

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1986

5 By: Representative Nazarenko
6 By: Senator D. Wallace
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT CONCERNING EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR CHILDREN OF
10 FALLEN SERVICE MEMBERS AND CHILDREN OF FALLEN FIRST
11 RESPONDERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

15 CONCERNING EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR CHILDREN
16 OF FALLEN SERVICE MEMBERS AND CHILDREN
17 OF FALLEN FIRST RESPONDERS.
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19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 18, Subchapter 2, is amended
22 to add an additional section to read as follows:

23 6-18-238. Excused absences – Children of fallen service members and
24 children of fallen first responders – Definitions.

25 (a) A student who meets one (1) of the following qualifications shall
26 not be considered absent from his or her public school for the time during
27 which he or she is absent from school due to a mental health concern or to
28 attend an event from a sponsoring organization that provides support to
29 families of fallen service members or first responders or provides support
30 for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency:

31 (1) A student who is a child of a fallen service member; or

32 (2) A student who is a child of a fallen first responder.

33 (b) As used in this section:

34 (1) "Child" means a biological or adopted son, daughter,
35 stepson, or stepdaughter;

36 (2) "First responder" means a firefighter, law enforcement



1 officer, or person employed as an emergency medical provider; and

2 (3) "Public school" means:

3 (A) A public school within a public school district; or

4 (B) An open-enrollment public charter school.

5 (c)(1) In order for a student to receive an excused absence under this
 6 section, the student's parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco
 7 parentis to the student shall provide written documentation that the
 8 student's absence is to attend an event from a sponsoring organization that
 9 provides support to families of fallen service members or first responders or
 10 provides support for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency.

11 (2) A public school may utilize the Resources Page for Military
 12 Family Engagement on the Department of Education website to verify an
 13 organization that provides support to the military and first responder
 14 community.

15 (d) A student who receives an excused absence under this section
 16 shall:

17 (1) Be in good academic standing;

18 (2) Have a prior record of good attendance at his or her school;

19 and

20 (3) Complete and turn in any missed classwork within the time
 21 period required by the school in which the student is enrolled.

22 (e) A student shall not be granted an excused absence under this
 23 section if the absence occurs during a date on which standardized testing is
 24 administered.

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