

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 minimize the number 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.

- A plain language summary of this 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 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 assembly will be held at the beginning of each school year with grades 7-12 to explain this policy and stress the student’s responsibility for ensuring their own attendance.
 - School newsletters and publications will include periodic reminders of the components of this 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.
- 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 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 by the appropriate building administrator (including, but not limited to, absences due to circumstances related to homelessness).

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 24 hours of the ATED and to provide a written excuse upon the student's return to school. For homeless students, the homeless liaison will assist the student in providing or obtaining documentation if needed.

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 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.
- Continuous monitoring will be conducted to identify students who are absent, tardy, or leave class or school early. If a pattern of ATED's for an individual student is identified, a designated staff person(s) will follow-up in accordance with this policy.

Attendance Incentives

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

- Monthly lottery drawings to award prizes for perfect attendance. Three prizes will be awarded each month at each grade level. Names of students with perfect attendance will be placed in the drawing by grade and three names will be drawn for the award of prizes each month, subject to parental consent and applicable confidentiality rules.
- An attendance honor roll shall be maintained and published monthly identifying those students with perfect attendance as well as those students whose attendance has improved significantly, subject to parental consent and applicable confidentiality rules.
- At the building and classroom levels, Building Principals and teachers are encouraged to schedule special events (quizzes, game days, debates, etc.) for days of chronically high absenteeism, like Mondays and Fridays.
- At the classroom levels, teachers are encouraged to assign special responsibilities (distribute and collect materials, lead groups, assist the teacher, etc.) to students who may need extra motivation to come to school.

Consequences of Excessive ATED's

A designated staff member(s) will contact the student's parents and the student's guidance counselor in the event that a student's record reveals excessive ATED's, excused and/or unexcused. Excessive ATED's is defined as: nine (9) for a semester class, eighteen (18) for a full year class. Such staff member(s) shall remind parents of the attendance policy, explain the ramifications of excessive ATEDs, stress the importance of class attendance and discuss appropriate intervention strategies to correct the situation.

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 events. However, absences related to homelessness shall not result in negative consequences where the district determines that it would be in the best interest of the student in retaining the student in school.

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 principal.

Attendance/Grade Policy

The Board of Education recognizes an important relationship between class attendance and student performance. Consequently, each marking period a student's

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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.

Attendance Policy - Grades 9 - 12

Absences from class due to religious education, home instruction, school-sponsored programs and athletic field trips, assemblies, approved college visits, music lessons and in-school suspension are not counted in this policy.

Pupils **may not** receive credit for a course if they exceed the number of absences listed below.

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|-------------------------|-------------|
| a. One credit course | 18 absences |
| b. One-half unit course | 9 absences |

Students will have the opportunity to repeat the course (if it is offered) during the following school year or semester. Students who exceed the allowable number of absences will be permitted to remain in the course until conclusion, provided they are not disruptive or insubordinate.

When a student achieves one-third the allowable number of absences (3 for a 1/2-unit course and 6 for a full-unit course), a letter will be sent home alerting parents of the situation. Parents may request an attendance conference with the Superintendent at any time to discuss the attendance policy, causes for the absenteeism, and planning for interventions and solutions. At 6 absences for a 1/2 unit course or 12 absences for a full unit course an Attendance Conference will be held to determine number and the status for all absences from school and/or class(es). At 9 absences for a 1/2-unit course or 18 absences for a full unit course an Attendance Hearing will be held. The Attendance Committee will review the student's attendance to determine if any additional absences will be allowed prior to denial of course credit. The committee will make a recommendation to the Superintendent regarding course credit.

A student who is identified as having a handicapping condition and who has not met the attendance requirements will be referred to the Committee on Special Education and will be provided due process procedures to determine if the handicapping condition is a contributing factor to the student's lack of attendance. Once that determination is made, a decision will be made by the Director of Special Education and the Superintendent of Schools.

Extenuating circumstances will be handled on an individual basis at the discretion of the Superintendent.

This policy shall also apply to CV-TEC programs.

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Attendance Policy - Grades 7 and 8

Since “credits” are not accumulated toward graduation requirements during grades 7 and 8, class attendance is among the qualities that are evaluated at the June promotional meeting of the faculty where promotion from grade 7 to 8 and promotion from grade 8 to 9 is decided, and recommendations for summer school eligibility are made. (See the Promotion Policy)

An attendance notification, as described above, will be scheduled when any grade 7 or 8 student accumulates 6 absences in a full-year course or 3 absences in a half-year course. The attendance conference at 6 absences for a half-year course and 12 for a full year course will familiarize the student and parent(s) with the grade 9 - 12 policy, and it will attempt to resolve the causes for the absenteeism and discuss possible interventions and solutions.

To ensure that parents and students are aware of the implications of this minimum attendance requirement, the teacher or other designated staff member(s) will advise the student and contact the parent(s) by telephone and mail at appropriate intervals prior to the student reaching nine or 18 unexcused ATEDs.

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.

Cross ref: 4710, Grading Systems
5151, Homeless Children
5300, Code of Conduct

5460, Child Abuse in a Domestic Setting

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Ref: 42 USC §11432(g)(1)(I) (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act)
Education Law §§1709; 3024; 3025; 3202; 3205-3213; 3225
8 NYCRR §§104.1; 175.6

Social Service Law §34-a

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