

Student Absences and Excuses (Grades 9-12)

As directed by the school board, the following procedures will be used to implement the district's attendance policy.

Definitions

Attendance: A student is considered to be in attendance if he/she is physically present in a class; participating in a district-sponsored or district-approved activity; participating in a class through alternative methods or media as allowed by Board policy; receiving homebound services at another location pursuant to law or by arrangement of the district.

Absence: Any period of time for which the student is not in attendance during the regular school day.

Late: Signing into school after the Eight O'Clock bell. This time does accrue towards total hours of absence, and would be considered unexcused without contact from a parent.

Parent: A parent, guardian, or a person acting as a parent in the absence of the parent or guardian if the student is under 18 years of age. If the student is 18 or otherwise emancipated, the student can serve as their own "parent" for purposes of this procedure.

Tardy: A student who is not in his/her assigned area at the beginning of scheduled class time will be considered Tardy.

Truancy: A student is considered Truant if he/she is absent from class or school without the knowledge and consent of the parents and/or the administration. A student is also considered Truant if he/she leaves school without the consent of the principal or accumulates excessive, unjustifiable absences, even with parental consent.

Attendance Standards

The following absences will be considered excused. **Parents must contact the office by phone or a hand-written note as indicated.**

1. Illness or injury of a student with written excuse from a parent. *In cases where a student's medical condition will cause him/her to exceed the 6 allotted excused absences, a doctor's note will be required.
2. Illness or injury of a member of the student's immediate family when the student's presence is necessary or expected, with written excuse from a parent.
3. Medical appointments, with written appointment confirmation by a medical provider.
4. Funeral, with written excuse from parent. The principal may require evidence of attendance as additional verification.
5. Religious observances, with written excuse from a parent.
6. Other appointments that cannot be scheduled outside attendance hours, such as court appearances, with written excuse from a parent. *The principal may require additional documentation for verification of the absence.
7. Out of school suspension.
8. Visits with a parent or legal guardian who is an active duty member of the military if he/she has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, with permission of the superintendent or designee.

School Sponsored Absences

Absences for school-sponsored activities will not be counted as absences when the student is under the direct supervision of a school staff member (field trips, athletic events, music events, academic competitions, and club/organization events).

Make-up assignments must be completed in advance or at the request of the teacher due to an absence for a school-sponsored activity.

College Visits are not counted as an absence when arranged through the Guidance Office. Students will be expected to make up all assignments from missed classes regardless of whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

Consequences for Violations

All absences not listed above, and any absence for which parent contact is required and is not received, will be considered **unexcused**.

Students will be expected to make up all assignments from missed classes regardless of whether the absence is deemed excused or unexcused. (See Homework Policy)

In all cases of an absence from school, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to contact the high school office. If your student is absent and you have not contacted us, we will attempt to call you before 9:00 am the day of the absence. You have **24 hours** to verify that the absence is excused **by phone or hand written note**.

If a student knows of an extenuating circumstance in advance that will require an absence, he/she should discuss it with the principal so necessary arrangements may be made in advance.

6.6 hours of absence will equal 1 total day.

6 excused absences or any unexcused absence during a semester will be assessed an academic penalty in the form of a grade reduction as follows:

Excused Absence	Grade Reduction	Unexcused Absence	Grade Reduction
6 days=39.6 hours	2%	1 day=6.6 hours	4%
7 days=46.2 hours	4%	2 days=13.2 hours	8%
8 days=52.8 hours	8%	3 days=19.8 hours	16%
9 days=59.4 hours	16%	4 days=26.4 hours	32%
10 days=66 hours	32%	5 days=33 hours	50%

This academic penalty is intended as a deterrent to excessive absences. Academic consequences accumulate more quickly for unexcused absences, because they are avoidable. Penalties are cumulative so that a student with (6) excused absences and (1) unexcused absence would be penalized (6%). Unexcused absences will not count

toward the excused absences total, so a student with (5) excused absences and (1) unexcused absence would only receive the penalty of (4%).

Any student may reduce accrued absences by attending make up study held on Saturday mornings. The student must notify the principal that he/she wishes to make up attendance days. At that time a Saturday make up session will be arranged. The student must meet certain stipulations during that time period in order for that "seat time" to count. An assignment will be given to the student. This assignment must be completed within the time served during a Saturday make up session. The student will be expected to behave in a cooperative manner during this time period, must be in the required classroom at the time stipulated, and remain in attendance the entire session. Make-up sessions do not match the educational value of actual class attendance. With this in mind no student will be allowed to make up more than (5) absences.

The district will contact the Children's Division of Department of Social Services and/or the prosecuting attorney in cases where the district has reasonable suspicion that a student's lack of attendance constitutes educational neglect on the part of the parents or that the parents are in violation of the compulsory attendance law.

Appeal Process

The student has the right to appeal any assigned academic consequences if the student and/or parents believe they can produce evidence that could prove that the penalty should not have been assessed against the student. In such a case an appeals committee would be formed consisting of at least one (1) administrator, one (1) counselor, and two (2) teachers. If the student and/or parents remain unsatisfied with the decision of the committee, the decision may be appealed to the Superintendent for review.