
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1902 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY D. MILLER, McNEILL, HILL-EVANS, SCHLOSSBERG,
YOUNGBLOOD, ULLMAN, ROEBUCK, CALTAGIRONE, FRANKEL, KIM,
HOWARD, McCLINTON, JOHNSON-HARRELL AND GALLOWAY,
OCTOBER 15, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, OCTOBER 15, 2019

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in pupils and attendance, further
6 providing for definitions and for excuses from attending
7 school.

8 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
9 hereby enacts as follows:

10 Section 1. The definition of "unexcused absence" in section
11 1326 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the
12 Public School Code of 1949, is amended to read:

13 Section 1326. Definitions.--When used in this article, the
14 following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

15 * * *

16 "Unexcused absence" shall mean an absence from school which
17 is not permitted by the provisions of section 1329 and for which
18 an approved explanation has not been submitted within the time
19 period and in the manner prescribed by the governing body. An

1 out-of-school suspension and an absence related to a medical
2 condition that is explained by a valid medical excuse from a
3 licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state,
4 commonwealth or territory may not be considered an unexcused
5 absence.

6 Section 2. Section 1329(a) of the act is amended and the
7 section is amended by adding subsections to read:

8 Section 1329. Excuses from Attending School.--(a) The board
9 of school directors of any school district [may] shall, upon
10 certification by any licensed practitioner of the healing arts
11 or upon any other satisfactory evidence being furnished to it,
12 showing that any child or children are prevented from attending
13 school, or from application to study, on account of any mental,
14 physical, or other urgent reasons, excuse such child or children
15 from attending school as required by the provisions of this
16 act[, but the term "urgent reasons" shall be strictly construed
17 and shall not permit of irregular attendance. In every such
18 case, such action by the board of school directors shall not be
19 final until the approval of the Department of Education has been
20 obtained. Every principal or teacher in any public, private, or
21 other school may, for reasons enumerated above, excuse any child
22 for non-attendance during temporary periods].

23 * * *

24 (a.3) The board of school directors of any school district
25 may excuse a child or children from attending school as required
26 by the provisions of this act for urgent reasons, but the term
27 "urgent reasons" shall be strictly construed and shall not
28 permit irregular attendance. In every such case, such action by
29 the board of school directors shall not be final until the
30 approval of the Department of Education has been obtained.

1 (a.4) Every principal or teacher in a public, private or
2 other school may, for reasons enumerated in subsections (a) and
3 (a.3), excuse a child for nonattendance during temporary
4 periods.

5 * * *

6 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.