



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Catherine Truitt, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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TO Superintendents, Charter School Operators, Finance Officers, and Board Attorneys

FROM Catherine Truitt and Allison Schafer

DATE November 8, 2021

LAWFUL STUDENT ABSENCE PURSUANT TO REQUIRED CONTROL MEASURES

We have recently been asked whether schools in certain districts may excuse student absences for isolation or quarantine without an order by a local health director or the State Health Director. We understand there has been some confusion about this issue due, in part, to the language in the State Board of Education's School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual.

We want to assure you that schools are required to comply with control measures, including excluding students from school who meet the criteria to isolate or quarantine. A formal isolation or quarantine order does not have to be issued before this becomes a legal requirement.

Pursuant to that legal requirement, the State Board of Education approved a change to policy ATND-001, Policies, Laws, and Guidelines Governing School Attendance at its November 4, 2021 meeting. This change revises the definition of "Quarantine" to include lawfully excusing student absences when isolation or quarantine are required by control measures as outlined in the StrongSchoolsNC: Public Health Toolkit (K-12).

Thank you for continuing to support our students during this unprecedented time. We appreciate the commitment to best meet our students' educational needs.

Sincerely,

Catherine Truitt
State Superintendent

Allison Schafer
General Counsel

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT

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