

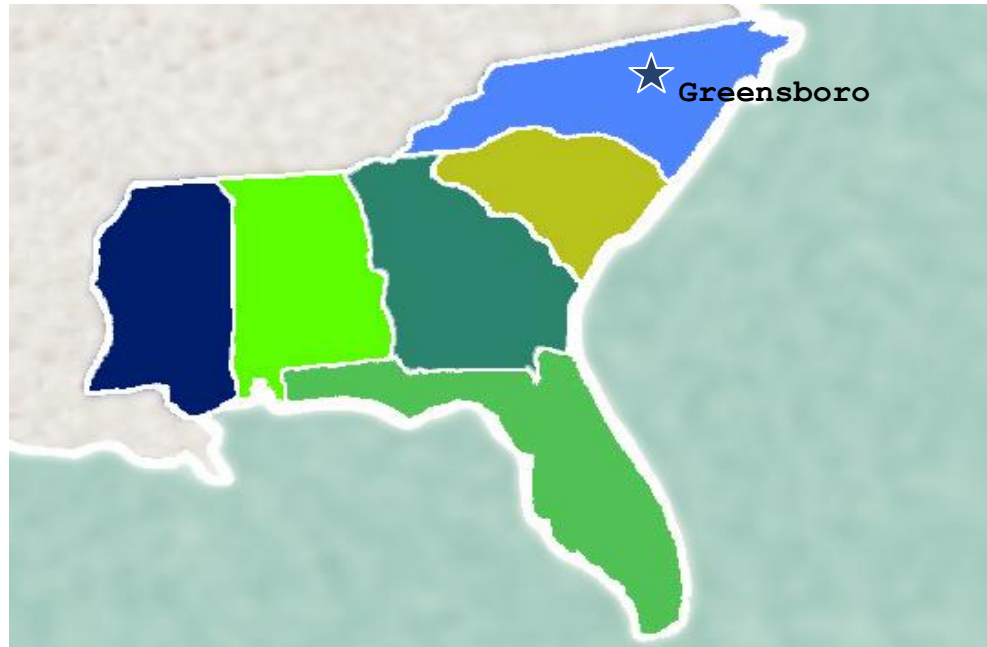
# REGIONAL *EDUCATION* ALL LABORATORY

## SOUTHEAST ~ SERVECenter

### EVIDENCE BASED EDUCATION REQUEST DESK

#### OUR GOAL

To assist educators and policymakers in their efforts to apply the evidence base to decisions about policies, programs, and practices they encounter.



#### REQUEST:

- What is the mandatory age of attendance in each of the states? Specifically we would like to know what is the age at which a student may leave school with or without parental consent, and what if any caveats or requirements are attached to dropping out.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact the REL-SE,  
1-800-755-3277 or [RELSoutheast@serve.org](mailto:RELSoutheast@serve.org)

## RESPONSE

### Methodology

REL-SE staff conducted a Google search using the search terms “mandatory age of attendance” and “compulsory school attendance law.” Staff also searched the websites of the National Center for Education Statistics, Education Commission of the States (ECS), National Conference of State Legislatures, and Council of Chief State School Officers. The table below was compiled primarily from a 2005 National Center for Education Statistics table, updated with a 2009 National Center for Education Statistics table and an April 2009 ECS table.

Table: Compulsory school attendance laws and exemptions, by state<sup>1</sup>

State	Age of required school attendance	Exemptions to upper mandatory age of attendance.	Citation
Alabama	7-16	Legally and regularly employed under child labor law.	<a href="#">ALA. CODE § 16-28-3</a>
Alaska	7-16	No exemptions.	ALASKA STAT. 14.30.010
Arizona	6-16 or completion of grade 10	At least 14 with parental consent and gainfully employed.	<a href="#">ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-802, §15-802-D-2</a>

<sup>1</sup> Sources: National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms. Table 5.1. Compulsory school attendance laws and exemptions, by state: 2005. [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab5\\_1.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab5_1.asp);  
National Center for Education Statistics, Participation in Education. Table A-1-2. Age range for compulsory school attendance and kindergarten programs, by state: Selected years, 2000-2008.  
(<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2009/section1/table-ope-2.asp>);  
Education Commission of the States. (Last Updated April 2009). Attendance: Compulsory School Age Requirements.  
(<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/80/44/8044.pdf>)  
Nebraska Legislature, Nebraska Revised Statute 79-201.  
(<http://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=s7902001000>);  
Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform. A Report by Civic Enterprises.  
([http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/41/df/0f.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/41/df/0f.pdf)); and  
Colorado Department of Education, Adult Education and Family Literacy.  
(<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/GEDindex.htm>).

