

State of Arkansas
94th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2023

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1527

By: Representatives Bentley, Beck, K. Brown, John Carr, C. Cooper, Crawford, Gramlich, Haak, D. Hodges, Ladyman, McAlindon, S. Meeks, R. Scott Richardson, Richmond, Rose, Rye, Vaught, Wing
By: Senator J. Bryant

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CLARIFY THE REQUIREMENT THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS GRANT EXCUSED ABSENCES TO STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN 4-H ACTIVITIES OR PROGRAMS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CLARIFY THE REQUIREMENT THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS GRANT EXCUSED ABSENCES TO STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN 4-H ACTIVITIES OR PROGRAMS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-18-220(b), concerning class absences of students participating in certain activities, is amended to read as follows:

(b) ~~Therefore, it~~ It is the purpose and intent of this section to ~~assure~~ ensure that class absences of students who are participating in ~~sanctioned National FFA Organization, Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Inc., and 4-H activities~~ the following programs are excused to ~~such~~ the extent as may be determined by the established by public school district boards of directors ~~of the respective districts~~, with the participants in the three (3) programs being treated equally with respect to such absences+;

(1) National FFA Organization;

(2) The Arkansas Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Inc.; and



(3)(A) 4-H.

(B) An absence granted to a student due to the student's participation in a 4-H activity or program shall be determined according to subsection (d) of this section.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-18-220, concerning student absences granted for participation in National FFA Organization, The Arkansas Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Inc., and 4-H programs, is amended to add an additional subsection to read as follows:

(d)(1) A student who is absent from the school district in which he or she is enrolled shall be granted an excused absence by the public school district if the reason for the student's absence is to participate in 4-H activities or programs that are scheduled and approved by a county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate authority.

(2) The maximum number of excused absences granted under subdivision (d)(1) of this section shall be established by each public school district board of directors in the public school district's student attendance policy.

(3) A 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the 4-H activity or program shall provide to a public school principal or other designated official upon request documentation as proof of a student's participation in an activity or program scheduled and approved by the 4-H program.

(4) A student who is granted an absence under subdivision (d)(1) of this section shall:

(A) Be given the opportunity to complete any schoolwork that was missed while the student was absent; and

(B) Not have his or her grades adversely affected due to his or her:

(i) Absence from a class due to his or her participation in a 4-H activity or a program; or

(ii) Participation in a 4-H activity or a program.

(5) A public school principal or his or her designee shall not grant a student an excused absence under subdivision (d)(1) of this section if the student's participation in a 4-H activity or a program occurs during a period of time:

(A) Scheduled by the State Board of Education during which statewide student assessments are administered; or

(B) For which the student has been disciplined, suspended, or expelled, if the terms of the discipline, suspension, or expulsion would preclude the student from participating in a school-sponsored educational field trip or extracurricular activity.

APPROVED: 4/4/23