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**School Excused Absence Amendments**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Carl R. Albrecht**

Senate Sponsor: Michael K. McKell

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**LONG TITLE**

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**General Description:**

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This bill amends a definition related to a student being excused from school.

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**Highlighted Provisions:**

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This bill:

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▸ amends a definition related to a student being excused from school; and

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▸ makes technical and conforming changes.

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**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

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None

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**Other Special Clauses:**

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This bill provides a special effective date.

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**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

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AMENDS:

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**53G-6-201**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 34

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

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Section 1. Section **53G-6-201** is amended to read:

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**53G-6-201 . Definitions.**

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As used in this part:

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(1)(a) "Absence" or "absent" means the failure of a school-age child assigned to a class or class period to attend a class or class period.

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(b) "Absence" or "absent" does not mean multiple tardies used to calculate an absence for the sake of a truancy.

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(2) "Educational neglect" means the same as that term is defined in Section 80-1-102.

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(3)(a) "Home-based microschool" means an individual or association of individuals that:

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(i) registers as a business entity in accordance with state and local laws; and

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- 29 (ii) for compensation, provides kindergarten through grade 12 education services to  
30 16 or fewer students from an individual's residential dwelling, accessory dwelling  
31 unit, or residential property.
- 32 (b) "Home-based microschool" does not include a daycare.
- 33 (4) "Instructor" means an individual who teaches a student as part of a home-based  
34 microschool or micro-education entity.
- 35 (5)(a) "Micro-education entity" means a person or association of persons that:
- 36 (i) registers as a business entity in accordance with state and local laws; and  
37 (ii) for compensation, provides kindergarten through grade 12 education services to  
38 100 students or fewer.
- 39 (b) "Micro-education entity" does not include:
- 40 (i) a daycare;  
41 (ii) a home-based microschool;  
42 (iii) a private school; or  
43 (iv) a school within the public education system.
- 44 (6) "Minor" means an individual who is under 18 years old.
- 45 (7) "Parent" includes:
- 46 (a) a custodial parent of the minor;  
47 (b) a legally appointed guardian of a minor; or  
48 (c) any other person purporting to exercise any authority over the minor which could be  
49 exercised by a person described in Subsection (7)(a) or (b).
- 50 (8) "School day" means the portion of a day that school is in session in which a school-age  
51 child is required to be in school for purposes of receiving instruction.
- 52 (9) "School year" means the period of time designated by a local school board or charter  
53 school governing board as the school year for the school where the school-age child:
- 54 (a) is enrolled; or  
55 (b) should be enrolled, if the school-age child is not enrolled in school.
- 56 (10) "School-age child" means a minor who:
- 57 (a) is at least six years old but younger than 18 years old; and  
58 (b) is not emancipated.
- 59 (11)(a) "Truant" means a condition in which a school-age child, without a valid excuse,  
60 and subject to Subsection (11)(b), is absent for at least:
- 61 (i) half of the school day; or  
62 (ii) if the school-age child is enrolled in a learner verified program, as that term is

- 63 defined by the state board, the relevant amount of time under the LEA's policy  
64 regarding the LEA's continuing enrollment measure as it relates to truancy.
- 65 (b) A school-age child may not be considered truant under this part more than one time  
66 during one day.
- 67 (12) "Truant minor" means a school-age child who:
- 68 (a) is subject to the requirements of Section 53G-6-202 or 53G-6-203; and  
69 (b) is truant.
- 70 (13)(a) "Valid excuse" means:
- 71 (i) an illness, which may be either mental or physical, regardless of whether the  
72 school-age child or parent provides documentation from a medical professional;  
73 (ii) mental or behavioral health of the school-age child;  
74 (iii) a family death;  
75 (iv) an approved school activity;  
76 (v) an absence permitted by a school-age child's:  
77 (A) individualized education program; or  
78 (B) Section 504 accommodation plan;  
79 (vi) competition in a rodeo sanctioned by an international, non-profit organization  
80 dedicated to the development of sportsmanship, horsemanship, and character in  
81 youth through the sport of rodeo;  
82 (vii) any reason a parent provides to justify a student's absence if the student  
83 maintains a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0, including an event  
84 related to participation in the following clubs:  
85 (A) mountain biking;  
86 (B) shooting sports; or  
87 (C) a youth development program Utah State University administers, which  
88 provides educational experiences in areas including agriculture, science,  
89 technology, engineering, mathematics, civic engagement, leadership, and  
90 healthy living through hands-on learning, mentoring, and community-based  
91 clubs or activities;
- 92 [(vii)] (viii) an absence permitted in accordance with Subsection 53G-6-803(5); or  
93 [(viii)] (ix) any other excuse established as valid by a local school board, charter  
94 school governing board, or school district.
- 95 (b) "Valid excuse" does not mean a parent acknowledgment of an absence for a reason  
96 other than a reason described in [~~Subsections (13)(a)(i) through (vii)] Subsections~~

97            (13)(a)(i) through (viii), unless specifically permitted by the local school board,  
98            charter school governing board, or school district under [~~Subsection (13)(a)(viii)~~]  
99            Subsection (13)(a)(ix).

100            Section 2. **Effective Date.**

101            This bill takes effect on July 1, 2026.