

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- A. **Purpose/Statement of Objectives:** 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. This Board of Education attendance policy has been developed and implemented to ensure the maintenance of an adequate record verifying the attendance of all children at instruction in accordance with Education Law §3205 and §3210 and establishes a mechanism by which the patterns of pupil absence can be examined to develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance.
- B. **Strategies to Be Employed:** The District will employ the following strategies to ensure good attendance of all of its students:
1. Appropriate record-keeping mechanisms to ensure that the attendance of all students is tracked and analyzed.
 2. Specific mechanisms to intervene on the individual student level when a student's attendance record demonstrates a need for improvement.
 3. District-wide program to encourage good attendance and improve the attendance of all District students.

ATTENDANCE POLICY REGULATIONS

I. Excused and Unexcused Absences:

- A. Students are expected to be present and on time at school each scheduled instructional day. However, the District recognizes that student absences from school may occur from time to time, for a variety of reasons. When a student is absent from school, the student’s parent/guardian must notify the building office of the absence. In addition, upon his or her return the student and his or her parents/guardians are responsible for providing the District with written notification of the reason for such absence(s). For absences totaling three (3) consecutive days or less, including absences for medical reasons, documentation may be written and signed by the student’s parent/guardian. Absences for medical reasons totaling more than three (3) consecutive days must be supported by a note from a medical professional. Such a note must be provided within five (5) days of the student’s return to school. Students who are absent from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days as the result of a physical and/or psychological condition may be entitled to Homebound Instruction (See District Policy #4327, Homebound Instruction).

- B. The District shall categorize all absences, tardiness, and early departures as either “excused” or “unexcused.”

- C. The following list represents legal and appropriate bases for being absent from school or tardy:
 - 1. Personal Illness
 - 2. Illness or Death in Family
 - 3. Medical Appointments
 - 4. Court Appearance
 - 5. Religious Observance
 - 6. Quarantine
 - 7. Power Outage
 - 8. Documented Internet Outage (in the case of remote instruction)
 - 9. Approved and Supervised Project Work
 - 10. Approved Cooperative Work Program
 - 11. Impassable Roads
 - 12. Military Obligation
 - 13. Pre-Approved College Visits for Purposes of Possible Admission
 - 14. Exchange Programs
 - 15. School Planned Activities (such as but not limited to Scheduled Music Lessons, Performing Arts Rehearsals and Performances, training sessions for students, guidance appointments, scheduled visits to the health office and visits in time of illnesses, field trips and assemblies, CSE/CST meetings, scheduled assessments, approved athletic trips, approved appointments with administration/counseling or staff, etc.)
 - 16. Approved Appointments with Administration/Counseling Staff/Specialized Services
 - 17. Pre-Approved Driver’s Testing
 - 18. Out-of-School Suspension

19. In-School Suspension

D. **Grounds for Unexcused Absences or Tardiness.** Absence for any reason not included in the list set forth in Section A is an unexcused absence. Absences for reason set forth in Section A for which a student does not have pre-approval from the District or for which the student does not provide an appropriate note or documentation or verbal notice to the main office within three (3) school days of his/her return to school will also be recorded as an unexcused absence. Parents and/or students may appeal extenuating circumstances to the building principal.

Parental requests excusing their child from school for reasons not included above (i.e. to get a haircut, to go shopping, to go on a family trip, or not stating a specific reason) 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.

High School students missing 50% or more of a class due to unexcused tardiness will be considered absent from the class for the day.

II Record Keeping

A. When Attendance will be Taken:

1. Elementary Buildings (non-departmentalized). Attendance shall be taken each morning at the beginning of the school day. Each classroom teacher shall record the students’ presence or absence in a classroom record and shall report all absence or tardiness to the building office.
2. 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 students’ presence or absence in a classroom record and shall report all absence or tardiness to the building office. ***Parents will be notified of class absences through a procedure to be developed at the building level.***

B. 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 teachers and maintained on a building-level basis by the building principal or another employee designated by the Board of Education. A District-wide record shall also be compiled by the Superintendent from the building-level records. The record shall include the following information for each student: name, date of birth, names of parents or persons 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 recorded in conformity with the chart below, 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.

