



Council for Lifelong Learning  
**School Age/Attendance  
Requirements**

**Fact  
Sheet**

September 2001

<p>1. What is the required age of attendance in Florida?</p>	<p>Children between 6 and 16 years of age must attend school. A child must start school if he or she is six or will be six by February 1 of that school year. A child who becomes 16 is not subject to compulsory school attendance if the child files a formal declaration, signed by the parent or guardian, of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board. A child who attains the age of 18 years is not subject to compulsory school attendance.</p>
<p>2. How can attendance be achieved?</p>	<p>Regular attendance can be achieved through attendance in a public school; parochial, religious, or denominational school; private, home education program; or a private tutoring program. <b>(See the Truancy Fact Sheet.)</b></p>
<p>3. Are there any exceptions for the 6 - 16 age attendance requirement?</p>	<p>There are several exceptions to the 6-16 years attendance requirement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Manatee County school board was required by the 1999 Legislature to implement a pilot project to raise the compulsory age of attendance from 16 to 18. The school board was required to evaluate the adopted policy on school attendance, the school district's dropout rate, and the costs associated with the pilot project. The final attendance data is currently being collected and assessed in order to accurately reflect the effect of the project.</li><li>2. Certificates of exemption are also authorized in certain cases. These certificates are issued by the superintendent and are valid for one year.</li><li>3. Children with disabilities who are three years old are eligible for admission to public special education programs and related services.</li><li>4. If a child moves from another state and does not meet the age requirements for entrance into Florida schools, the student is allowed to enter school according to the rules of the state from which he or she has moved.</li></ol> <p>A parent may request and be granted permission for the absence of a student from school for religious instruction, holidays, according to the school board policy.</p>

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4. What are the age requirements for kindergarten attendance?	Children who attain five years of age on or before September 1 of the school year are eligible for admission to public kindergartens during that school year.
5. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	<p>Section 232.001, F.S. -- Manatee pilot project Section 232.01, F.S. -- School attendance Section 232.02, F.S. -- Regular school attendance Section 232.021, F.S. -- Attendance records and reports Section 232.022, F.S. -- Attendance defined Section 232.0225, F.S. -- Absence for religious instruction or holidays Section 232.06, F.S. -- Certificates of exemption</p> <p>State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.0985, F.A.C. -- Entry into kindergarten and first grade by out-of-state transfer students.</p> <p>State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.09514, F.A.C. -- Excused absences for religious instruction or holidays.</p>
6. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education Division of Public Schools (850) 488-2601</p> <p>Florida Department of Education Division of Public Schools Memorandum 98-131 "Technical Assistance Paper on School Attendance", April 8, 1998</p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives Committee on General Education (850) 414-9780</p>