

## 5100 ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is a major component of academic success. Through implementation of this policy in conjunction with specific school building rules and procedures), 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.

### Notice

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 district's attendance policy and specific school building rules and procedures 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. A standard district written communiqué will be mailed to the parent(s)/guardian(s). During the registration process for students who enter school after the first day of school, parents/guardians will be provided with a copy of the policy summary. This letter will also include the school attendance procedures and intervention strategies the District will employ to reduce ATEDs.

When a student has demonstrated a pattern of unexcused absences, latenesses, or early departures, designated staff member(s) will notify the student's parent(s) of the specific ATED, remind them of the attendance policy, and review ATED intervention procedures with them.

School newsletters and publications will include periodic reminders of the components of the policy.

- The district will provide a copy of the attendance policy and any amendments thereto to faculty and staff. New staff will receive a copy upon their employment. This policy will be included in each school's staff handbooks and disseminated to all staff.

All faculty and staff will meet at the beginning of each school year to review the attendance policy to clarify individual roles in its implementation.

- Copies of this policy will also be made available to any community member, upon request.

### Excused and Unexcused Absences

The following ATEDs will be excused; this list is meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. 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.

Parent/guardian should notify school officials in advance of any absence or lateness, where possible. The student needs to submit a written excuse, signed by a parent/guardian, stating the date(s) of and reason for the absence. Any absence not covered by a written excuse submitted to the child's school shall be deemed an unexcused absence. Any absence or lateness/early departure not provided for on the excused list shall be deemed an unexcused absence.

At the secondary level, class cutting shall be deemed an infraction of the Code of Conduct in the nature of insubordination to the teacher and school administration. The Code prescribes a range of disciplinary interventions to address class cutting.

This policy does not differentiate between legal and illegal absences except as listed below.

Exceptions: Students on home instruction are not considered absent. If a student's schedule is altered administratively, that absence will not count as one of the absences to deny credit. Other absences that will not count toward denial of credit are school operated music lessons, school testing, curriculum-based field trips, participation in athletic and academic competitions, and intervention counseling.

Note that medical and dental appointments are not exceptions to this rule and should be scheduled outside of school hours, unless such absence is specifically excused by the building principal.

Whenever a student exhibits a pattern of unexcused absence, tardiness or early departure, notice will be given to the parent(s)/guardian(s), in writing and/or by telephone communication, and the classroom teacher and/or a guidance counselor shall confer with the student regarding the pattern of unsatisfactory attendance in an effort to remediate the underlying problem. Notice shall also be given to the Building Principal, who may address the matter with the student and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).

In the event that school level interventions have not improved the student's attendance, the Principal may recommend interventions, which may include the filing of a Person In Need of Supervision (PINS) petition in the Family Court and/or contact with the appropriate social services agency to initiate a neglect petition.

#### General Procedures/Data Collection

- Attendance will be taken during each class period at the high school and middle school. At the Middle School, teachers will maintain their class record-keeping relative to attendance. At the elementary

schools, attendance will be taken at the outset of the school day. Students who leave earlier than the end of the school day will be coded as an 'early leave'.

- 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 requires 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 or Assistant Principal.
- Continuous monitoring will be conducted to identify students who are absent, tardy, or leave class or school early.
- The building principal or designee will be ultimately responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy including general procedures and data collection at the building level.

#### CODES

Absent - Excused	A	Absent - Unexcused	I
Late - Excused	LL	Late - Unexcused	IL
College Visit	CV	Doctor's Appointment	DA
Early Dismissal	ED	Educational Testing	TST
Family Trip - Unexcused	FTU	Field Trip	FLD
Home Tutored	HB	In-School Suspension	ISS
Out-of-School Suspension	OSS	Pupil Personnel Services	PPS
Nurse	NUR		

#### Attendance Incentives

The Board recognizes all specific school building level incentive efforts designed to maintain or improve school attendance.

#### Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused ATEDs will result in disciplinary action consistent with the district's code of conduct. Those penalties may include any penalty listed in the Code of Conduct, including but not limited to detention, in-school suspension, parental meetings, and the denial of participation in extracurricular activities or other privileges.

In addition, in the event a student demonstrates a pattern of unexcused ATEDs, 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 (which may include the student not receiving credit for a course or courses), 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 attendance 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.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Consistent with the importance of classroom participation, unexcused ATEDs will affect a student's class participation grade for the marking period.

Intervention strategies will be discussed with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and respective student(s) by appropriate personnel.

At the secondary level, classroom participation is an integral part of student's grade. Therefore, a student will receive credit for a course by maintaining an acceptable academic average and by following all specific school building attendance rules and procedures.

To ensure that parents and students are aware of the implications of the minimum attendance requirement, the teacher or other designated staff member(s) will advise the student and contact the parent(s) as stipulated in school building rules and procedures.

In implementing the policy set forth above, students 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

8 NYCRR §§104. 1; 175. 6

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