

Student Absences and Excuses

This attendance procedure is designed to provide guidance and procedure for managing and improving student attendance. In addition, it is recognized that other important factors which impact school attendance include the positive relationships that exist between teachers and their students and the ongoing timely involvement of parents. It is the district's intention to encourage all students to have good attendance and to participate in school; however it may become necessary as a last resort to implement steps which may include taking legal action when a student's level of absence becomes chronic.

Elementary school level

Annual incentive programs may recognize and reward those students with annual perfect attendance, exemplary attendance, and improved attendance.

Steps for unexcused absences may include administrative conferences, detention, make-up time, parental contacts, and involvement of district-level prevention/intervention efforts.

Make-up work for excused and unexcused absences, or following a student's suspension, shall be provided for any class unless otherwise determined by the building administrator or unless the absence is due to the student's expulsion from school.

In the case of both excused and unexcused absences, the principal or designee will make a reasonable number of attempts to contact parents/guardians in an effort to address a student's attendance issues.

Secondary level

Annual incentive programs may recognize and reward those students with annual perfect attendance, exemplary attendance and improved attendance.

Steps for unexcused absences may include administrative conferences, detention, suspension, make-up time, parental contacts, and involvement of district-level prevention/intervention efforts.

Make-up work for excused and unexcused absences, or following a student's suspension, shall be provided for any class unless otherwise determined by the building administrator or unless the absence is due to the student's expulsion from school. Credit may be withheld for unexcused absences. Students who are unexcused may make up missed work for 50% credit.

In the case of both excused and unexcused absences, the principal or designee will make a reasonable number of attempts to contact parents/guardians in an effort to address a student's attendance issues.

In addition:

1. At all high schools, 9 unexcused absences in a class within an 18-week period (semester) and/or 6 unexcused absences within a 9-week period (quarter) may result in a loss of credit (NC). Students over 17 may be removed from class if their cumulative average of class work results in a failing grade. Students with chronic absenteeism may be placed on a flexible schedule and referred to an alternative program. Where extenuating circumstances exist, the principal or designee may extend partial/full credit providing that specific conditions established by the school are met.
2. Because students under age 17 must fulfill the requirements of the compulsory attendance law, they will remain in the class regardless of the number of unexcused absences. The minimum number of unexcused absences (days) a student may incur before judicial proceedings may be initiated to enforce compulsory attendance is four (4) unexcused absences (days) in any one month or ten (10) unexcused absences (days) during any school year.
3. In the case of both excused and unexcused absences, the principal or designee will make a reasonable number of attempts to contact parents/guardians in an effort to address a student's attendance issues. As part of this communication, the principal or designee shall notify parents/guardians of any grade reduction and/or loss of credit.
4. All students are expected to make up school work because of absenteeism.
 - a. Students with excused absences will be granted a reasonable amount of time to complete make-up work-generally two days for each day absent.
 - b. Time allowed for make-up work may not extend beyond the end of the grading period except by special permission of the principal or designee.
 - c. Students with prearranged absences must make arrangements prior to the absence for completing make-up work.
 - d. Students with excused absences due to suspension will receive 50% credit at the middle and high school level for all class work missed because a suspension is subject to penalty. Students will be held responsible for knowledge of class work covered during their absence.
 - e. Parents/guardians may request a conference with the building administration to discuss a decision related to the attendance policy. The conference must be requested within one week of notification.

Notification of parents/guardians regarding unexcused absences

The principal or designee will make reasonable efforts to work closely with parents/guardians to identify and resolve student attendance issues. Regardless of grade level, the following actions will be taken if a student's unexcused absences reach the levels identified.

After 3 unexcused days – a general letter of concern will be sent to parents/guardians requesting a conference with school officials.

After 6 unexcused days – a second letter will be sent indicating that the student has violated Board policy regarding the number of unexcused absence days allowed before judicial proceeding may be initiated and requiring a meeting with the parent/guardian.

After 10 unexcused days – a letter including a reference to the state compulsory attendance law and notification that the student's attendance will be monitored for the next 10 days at which time a decision may be made which may include legal action.

In all cases, letters sent to parents/guardians will be addressed to the current address on file with the district.

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