Code	Title	Status	Excused
UA	Unexcused Absence	Absence	No
UT	Unexcused Tardy	Tardiness	No
EA	Excused Absence	Absence	Yes
ET	Excused Tardy	Tardiness	Yes
OS	Out-of-School Suspension	Absence	Yes

	(without tutoring)		
IS	In-school Suspension	Present	Yes
SP	Suspended	Present	Yes
	(Out-of-school with tutoring)		
TR	Truancy	Absence	No
ED	Educational Absence	Absence	Yes
RA	Religious Absence	Absence	Yes
EP	Educational Program	Present	Yes
OT	Other (with explanation)	Absence	No
SC	School Closed	Present	Yes
	(extraordinary circumstance)		
TU	Homebound Instruction	Present	Yes

Entries on the attendance record shall be made by a teacher, the building principal, *or an employee designated by the Board of Education*, and shall be verified as accurate under oath or affirmation.

C. Contacting parents. In the event that a student is absent from school without a previous notification to the teacher or building principal, the school will call the student's home to confirm the student's 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, *and if possible*, a message will be left for the parent or person in parental relation to call the school immediately.

III Student's Attendance Requirements and Receipt of Course Credit:

It is the expectation of the Board that students will be in attendance in all classes of the courses in which they are enrolled as in-person instruction benefits students academically, socially, and emotionally through interactions with peers, teaching staff, and support staff. Consistent attendance in school courses will allow our students to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to be contributing members of society, in an ever-changing world.

Students Enrolled in Grades K-8:

- 1.) At a minimum, after missing ten (10) days of school for any combination of excused and/or unexcused absences, the Building Principal will consider sending a letter and/or by email if known to inform the parent/student noting the number of days missed along with information about the steps the district will take if the student continues to miss additional days.

- 2.) After missing eighteen (18) days of school for any combination of excused and/or unexcused absences, the Building Principal or designee will consider requesting a meeting with the parents/guardians and the student (as appropriate). At the meeting, the Principal or designee and other staff as deemed appropriate by the Principal will review the attendance records with the parents/students and will discuss the implications of missing additional days. At this meeting, the parent/guardian and student will have an opportunity to discuss any information that might be applicable to the situation and/or to address any alleged inaccuracies in the attendance records.

3.) After missing 24 or more days, the Building Principal or designee may choose to take one of the following actions: make a referral to Child Protective Services for educational neglect, submission of *a Person In Need of Supervision (PINS) petition*, or to make recommendations about the involvement of “outside” agencies to work with a family. **Note: Nothing in this policy limits the obligations for school officials to notify Child Protective Services for any reason as provided by law.**

Students Enrolled in Grades 9-12

The Building Principal is responsible on an ongoing basis to monitor the overall attendance patterns within his/her school and to work with the teaching staff to develop strategies which shall address any trends of poor attendance in the Building. The Building Principal, in collaboration with staff, will develop a plan to inform parents/guardians of attendance patterns and the impact that poor attendance can have on a student’s academic progress.

The plan for informing parents of attendance patterns will be outlined in the High School Parent/Student Handbook.

The plan will be reviewed annually by the Superintendent. Any changes made to the plan will be approved by the Superintendent and will be clearly communicated to parents/guardians.

IV Make-up Work

It is the further expectation of the Board that students be given the opportunity to complete, and will complete, any assignments or assessments missed due to absence (whether excused or unexcused). Within a reasonable period of time following a student’s return from an absence, the student’s teacher(s) shall provide the student with missed work to be completed and arrange for an opportunity for the student to take any missed assessment(s).

Requests for work in advance of an unexcused absence may not be honored.

V Good Attendance Incentive Program

Each building will implement an incentive program for attendance. At a minimum, each building will recognize the following categories:

Perfect Attendance

Students who do not miss any school, and who have zero unexcused tardies from school will receive a certificate for Perfect Attendance.

Exemplary Attendance

Students who incur a combination of four or fewer days absent or unexcused tardies from school will receive a certificate for Exemplary Attendance.

Each school is authorized to develop additional “prizes and/or rewards” for perfect or exemplary attendance.

VI Participation in After School or Evening Activities

Students absent from school may not participate in after school or evening activities. This clause does not apply to absences due to a religious observance. Exceptional cases may be appealed to the building Principal. The Principal has the authority to allow participation upon appeal.

VII Policy Review and Assessment:

This policy shall be annually reviewed by the Board of Education annually at the same time that year-end building level attendance records are reviewed. If the attendance records show a decline in attendance, the Board shall revise this policy as is necessary to improve attendance.

Effective Date: September 13, 2022