

## ATTENDANCE REGULATION

### Generally

School attendance is critical for academic achievement and preparation of students for the world of work. Each parent/guardian, having charge of a child within the compulsory attendance age, shall be responsible for the child's regular and punctual attendance at school as required under provisions of the law. Based upon the state compulsory attendance law, accreditation standards and the sincere belief of the administration that regular student attendance is imperative for proper adjustment and success in school. Student attendance shall be monitored and reported as required by state law and regulations. Attendance by period will be recorded and will be noted on the student's report card each nine weeks.

Parents of students who are absent must inform the school of the reason for the absence no later than upon the student's return to school. Whenever a student fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no information has been received by school personnel that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence, the school principal, principal's designee, attendance office or other school personnel notifies the parent by phone, email, or other electronic means to obtain an explanation. After an accumulation of more than ten (10) days of absence per year, an official verification such as a doctor's note or a court summons shall be required.

### **Tardiness**

Students who are tardy to school are required to present a note that is written by the parent/guardian, doctor, or court official stating the reason for tardiness. After receiving an admit slip the student may report to class.

Elementary Students: Extreme or habitual cases of tardiness may be reported to the division's attendance officer or to appropriate child protection agencies.

Secondary Students: A student is tardy to class if he or she arrives to the class after the tardy bell. Five (5) unexcused tardies will result in one (1) absence. The teacher will record this absence as an "Absence by Tardy." Each time an "Absence by Tardy" occurs, the absence will count toward the total number of absences. If a student arrives to class more than 10 minutes after the tardy bell without an excused note, the student will receive an unexcused tardy AND a discipline referral. Additional tardies beyond five (5) will also result in a discipline referral.

### **Early Departure**

Students will only be permitted to leave the school premise when proper school procedures are followed.

### **Absences**

#### 1. Excused Absences

The following reasons shall be acceptable for absence from class:

- a. Up to ten (10 days), illness of the student as verified by notification from parents,
- b. Medical appointments that cannot be scheduled after school, (All appointments must be verified by a doctor and a student is expected to return to school from early appointments if possible.),
- c. Death in the family,
- d. Court appearances as evidenced by a summons or other verification,
- e. Observance of a religious holiday, and
- f. Other reasons deemed acceptable by the principal.

## 2. Unexcused Absences

Parents are notified on a daily basis about student absences. The following reasons shall be unacceptable for absences from class:

- a. car trouble
- b. missing the bus
- c. personal business
- d. oversleeping
- e. needed at home
- f. working on a job
- g. other reasons deemed unacceptable by the principal

The following actions may be taken for students who are absent for unacceptable reasons or have chronic absenteeism:

- conference with student and parent
- before/after school detention
- in-school disciplinary action
- referral to counselor/Student Assistance Program
- referral to Attendance Officer, School Resource Officer, or Law Enforcement/Court System

## 3. Prearranged Absences

Parents must notify the school if they wish to prearrange an absence and request assignments in advance. Such absences are neither excused nor unexcused and will be counted toward the student's cumulative number of absences.

## 4. Make-up Work Due to Absences

If a student is absent for any reason, he or she will be expected to make up all work. A student, or his or her parent/guardian, may contact the school to obtain work missed. Teachers may also be contacted through the school e-mail system. If the student has not requested work during the absence, it is the student's responsibility to ask teachers for any assignments on the first day he or she returns from the absence. The student will have one (1) day for each day absent to turn in missed assignments. It is at the discretion of the teacher whether an extension of time will be granted. Any work assigned before the student's absence may be required on the first day of his or her return to school (i.e., projects, tests, etc.).

## 5. Absences due to school sanctioned activities

Absences related to school sanctioned activities will not be counted toward the student's cumulative number of absences. However, students will be expected to follow the policy for making up work due to absences.

## 6. Absences Due to Suspension

Absences due to suspension will be counted in the student's attendance record. Students who are suspended from school are to take the initiative to find out what the makeup work will be, during their absence. If the work is ready on the day of the student's return, no grade penalty will occur. If the work is turned in on succeeding days, the work may be penalized for lateness

by a reduction of ten points per day, up to a maximum of five days. It is up to the discretion of the teacher as to how many points will be deducted after five (5) days and also as to the final date tests, projects, or other work will be accepted.

#### 7. Accumulation of Absences

Elementary School: Should a student accumulate more than sixteen (16) absences, the student may be denied promotion to the next grade level, regardless of whether the absences are excused, unexcused or unverified. Letters will be sent home when a student has accumulated four (4) unexcused or unverified absences, and ten (10) absences.

Middle School: Should a student accumulate more than and sixteen (16) absences, the student may be denied credit and/or promotion to the next grade level, regardless of whether the absences are excused, unexcused or unverified. In addition, individual course attendance will be considered in determining retention. Tardies may also factor into accumulated absences. To be counted present, the middle school student must attend 2/3 of a class period; this regulation includes tardiness and leaving class early. Letters will be sent home when a student has accumulated four (4) unexcused or unverified absences, and ten (10) absences.

High School: Should a student accumulate more than eight (8) absences in a course, the student will be denied credit for the course, regardless of whether the absences are excused, unexcused or unverified. Tardies may also factor into accumulated absences. To be counted present, the student must attend 2/3 of a class period; this regulation includes tardiness and leaving class early. Letters will be sent home when a student has accumulated four (4), and six (6) absences in a course.

#### **Parent Notification of Retention or Credit Denial Due to Attendance**

Elementary School: When a student has accumulated more than sixteen (16) absences, the building principal, or designee, will notify the parent/guardian of the possibility of retention and the option to file a waiver.

Middle School: When a student has accumulated more than sixteen (16) absences, the building principal, or designee, will notify the parent/guardian of the possibility of retention or denial of credit and the option to file a waiver.

High School: The building principal or designee will notify the parent of a student who has accumulated more than eight (8) absences and is being denied course credit. They will be provided information on the option to file a waiver.

#### **Waiver Process**

Only those students who have a passing grade in the course may apply for an attendance waiver. The waiver process will be used if a parent requests an elementary or a middle school student be promoted despite being absent more than sixteen (16) days, or the high school student passed the class and requests course credit despite being absent more than eight (8) days. The student's parent or guardian will send a written request for a waiver and any supporting information to the building principal. The supporting information will include doctor's excuses, court excuses, and any other information that may support his or her case. The principal/designee will give this information to the Attendance Waiver Committee.

Each school will have an Attendance Waiver Committee, which will meet to approve or deny Student Waiver Applications. This committee will be made up of (but not limited to) a guidance counselor and at least two teachers other than the student's classroom teacher. The committee's decision will be based on, but not limited to, a review of the current academic, attendance, and discipline records of all of the student's classes, any teacher input, the Student Attendance Waiver Form and any other supporting information submitted by the student.

The Attendance Waiver Committee will submit in writing to the building principal or designee the results of the Attendance Waiver Committee's decision. The building principal or designee will be responsible for notifying the parents and student of the decision of the Attendance Waiver Committee.

### **Appeals**

Should a parent or student wish to appeal the decision of the Attendance Waiver Committee, the appeal must be presented in writing to the building principal. The principal will review the student information and minutes from the Attendance Waiver Committee and any additional information he or she might have. Should the principal uphold the denial from the Attendance Waiver Committee, he or she will notify the parent and student. Should the principal reverse the decision of the Attendance Waiver Committee, he or she must present in writing to the Attendance Waiver Committee the reason(s) for this reversal. The principal will be responsible for notifying the parent(s) and student of his/her decision.

All appeals beyond the principal must be made in writing to the Superintendent/ designee at the School Board Office.

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