State	Age of required school attendance	Exemptions to upper mandatory age of attendance.	Citation
Arkansas	5-17	Must complete school year.	<a href="#">ARK. STAT. ANN. § 6-18-201</a>
California	6-18	No exemptions.	CAL. EDUC. CODE § 48200
Colorado	6-17	No exemptions.	COLO. REV. STAT. § 22-33-104
Connecticut	5-18	At least 16 with parental consent.	<a href="#">CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-184</a>
Delaware	5-16	No exemptions.	14 DEL. CODE ANN. §2702
District of Columbia	5-18	No exemptions.	D.C. CODE ANN. § 38-202
Florida	6-16	May terminate beginning at 16 with parental consent. Compulsory school age for all Manatee County students who turned 16 on or after October 1, 1999, is 18, except for students who earned a high school diploma prior to reaching their 18th birthday.	<a href="#">FLA. STAT. § 1003.21</a>
Georgia	6-16	No exemptions.	GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-690.1
Hawaii	6-18	At least 15 if employed.	<a href="#">HAW. REV. STAT. § 302A-1132</a>
Idaho	7-16	No exemptions.	IDAHO CODE § 33-202
Illinois	7-17	Employed and excused by school official.	<a href="#">105 ILL. COMP. STAT. ANN. 5/26-1</a>
Indiana	7-18	An individual is required to stay in school until he or she graduates; is between 16 and 18 and meets the requirements for an exit interview; or reaches at least 18 years of age. Withdrawal before 18 requires parent/guardian's and principal's written permission.	<a href="#">IND. CODE ANN. § 20-33-2-6; § 22-33-2-9(B)</a>

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Iowa	6-16	No exemptions.	IOWA CODE §299.1A
Kansas	7-18	At least 16 with parental consent.	<a href="#">KAN. STAT. ANN. § 72-1111</a>
Kentucky	6-16	No exemptions.	KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 159.010
Louisiana	7-18	“A child between the ages of seventeen and eighteen may withdraw from school prior to graduation if both of the following circumstances exist: (a) The written consent of his parents, tutor, or legal guardian. (b) An exit interview is conducted where the student and his parent, tutor, or legal guardian provide written acknowledgment that withdrawal from school shall likely reduce the student’s future earning potential and increase the student’s likelihood of being unemployed in the future. During such exit interview, a student who is withdrawing from school shall be given information that has been prepared and supplied by the Louisiana Workforce Commission regarding available training and employment opportunity programs, provided such information is available.”	<a href="#">LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:221</a>
Maine	7-17	At least 15 or completed 9th grade.	<a href="#">ME. REV. STAT. ANN. § TIT. 20A, § 3271</a>
Maryland	5-16	No exemptions.	MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 7-301
Massachusetts	6-16	Except a child between fourteen and sixteen who meets the requirements for the completion of the sixth grade of the public school as established by said board and who holds a permit for employment in private domestic service or service on a farm, and is regularly employed thereunder for at least six hours per day; or a child between fourteen and sixteen who meets said requirements	<a href="#">MASS. REGS. CODE TIT. 603, § 8.02</a> MASS. GEN. LAWS ANN. CH. 76 § 1

State	Age of required school attendance	Exemptions to upper mandatory age of attendance.	Citation
		and has the written permission of the superintendent of schools of the town where he resides to engage in non-wage-earning employment at home; or a child over fourteen who holds a permit for employment in a cooperating employment.	
Michigan	6-16	No exemptions.	MICH. STAT. ANN. § 380.1561
Minnesota	7-16	No exemptions.	MINN. STAT. § 120A.22
Mississippi	6-17	No exemptions.	MISS. CODE ANN. § 37-13-91
Missouri	7-16	At least 14 with parental consent and approval from the superintendent and gainfully employed.	<a href="#">MO. REV. STAT. § 167.031</a>
Montana	7-16	At least 16 or completion of 8th grade, whichever is later.	<a href="#">MONT. CODE ANN. § 20-5-102</a>
Nebraska	6-18	At least 16 with parental consent; special legislation for home schooling.	<a href="#">NEB. REV. STAT. ANN. § 79-201</a>
Nevada	7-18	At least 14 and excused by board of trustees; 14 if work is necessary for own or parents' support.	<a href="#">NEV. REV. STAT. ANN. § 392.040</a>
New Hampshire	6-18	The superintendent may grant waivers upon proof that the pupil is 16 years of age or older and has an alternative learning plan for obtaining either a high school diploma or its equivalent.	<a href="#">N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 193.1</a>
New Jersey	6-16	No exemptions.	N.J. REV. STAT. §18A:38-25
New Mexico	5-18	A parent may give written, signed permission for the school-age person to leave school in case of hardship approved by the local superintendent.	<a href="#">N.M. STAT. ANN. § 22-12-2</a>
New York	6-16	Both New York City and Buffalo require minors to attend school from the age of 6 until the age of 17. Each district in the state is au-	<a href="#">N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 3205</a>

