



**ARIZONA STATE SENATE**  
*Fifty-Fifth Legislature, First Regular Session*

FACT SHEET FOR S.B. 1097

pupils; excused absences; mental health

Purpose

Deems an absence caused by a pupil's mental or behavioral health an excused absence.

Background

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) identifies excused absences for the purposes of determining average daily membership (ADM). An absence identified as excused is not counted towards a withdrawal, and therefore, is not subtracted from an ADM calculation ([A.R.S. § 15-901](#)). Currently, ADE defines an excused absence as an absence due to illness, doctor appointment, bereavement, family emergencies and out-of-school suspensions. Excused absences due to out-of-school suspensions must not exceed 10 percent of the instructional days scheduled for the school year. An absence relating to any other term or condition that is not specifically designated is counted as unexcused ([ADE](#)).

School district governing boards and charter school governing bodies must adopt a policy regarding the excuse of pupils from school attendance ([A.R.S. § 15-806](#)). For a qualifying absence to be authorized as excused, the school must be notified in advance or at the time of any absence by the parent or other person who has custody of the student ([A.R.S. § 15-807](#)).

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the state General Fund associated with this legislation.

Provisions

1. Requires ADE to identify an absence caused by a pupil's mental or behavioral health as an excused absence.
2. Allows ADE to adopt guidelines and rules for determining what constitutes an absence caused by a pupil's mental or behavioral health.
3. Makes technical changes.
4. Becomes effective on the general effective date.

Prepared by Senate Research  
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JO/JP/gs