

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AGES

Except as provided by law, every child in the state is required by state law to attend public or nonpublic school from the child's seventh (7th) birthday until his/her eighteenth (18th) birthday, unless the child graduates prior to his/her eighteenth (18th) birthday. Any child below the age of seven (7) who legally enrolls in school shall also be required to attend school. If a child in these age brackets was a resident of this parish when school opened and enters school late without having attended another public or nonpublic school or approved home study program during the current school session within or without the parish, a statement should be secured from the parents or guardian giving the reasons why the child has not been in school. If these reasons are not satisfactory, the matter should be referred to the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance, who may find it necessary to refer it to the proper court.

Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, the parent or legal guardian of a child who resides in Louisiana and who is age five (5) by September thirtieth of the calendar year in which the school year begins through eighteen (18) shall send the child to a public or nonpublic school, as defined by La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:236, unless the child's parent or legal guardian opted to defer enrollment of his/her child in kindergarten pursuant to La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:151.3(D) or the child graduates from high school prior to his/her eighteenth birthday. A child below the age of five (5) who legally enrolls in school shall also be subject to these provisions.

EXCEPTIONS

Certain exceptions to the compulsory attendance laws are allowed as provided by state law and included in policy *JBD, Student Absences and Excuses*. In addition, statutes provide for the following:

1. The parent, tutor, or other person responsible for the school attendance of a child between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) who is enrolled in school may request that the student be allowed to attend an effective adult education program or a career and technical education program.
2. A child who is at least seventeen (17) years of age and who, after successfully completing a program established by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, has been issued a Louisiana high school equivalency diploma in accordance with criteria established by the Louisiana Board of Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges shall be considered exited from high school and shall not be subject to compulsory attendance laws.
3. Compulsory attendance does not apply to any child who is under the age of seventeen (17) and is attending or seeking admission to a National Guard Youth Challenge Program in Louisiana.

4. Any minor employed to perform or render artistic or creative services shall be exempt from the compulsory school attendance statutes for those days during which the minor is engaged in rendering such services.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to abide by the compulsory school attendance laws of the state may result in a referral to *Families in Need of Services* (FINS) which is a state mandated program or to the District Court with jurisdiction.

Approved: June 3, 2025

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:151.3, 17:221, 17:226, 17:226.1, 17:233; La. Children's Code, Art. 730; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education; Board minutes, 6-3-25.