

Required
 Local
 Notice

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Good attendance is a central component of the educational process. The educational program offered by the district is predicated upon student presence and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Through implementation of this policy, the Board expects to reduce the current level of unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures, encourage full attendance by all students, maintain an adequate attendance recordkeeping system, identify patterns of student absences and develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance. To be successful in this endeavor, it is imperative that all members of the school community are aware of this policy, its purpose, procedures and the consequences of noncompliance. To ensure that students, parents, teachers and administrators are notified of and understand this policy, the following procedures shall be implemented:

- The attendance policy will be included in student handbooks and will be reviewed with students at the start of the school year.
- Parents will be asked to review this policy on the school website at the start of the school year. Parents will be asked to verify online that they have read and understand the policy. When a student is absent, tardy, or leaves early from class or school without excuse, designated staff member(s) will notify the student's parent(s) by phone and mail and remind them of the attendance policy, and review intervention procedures with them.
- School newsletters and publications will include periodic reminders of the components of this policy.
- The district will provide a copy of the current attendance policy and any amendments to new faculty and staff.
- Copies of this policy will also be made available to any community member, upon request.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

The student and his/her parent or person in parental relation are responsible for providing written notification within three school days of the reason for such absences upon the student's return to school. The following list represents appropriate reasons for being absent from school or tardy:

1. Personal illness
2. Sickness or death in family
3. Medical appointments
4. Court appearances
5. Religious observance
6. Quarantine
7. Supervised education, supervised project, scheduled athletic event (authorized release form/permission slip constitutes written notification)

8. Approved cooperative work program
9. Military obligation/pre-approved appointments with documentation of recruitment
10. Pre-approved college visits
11. Any other absence excused in the discretion of the Superintendent.

Grounds for Unexcused Absences or Tardiness

Absence for any reason not included in the list set forth above is an unexcused absence. Absences for reasons set forth above, but which a student does not have pre-approval from the district or for which the student does not provide an appropriate note or documentation within three (3) school days of his/her return to school will also be recorded as an unexcused absence. The principal may require a doctor's note for extended absences. Parental requests to excuse their child from school for reasons not included in the above list are unexcused absences under state law. Excuses that a student overslept or had car trouble are also unacceptable and will constitute an unexcused absence or tardy.

Recordkeeping Taking Attendance Elementary buildings (non-departmentalized) – Attendance shall be taken each morning at the beginning of the school day. Each classroom teacher shall record the student's presence or absence in a classroom, and send the record of absent students to the attendance office.

Middle School/High School buildings (departmentalized) – Attendance shall be taken at the beginning of each period of scheduled instruction. Each classroom teacher shall record the student's presence or absence in a classroom, and shall report the absences to the attendance office.

Content/Form of District Attendance Records

The district maintains a permanent record of attendance for all students enrolled in instruction. The attendance record will be prepared by the attendance recorder and maintained electronically or in paper form at the building-level. A district-wide record shall also be compiled by the Superintendent based on the building-level data. The record shall include the following information for each student: name, date of birth, names of parents or person in parental relation, address where student resides, phone numbers where parents or persons in parental relation can be reached, date of enrollment, a record of the student's attendance on each day of scheduled instruction, a record of each scheduled day of instruction during which the school is closed for all or part of the day due to extraordinary circumstances. Entries on the attendance record shall be made only by the attendance recorder designated by the building principal and shall be verified under oath or affirmation. Contacting parents in the event that a student is absent from school without previous notification to the teacher or building principal, the school will call the student's home to confirm the absence. If no parent or person in parental relation is home, the district will contact a parent or person in parental relationship at their place of employment or number listed on the student's emergency contact form. In both situations, if contact is not made with a parent or person in parental relation, a message will be left for the parent or person in parental relation to call the school, and remind them to send a written excuse within three days of the absence.

Attendance Requirements for Rewards, Discipline, and Receipt of Course Credit Rewards

In addition to the likelihood of enhanced educational progress, good attendance will be the basis for student recognition awards. Any student who attends 95% or more of his or her scheduled instructional periods will be eligible for good attendance recognition. Any student who has perfect attendance shall be eligible for perfect attendance recognition. In addition, good attendance will be a positive endorsement factor in any letter of recommendation written by a school employee on behalf of a student.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences

Chronic absences and tardiness, whether excused or unexcused, are disruptive to the educational process and will not be tolerated. Make-up work will be for excused absences, subject to the classroom teacher's discretion. For unexcused absences, make-up work will generally not be offered. Each building within the district will have procedures for the consequences for unexcused absences.

Development of an Attendance Intervention Strategy and Annual Review

Each principal, through a committee of teachers, parents and/or school administrators, will develop an attendance intervention strategy consistent with this policy in the event that regular reviews of the district's attendance record suggests that overall student attendance is declining or should be improved. The Board shall annually review building-level student attendance records and, if such records show a decline in student attendance, the Board shall revise this comprehensive attendance policy and make any revisions to the plan it deems necessary to improve student attendance.

Ref: Education Law §§1709; 3024; 3025; 3202; 3205-3213; 3225 8 NYCRR §§104.1; 175.6

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