

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

- I. Students must attend school regularly in order for meaningful instruction to occur. Public School Law 7-301 and (COMAR) 13A.08.01.01A state that "each child who resides in this State and is 5 years old or older and under \*16 shall attend a public school regularly during the entire school year unless the child is otherwise receiving regular thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public schools to children of the same age."
  - II. Regular school attendance increases the student's opportunity for greater academic and social success. Failure to attend school on a regular basis may lead to problems which could result in a decision to drop out of school. The consequences of such a decision can subject the former student to a lifetime of limited income, minimal employment skills and possible dependency on public assistance. It is therefore the Talbot County Board of Education's goal that each student will want to attend school everyday and, that as a result, an attendance rate of at least 96% will be achieved annually by each school.
  - III. To realize this desired outcome, the Talbot County Board of Education recognizes the need, under law, to balance and pursue appropriate incentives for good attendance with penalties for truancy. For example, under COMAR 13A.08.01.05B(7) each student should be rewarded for regular attendance. However, under Public School Law 7-301, any person who has legal custody or care and control of a child who is 5 years old or older and under \*16 who fails to see that the child attends school or receives instruction under this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and:
    - a. For a first conviction is subject to a fine not to exceed \$50 per day of unlawful absence or imprisonment not to exceed 10 days, or both; and
    - b. For a second or subsequent conviction is subject to a fine not to exceed \$100 per day of unlawful absence or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, or both.
- \* July 1, 2015 compulsory age for school attendance is 17.  
\* July 1, 2017 compulsory age for school attendance is 18.

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