

ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education emphasizes raising standards for all students. The Board recognizes that regular school attendance is a major component of academic success. In recent years, the district has made progress in improving student attendance. Through implementation of this policy, the Board expects to reduce the current level of unexcused absences, encourage full attendance by all students, maintain an adequate attendance record-keeping system, identify patterns of student absence 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.

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 cuts class or is absent without excuse, designated staff members will notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and review the attendance procedures with them.

At the back-to-school event, held at the beginning of each school year, parents will be provided an explanation of this policy, stressing the parent's role and responsibility for ensuring their children's attendance.

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.

Individual student attendance is available through the password protected parent portal.

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.

The district will share this policy with local Child Protective Services (CPS) to ensure a common understanding of excused and unexcused ATED's and to work toward identifying and addressing cases of educational neglect.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Excused absences are defined as absences 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, school-sponsored events, or such other reasons as may be approved.

All other absences (e.g., class cuts, undocumented absences and tardiness, unapproved early departures) are considered unexcused absences.

All absences must be accounted for. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school (Elementary: Nurse's Office; Secondary: Attendance Office) on the morning of the absence or tardiness and to provide a written excuse upon the student's return to school. Extended periods of illness will require medical documentation.

General Procedures/Data Collection

Attendance will be taken at the start of each school day.

The time and reason for late arrivals or early departures shall be recorded.

Attendance will be taken during each class period at the Junior High School and Senior High School. At the conclusion of each class period or school day, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the appropriate individual(s) responsible for attendance. The nature of an absence (full day, class cut, early departure, late arrival) shall be coded on a student's record. Student absence/class cut data shall be available on the following school day and should be reviewed by appropriate school personnel.

A permanent record shall be recorded electronically in an attendance database. It will include: the student's name, date of birth, full name(s) of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation, address where student resides, telephone number(s) for contacts, date of the student's enrollment, record of the student's attendance on each day of scheduled instruction, date the student withdraws or is dropped from enrollment (if applicable), and record of school absences.

Where additional information is received during a conference 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.

Attendance data will be analyzed periodically by the Building Principal to identify patterns or trends in student absences.

Continuous monitoring will be conducted to identify students who are cutting class.

Attendance Incentives

The district will design and implement systems to acknowledge a student's efforts to maintain or improve school attendance. For example:

1. Individual recognition of students with perfect attendance on a monthly basis.
2. Monthly recognition of classes/homerooms with the best attendance at each school.
3. Certificates for students maintaining a full year of exemplary attendance.

Disciplinary Consequences

The following disciplinary consequences will be applied for all students:

For the first through sixth class cut or unexcused absence, an appropriate school staff member will counsel the student and contact the student's parents. The student will be assigned one day of in-school suspension for each incident. The student will also be suspended from extra-curricular activities on the day of the in-school suspension.

At the seventh class cut or unexcused absence, a conference with the principal or assistant principal will be scheduled for the student and parent. The student and parent will be counseled regarding the attendance policy and the implications of poor attendance. The student will be assigned a one day out-of-school suspension. The student will also be suspended from extra-curricular activities on the day of the out-of-school suspension.

Students continuing to have class cuts or unexcused absences will receive an out-of-school suspension of one day for each class cut or unexcused absence for the eighth through thirteenth incident. The student will also be suspended from extra-curricular activities on the day of the out-of-school suspension. An appropriate school staff member will counsel the student and contact the student's parents.

A principal's conference with the student and their parent will be scheduled for any student reaching the fourteenth class cut or unexcused absence. The student and parent will be advised that the student will lose course credit if one additional class cut or absence occurs (this meeting will be held at the seventh class cut or unexcused absence if it occurs in a one-half year class). A one day out-of-school suspension will be imposed. Additional days of out-of-school suspension (up to five days), in-school suspension or referral to a Superintendent's Hearing may occur at the discretion of the principal.