State	Age of required school attendance	Exemptions to upper mandatory age of attendance.	Citation
		thorized to require minors between 16 and 17 who are not employed to attend school.	
North Carolina	7-16	No exemptions.	N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-378
North Dakota	7-16	Necessary to support family. A multidisciplinary team that includes the child's school district superintendent, the director of the child's special education unit, the child's classroom teacher, the child's physician, and the child's parent has determined that the child has a disability that renders attendance or participation in a regular or special education program inexpedient or impracticable.	<a href="#">N.D. CENT. CODE § 15.1-20-01</a>
Ohio	6-18	At least 16 with parents' and superintendent's permission.	<a href="#">OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3321.01</a>
Oklahoma	5-18	At least 16 if excused by written joint agreement.	<a href="#">70 OKLA. STAT. TIT. 70, § 10-105</a>
Oregon	7-18	Or excused by district school board; At least 16 with consent of school and parent.	<a href="#">OR. REV. STAT. § 339.010</a>
Pennsylvania	8-17	At least 16 if regularly engaged in employment with a certificate, 15 if in farm work or domestic service in private home with permit, and 14 if completed elementary school with permit recommended by district superintendent of schools or principal of private school.	<a href="#">PA. STAT. ANN. § 13-1327</a>
Rhode Island	6-16	At least 16 with consent of parents and principal, or the withdrawal is: --Due to documented financial hardship and the need of the individual to be employed to support the individual's family or a dependent; --Due to documented illness; --By order of a court that has jurisdiction over the student.	<a href="#">R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-19-1</a> <a href="#">R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-67.1-3</a>

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South Carolina	5-17	A child who has completed the eighth grade and who is determined by the court to be legally and gainfully employed whose employment is further determined by such court to be necessary for the maintenance of his home. At least 16 if further attendance is determined by court to be disruptive, unproductive, or not in best interest of child.	<a href="#">S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-65-10; 59-65-30</a>
South Dakota	6-18	At least 16 or completion of 8th grade if member of certain religious organizations.	<a href="#">S.D. CODIFIED LAWS § 13-27-1</a>
Tennessee	6-17	No exemptions.	TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-3001 (C)(1)
Texas	6-18	No exemptions.	TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 25.085
Utah	6-18	At least 16 and 8th grade completed.	<a href="#">UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-11-101</a>
Vermont	6-16 or completion of grade 10	The superintendent with the consent of a majority of the school board of the town in which the pupil resides, may excuse, in writing, a pupil who has reached the age of fifteen years and has completed the work required in the first six years of the elementary school course from further school attendance if his services are needed for the support of those dependent upon him, or for any other sufficient reason.	<a href="#">VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. § 16-25-1121</a>
Virginia	5-18	Exempt any pupil who is at least 16 years of age, with parents' and principal's consent or superintendent or a court believes the minor cannot benefit from education at school.	<a href="#">VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-254</a>
Washington	8-18	At least 16 if parent agrees, or child is emancipated, or has received certificate of competence.	<a href="#">WASH. REV. CODE § 28A.225.010</a>

State	Age of required school attendance	Exemptions to upper mandatory age of attendance.	Citation
West Virginia	6-16	No exemptions.	W. VA. CODE § 18-8-1
Wisconsin	6-18	No exemptions.	WIS. STAT. § 118.15
Wyoming	7-16 or completion of grade 10	No exemptions.	WYO. STAT. ANN. § 21-4-102





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- Information on large, sponsored research projects
- Information on southeastern state policies and programs

For more information or to make a request, contact:

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