into school, shall be considered unexcused. Habitually means once a week or more.
- VII. Children who are "no show/not called off" will be marked as such on the attendance form.
- VIII. After 9 weeks of consecutive excused school absences, medical and administrative staff will meet to discuss current medical status and prognosis for attending school. Based on this information, a determination shall be made as to whether we will continue to hold a slot for the child. Communication will occur with the parent.

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- IX. After 20 days of unexcused absences in a quarter or 30 days of unexcused absences in a semester, the parent shall be sent a letter from the Early Childhood Director via certified mail. The letter shall remind the parent that preschool is voluntary and will provide the parent with options for attendance as well as parameters for continued Stark DD preschool participation if that is what the parent wishes. If the child continues to be unexcused or “no show/no call off” on a frequent basis, the child shall be withdrawn by the Stark DD Early Childhood Director and a letter will be sent via certified mail to the parent.

If the attendance issue concerns a child with special needs, the child’s local school district director of special education shall be notified of the attendance issues throughout each step.

- X. Waiting lists are maintained for district referrals for children with special needs as well as for typical peer program slots. Whenever withdrawals from the Stark DD Preschool program occur, new students shall be placed in the open slots based upon the date the district referral/peer application was received.