Students continuing to have class or unexcused absences will receive an out-of-school suspension of one day for each class cut or unexcused absence for the fifteenth and sixteenth incident. The student will also be suspended from extra-curricular activities on the day of out-of-school suspension. An appropriate school staff member will counsel the student and contact the student's parents.

A principal's conference with the student and their parent will be scheduled for any student reaching the seventeenth class cut or unexcused absence. The student and parent will be advised that the student will lose the privilege of attending summer school for this course if one additional class cut or absence occurs (this meeting will be held at the ninth class cut or unexcused absence if it occurs in a one-half year class). A one day out-of-school suspension will be imposed. Additional days of out-of-school suspension will be imposed. Additional

days of out-of-school suspension (up to five days) or referral to a Superintendent's Hearing may occur at the discretion of the principal.

Students exceeding seventeen class cuts will be referred for out-of-school suspensions of one to five days or a Superintendent's Hearing at the principal's discretion.

The following procedure will be applied for elementary students:

Parents of elementary students will be notified by telephone and/or letter of each unexcused absence. At the fifth, tenth, and fifteenth unexcused absence (and at each increment of ten unexcused absence beyond fifteen) a principal's conference will be scheduled with the parents. At this conference, the parents will be advised of the consequences of excessive absence and methods of improving attendance will be discussed. The principal will request the intervention of the district social worker and/or attendance official at the fifteenth absence (excused or unexcused, in any combination).

Disciplinary sanctions for unexcused absences by elementary students will be addressed in accordance with the district's Code of Conduct. The district's Code of Conduct allows the following range of disciplinary sanctions to be imposed to discourage unexcused student absences, tardiness and early departure:

- Oral warning
- Written warning
- Written or oral notification to parent
- Detention
- Suspension from athletic participation
- Suspension from social or extra-curricular activities
- Suspension from other privileges
- In-school suspension
- Short-term suspension from school (five days or less)
- Long-term suspension from school (more than five days)

In addition, the designated staff member will contact local Child Protective Services (CPS) if they suspect that the child is being educationally neglected. The designated staff member will provide CPS with the information necessary to initiate a report. If other staff members suspect education neglect, they must follow the procedures outlined in Board policy and regulation 5460, Child Abuse in a Domestic Setting, and advise the attendance officer.

Attendance/Grade Policy

The Board of Education recognizes an important relationship between class attendance and student performance. Therefore, each marking period a student's final grade will 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, any absence from class which is not made up shall result in the loss of points from the student's class participation grade for the marking period. Any student who misses a class is expected upon his or her return to consult with his/her teachers regarding missed work. If the absence is excused, the student may earn his or her classroom participation grade by arranging with the teacher to cover the work missed and completing the assignment within the time frame designated by the teacher.

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

At the junior high school and high school level, any student with more than 8 (eight) unexcused absences in a one-half year course or 15 (fifteen) unexcused absences for a full year course will be denied credit for that course.

Secondary students reaching 8 (eight unexcused absences in a one-half year course or 15 (fifteen) unexcused absences in a full year course will be allowed to continue attending the course. If they exceed 9 (nine) unexcused absences in a one-half year course or 18 (eighteen) unexcused absences in a full year class they forfeit the privilege of attending summer school for this subject area.

During summer school, secondary students will be allowed up to three absences – excused or unexcused

before forfeiting credit for the course. Arriving more than 10 minutes late to a summer school class will be counted as $\frac{1}{2}$ of an unexcused absence.

Any elementary or junior high student who exceeds 30 (thirty) absences (in any combination of excused or unexcused absences) must be reviewed by the school's principal to determine if promotion is appropriate. Any high school student who exceeds 30 (thirty) absences (in any combination of excused or unexcused absences) in a course, must be reviewed by the school's principal to determine if course credit is appropriate.

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.

Cross ref: 4710, Grading Systems
5300, Code of Conduct
5460, Child Abuse in a Domestic Setting

Ref: Education Law §§1709; 3024; 3025; 3202; 3205-3213; 3225
8 NYCRR §§104.1; 175.6
Social Service Law §34-a

Replaces former policy JE

Adoption date: 1/11/11