

ATTENDANCE

PHILOSOPHY OF ATTENDANCE

Frequent absences of pupils from regular classroom learning experiences disrupt the continuity of the instructional process. The benefit of regular classroom instruction is lost and cannot be entirely regained, even by extra after-school instruction. Consequently, many pupils who miss school frequently experience great difficulty in achieving the maximum benefits of schooling. Indeed, many pupils in these circumstances are able to achieve only mediocre success in their academic programs. The school cannot teach pupils who are not present.

The entire process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction. Classroom participation in well-planned instructional activities under the tutelage of a competent teacher is vital to this purpose. This is the well-established principle of education which underlies and gives purpose to the requirement of compulsory schooling in this and every other state in the nation. Administrative consideration may be given when extenuating circumstances deem it advisable.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

- A. Students may earn credit for any course as long as they do the required work and meet the attendance requirements.
- B. The attendance office will be open at _____.
- C. Parents are to notify the attendance office when a student is absent by calling _____ and leave a message if no one is available.
- D. If a student is absent and the parent does not notify the attendance office, the student will be counted as truant.
- E. Students who arrive at school after 7:50 a.m. shall sign in at the attendance office.
- F. Students who must leave school during the school day must report to the attendance office, receive administrative approval to leave, and sign out. Parent approval must be received 24 hours in advance of the dismissal or the parent must come in to sign the student out.
- G. When returning to school after an absence, students are to report directly to their classes, except when presenting a medical excuse, in which case they should report to the attendance office.
- H. It is the student's responsibility to make all arrangements with their TEACHERS TO COMPLETE MAKE-UP WORK. Upon returning to school the student must make arrangements for make-up work with the teacher. Students will have two days to make up work for each day's absence, upon their return to school. Students who miss only part of a school day for any reason are required to obtain the day's assignments from their teachers whose classes they missed.

THREE ABSENCE LIMIT

Any student passing the class academically at the time of the attendance violation has the opportunity to earn a passing grade in each class for each six week period in a trimester. If within the six week period a student has four or more unexcused/noncountable absences, he/she will receive an "I" for the six weeks. He/She will then be given the opportunity to make-up the time missed and earn a passing grade, provided all the time is made up. This must be done within the first two weeks of the next grading period. If this occurs during the 2nd six weeks of a term, all time must be made up by the end of a term. If the time and work are not made up within that time frame, the "I" will convert to an "F".

EXCUSED/NONCOUNTABLE ABSENCES

1. Personal illness or injury requiring physician's care and verified in writing by the physician. Verification of a physician's care must be presented within two days of the student's return to school. ****
2. Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. However, medical and dental appointments which must be scheduled during the school day must be verified by a note from the doctor's office and NOT by an appointment card.
3. Absence due to an emergency illness or injury in the family (EX: Mother hospitalized). When an emergency requires a student to be absent, the absence will be excused provided a parent or close relative notifies the school on the day of the absence.
4. Illness in cases where the student is sent home by the school nurse or an administrator will be excused ONLY for the day the student was sent home.
5. Deaths and funerals of immediate family members (immediate defined as father, mother, guardian, grandparents, brother and sister).
6. Approved family trips with parent(s) or guardian is limited to five (5) days per school year. Each day after the limit will be counted as an unexcused/countable absence. Approval may be obtained by submitting the proper form to an administrator prior to the absence.
7. School sponsored events/field trips.
8. Serving as a page for a government agency. (Letter required from agency)
9. Serving on the precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or political party on the date of each general city or town, special and primary election. (Letter required from election board)
10. Military service (National Guard) for not more than 10 school days per year. (Letter from national Guard)
11. Court ordered appointments. (Letter required from the court or legal agency)
12. Religious observations which are not available outside school hours. (Letter required from the church)

13. College visitations will be limited to three (3) per year. Seniors who are applying for college admission must make arrangements in advance for approval. No college visits will be allowed after May 1st.
14. OSS/ISS

*** In case of serious or catastrophic illness, arrangements can be made for school work to continue.

UNEXCUSED/COUNTABLE ABSENCES

An UNEXCUSED ABSENCE/COUNTABLE is any absence not listed under the Excused/Noncountable Absence category.

ATTENDANCE AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students must be in attendance at least 3 class periods on the day of an extra-curricular activity to be eligible to participate in or attend that activity.

DEFINITION OF TRUANT

A student may be considered truant when they are not in their assigned area at any time during the school day. Truancies accumulate per 6 weeks toward failure for the trimester.

1. A student tardy to class more than ten (10) minutes will be marked absent and considered truant. A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in their assigned seat when the bell rings.
2. A student who is habitually truant involving the use of his/her vehicle will lose parking privileges for 30 days on the 1st offense, and on the 2nd offense a student will lose parking privileges for one trimester.
3. Students who leave class before the dismissal bell will be considered truant.
4. Students located in the hallways without a pass will be considered truant.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE PROGRAM

Students are required to attend school and follow all school policies and rules. Students, who are habitually truant, will be referred to the city and county courts through the Juvenile Court and the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. The focus will be on attendance issues with students in K-12. These agencies may be called to meet with parents in order to eliminate truancies and excessive absenteeism when the school's efforts alone are not successful.

TARDINESS

Tardiness occurs when students are late to class after the bell has sounded to commence classes. Discipline for unexcused tardiness after students have been informed of the classroom rules will be handled by the individual teacher through assigning of extra work, detention or other appropriate disciplinary measures.

- A. When a student arrives after the class has been in session for ten (10) or more minutes he/she shall be given an unexcused absence for that class period and will be considered truant, unless that person has a valid pass.
- B. Any student tardy to school must sign in through the attendance office.
- C. When a student is tardy to his/her first period of the day, he/she **MUST HAVE AN ADMIT PASS FROM THE ATTENDANCE OFFICE**. All other students who are tardy during the day are to report directly to their teacher.
- D. Students shall be warned by the teacher on their first and second tardies per trimester with appropriate penalties assigned.

Attendance Requirement for the Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver

Students who do not pass both sections of the Graduation Qualifying Exam will be eligible for a waiver during the third term of their senior year if they have met the state requirements for the waiver. The state recognizes that regular attendance in school is essential to mastery of the standards tested on the Graduation Qualifying Exam. Therefore, one of the state requirements for the Graduation Qualifying Exam waiver is 95% attendance (only 9 or less days of absence from school per year) during a student's four years of high school. Students who do not meet this attendance requirement will not be granted a waiver even if all the other requirements are met.