Consequences for Truancy:

1. After five absences:
   a. Excused Absences: The teacher will contact the parent or guardian by telephone or parental conference regarding attendance when possible. If contact is unsuccessful, then a letter or postcard will be sent.
   b. Unexcused Absences: After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child with five unexcused absences without response, the school administrator shall send a notice to such parent, guardian, or other person by certified mail, return receipt requested. The letter is to include a copy of the Compulsory Attendance Law (O.C.G.A. 20-20-690.1)

2. After seven unexcused absences by students 14 years old and older:
   The school administrator/school social worker shall notify students that they have only three unexcused absences remaining prior to violating the attendance requirements. Violating the state's attendance requirement will result in the denial of driver's permits and licenses.

3. After ten absences:
   a. Excused: A letter will be sent from the school administrator to the parent or guardian regarding attendance. This letter should not be sent for a child with a documented illness unless school administration and/or the school social worker determines it as necessary. In addition, the administrator shall confer with a school social worker to determine whether a referral is warranted at this time.
   b. Unexcused: A letter will be sent from the school administrator to the parent or guardian regarding attendance. If the student has more than ten unexcused absences within one semester or two consecutive quarters and is between 14 and 18 years of age, his or her eligibility to obtain or retain a learner's permit or driver's license may be impacted. In addition, the administrator shall confer with a school social worker to determine whether a referral is warranted. Other interventions may include referral to appropriate agencies for follow up (medical, economic, mental health, other) or referral to a system-wide Attendance Panel.

4. After fifteen absences:
   a. Excused: The school administrator shall confer with a school social worker to determine whether a referral is warranted.
   b. Unexcused: A referral shall be made to the school social worker using the social work form.

5. Out-of-School Suspensions/Expulsions:
   Absences due to out-of-school suspensions or expulsions shall not count as unexcused absences for the purpose of determining truancy or for using this checklist. Parents shall be notified of out-of-school suspension or expulsion according to the guidelines of the discipline process.

6. Tardy/Early Check-Out:
   a. After ten occurrences: A letter will be sent from the school administrator to the parent or guardian regarding missed instructional time. This letter should not be sent for a child with a documented illness unless school administration and/or the school social worker determines it as necessary. In addition, the administrator shall confer with a school social worker to determine whether a referral is warranted.
   b. After fifteen occurrences: The school administrator shall confer with a school social worker to determine whether a referral is warranted.

School Social Worker Communication and Referrals:

Upon receipt of a written referral:

1. A letter will be sent from the School Social Work Department to the parent or guardian regarding attendance.
2. The school social worker will assess the student and family circumstances related to poor attendance.
3. Other interventions and strategies may be utilized depending on the circumstances of the case and may include the following:
   a. Consultation with school staff (teacher, counselor, assistant principal, principal, other)
   b. Consultation with student, and parent or guardian
   c. Home visit(s)
   d. Participation in the SST process, Special Education due process, school conferences, and other school-based interventions as necessary
   e. Referral to juvenile court
   f. Referral to the Department of Family & Children Services for educational neglect

4. If you have questions or need further information, contact your local school.
The importance of students attending school regularly, being on time and remaining in school through graduation:

The lack of a high school diploma increases the risk of criminal activity involvement, reduces employment opportunities and lowers earning capacities. All children deserve a quality education to prepare them for the challenges of the world. Young people who do not attend school regularly are more likely to drop out of school and are at a higher risk of becoming involved in behaviors that can cost them their education. School districts lose hundreds of thousands of dollars each year in Federal and State funds that are based on daily attendance figures. Also, local businesses incur the burden of training costs for uneducated workers. Furthermore, taxpayers’ assessments are at higher rates for law enforcement and welfare programs.

**The Definition of Truancy:**

Any child, subject to compulsory attendance, who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences.

**Lawful Excuses:**
- Illness
- Illness in family
- Death
- Religious holiday
- Family emergency
- Hazardous conditions

**Unlawful Excuses:**
- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Sleeping In
- “I do not feel like going to school.”
- Boredom
- Staying home to baby sit, work, or take care of a parent
- Family trips

**Tips For Parents To Improve School Attendance:**

- Make your child’s education a family priority.
- Do not allow your child to stay home from school.
- Know and follow the school district’s attendance policy.
- Make sure your child has a regular bedtime and gets plenty of rest each night.
- Do not enable your child by encouraging or endorsing unexcused absences.
- If your child does not want to attend school, talk to him or her and listen for answers. Solve problems regarding school attendance together.
- If your child refuses to go to school, do not hesitate to ask for help from the school staff.
- Be an advocate for your child.
- Offer praise to your child for school tasks well done.
- Assist your child with homework.
- Get involved in your child’s education.