

ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is a major component of academic success. Through implementation of this policy, the Board expects to reduce the current level of unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures (referred to in this policy as "ATEDs"), encourage full attendance by all students, maintain an adequate attendance recordkeeping system, identify patterns of student ATEDs 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 non-compliance. 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 receive a plain language summary of this policy by mail at the start of the school year. Parents will be asked to sign and return a statement indicating 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 of the specific ATED, remind them of the attendance policy, and review ATED intervention procedures with them.
- A back-to-school event will be held at the beginning of each school year to explain this policy and stress the parent's responsibility for their ensuring their children's attendance.
- School newsletters and publications will include periodic reminders of the components of this policy.
- Via the Code of Conduct, the district will provide a copy of the attendance policy and any amendments thereto to faculty and staff. New staff will receive a copy of the Code of Conduct upon their employment.
- Principals will brief all faculty and appropriate staff each school year regarding the attendance policy, to clarify individual roles in its implementation.
- Copies of the attendance policy will also be made available to any community member, upon request.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Excused ATEDs are defined as absences, tardiness, and early departures from class or school due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads or weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, or such other reasons as may be approved.

All other ATEDs are considered unexcused absences.

All ATEDs must be accounted for. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office within at least 24 hours of the ATED and to provide a written excuse upon the student's return to school.

General Procedures/Data Collection

- Attendance will be taken during each class period.
- At the conclusion of each class period or school day, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the designated staff member(s) responsible for attendance.
- The nature of an ATED shall be coded on a student's record.
- Student ATED data shall be available to and should be reviewed by the designated school personnel in an expeditious manner.
- Where additional information is received that required corrections to be made to a student's attendance records, such correction will be made immediately. Notice of such a change will be sent to appropriate school personnel subject to applicable confidentiality rules.
- Attendance data will be analyzed periodically to identify patterns or trends in student absences.
- Where consistent with other school practices, teachers and staff shall detain students in the hallways who are absent from a class period without excuse and refer the students to the Building Principal.
- Continuous monitoring will be conducted to identify students who are absent, tardy, or leave class or school early.

Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused ATEDs will result in disciplinary action consistent with the district's code of conduct. Those penalties may include, for example, detention or in-school suspension. Students may also be denied the privilege of participating in or attending extracurricular activities.

In addition, designated staff member(s) will contact the student's parents and the student's guidance counselor. Such staff member(s) shall remind parents of the attendance policy, explain the ramifications of unexcused ATEDs, stress the importance of class attendance and discuss appropriate intervention strategies to correct the situation.

Attendance/Grade Policy

The Board of Education recognizes an important relationship between class and student performance. Consequently, each marking period a student's final grade may be based on classroom participation as well as student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects, etc.

In implementing the policy set forth above, student who are unable to attend school or a class on a given day due to their participation in a school-sponsored activity (i.e., music lessons, field trips), may arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed. This also applies to any student who is absent, tardy or leaves early from school or a class due to illness or any other excused reason.

All students with an excused ATED are expected upon their return to consult with their teachers regarding missed work.

Only those students with excused ATEDs will be given the opportunity to make up a test or other missed work and/or turn in a late assignment for inclusion in their final grade. Make up opportunities must be completed by a date specified by the student's teacher for the class in question.

Annual Review

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

Adoption date: June 9, 2009