





SCHOOL LAW – ATTENDANCE


 The Commonwealth entitles all persons residing in it between the ages of 6 and 21 years to a free and full education in the Commonwealth's public schools. No individual shall deny a student access to a free and full public education because of race, religion, sex, national origin, or physical disability.


 The compulsory attendance law requires parents or guardians of all children between the ages of 8 and 17 to ensure that their children attend an approved educational institution, unless legally excused.


 Compulsory school age refers to the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school as a beginner, which may be no later than at the age of 8 years, until the age of 17 or graduation from a high school, whichever occurs first.


 No individual may admit a child to attend school unless the child received immunizations required by the Department of Health.

- DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis) – 3 doses, a physician must inject one dose after a child turns 4-years-old
- Polio – 3 doses
- Hepatitis B – 3 doses
- MMR (Measles, mumps, rubella) – 3 doses
- Varicella (chicken pox) – either proof of date of disease or vaccine

 Commonwealth law entitles a school-age child to attend the public schools of the child's district of residence. A district of residence is that in which the parents or the guardian resides, or, if the child is an emancipated minor, the district in which the child lives. An emancipated minor is a person below the age of 21 who chose to establish a domicile separate from the continued control and support of parents and guardians.

 Administrators shall keep open, each school year for a minimum of 180 days of instruction for pupils, public kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools.

 A school district may excuse a school age child from compulsory attendance upon recommendation of a school physician, a psychiatrist, or both and with the approval of the Secretary of Education. Parties shall reevaluate the excusal every 3 months.

 Prior to seeking excusal, the school district shall provide the child's parent or guardian with written notice of both the proposed excusal, including the reasons for the excusal, and an opportunity for district representatives to hear the parent or guardian.

Resource: PA Department of Education Website. School District Basic Education Circulars (BECs) Related to Child Accounting. Retrieved June 1, 2005 from http://www.pde.state.pa.us/child_acct/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=95742