

Instruction

Attendance - High School (Grades 9-12) Course Credit

In order to gain credit for high school courses, there are specific attendance requirements. Success earned in any course shall reflect student daily participation and attendance as well as fulfillment of other academic requirements as established by the teacher.

Definitions:

1. An absence occurs when a student is not present in class, or when arrival to class is 15 minutes or more after the bell has rung signaling the start of a class period.
2. "Excused absence" or "waived absence" is an absence from a regularly scheduled school day which, as determined by the building principal (or his/her designee), is for:
 - a. Reasons of health, including extended illness, incapacity, or doctor's visits. The administration reserves the right to require physician or other appropriate certification for health-related absences.
 - b. Religious holidays.
 - c. Funeral or death in the family.
 - d. Court appearance.
 - e. Documented college visits
 - f. Approved school activities, including field trips and sporting events.
 - g. Suspension or expulsion.
 - h. Failure of Region #10 to provide transportation
 - i. In limited circumstances, special activities or emergencies with the consent of the parent or other person having control of the child.
 - j. An extraordinary circumstance with the approval of the appropriate administrator.
 - k. Up to ten absences will be considered excused for students to visit with parents or legal guardians who are active members of the armed forces and have been called to duty for, are on leave from or have immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The Board of Education may grant additional excused absences for such purposes.
3. "Unexcused absence" or "un-waived absence" – any absence including a brief illness which does not fall under the definition of an excused absence.

The following are the limits for un-waived or unexcused absences in high school classes:

- Full year course loss of credit at 8th absence
- Half year course loss of credit at 4th absence
- Quarter year course loss of credit at 2nd absence
- Wellness /P.E. loss of credit at 2nd absence

If credit is denied due to unexcused/un-waived absences, a passing grade in the course will not meet the distribution requirement, i.e. 4 years of English, 1 year of American History, for graduation.

Class cuts:

A cut is an "unexcused" absence from class, and will result in disciplinary action. No make-up privileges will be allowed for students who cut class. Any absence from class that is 15 minutes or more in duration is considered to be a class cut. Three class cuts will result in a loss of credit. Students are expected to make all appointments after school hours.

Instruction

Attendance - High School (Grades 9-12) Course Credit (cont.)

Tardiness:

If a student accumulated three lates to a class, either excused or unexcused, of any amount under 15 minutes, they will count as an absence from class.

Early Dismissal:

If a student is dismissed early due to illness occurring during the school day, he or she must see the nurse first; if the situation is one for which the nurse is obligated to dismiss the student (e.g., infectious conditions), the nurse must contact the student's parent or guardian to inform them of the situation and to arrange for the student to be picked up. The student must follow the required sign-out procedure in the main office. This type of dismissal is a waived absence.

If the situation is not one for which the nurse is obligated to dismiss the student, the nurse must contact the student's parent or guardian to authorize the dismissal. When the decision to dismiss the student is made by the student and parent or guardian, the student must follow the required sign-out procedure in the main office. This type of dismissal may not be a waived absence.

Parents or guardians must notify the administration if a student is to leave the school grounds. Students must sign out in the log located in the main office, and they must indicate their time of departure. Any early dismissal resulting in a student's missing 15 minutes or more of a class will be considered an absence.

Early Dismissal for Work-related Reasons:

It is possible for eleventh and twelfth grade students to qualify for early dismissal from study halls only for work related reasons as a part of their participation in a cooperative work experience program.

Truancy:

Truancy is absence from school without the consent of the parents or guardians.

Truancy referral to the court is appropriate only when the school has exhausted all administrative and social service remedies and has reasonable cause to believe that the absenteeism constitutes truancy. In addition, referrals must provide documentation of at least four days of unwaived absences in one month or 10 days during the current school year to meet the definition of truancy, or 20 days during the current school year to meet the definition of habitual truancy (see Regional School District #10 Policy and Regulations 5115 and 5115A)

Loss of Credit Policy

Notification Procedure:

The school administration will notify the student's parents or guardians by mail when the student's number of absences in a class has reached the intervals cited on the following page. Notification concerning loss of course credit will also be sent to the student's parents or guardians via mail.

Instruction

Attendance - High School (Grades 9-12) Course Credit (cont.)

For **full year courses** when the student has accumulated 4 unexcused/un-waived absences, with the final notification of loss of credit at 8 unexcused/un-waived absences.

For **half year courses** when the student has accumulated 2 unexcused/un-waived absences, with the final notification of loss of credit at 4 unexcused/un-waived absences.

For **quarter year courses** when the student has accumulated 1 unexcused/un-waived absence, with the final notification of loss of credit at 2 unexcused/un-waived absences.

Attendance Review Process:

Parents, guardians, and students have the right to appeal a loss of credit decision to the Attendance Appeals Committee and to attend a hearing during which the decision will be examined. An appeal must be requested to the principal, in writing, within five school days of receipt of the loss of credit notification. The parents, guardians, or students must include a statement explaining why credit should be restored. The initiation of the appeal process is the responsibility of the parents, guardians, or student.

Near the end of the fall and the spring semester, the Attendance Appeals Committee will convene to review the attendance file of each student who had been notified of a loss course credit and requested an appeal. The purpose of this review is to determine whether any of the lost credits might be able to be reinstated. The Attendance Appeal Committee appointed by the principal will rule upon the appeal request. The members of this committee will be the assistant principal, a group of teachers, and the school nurse. The parents, guardians, or students will be notified of the date and time of the school committee's deliberation and may attend.

The committee will examine the nursing and phone logs as well as written notifications that were received from parent or guardians indicating reasons for the student's absences. Using the documentation in the file, the committee will determine whether reinstatement of course credit is reasonable. Whenever credit is reinstated, the administration will inform the student's parents or guardians by mail. If credit is denied due to absences, a passing grade in the course will NOT meet the distribution requirement, i.e., 4 years of English, 1 year of American History, for graduation.

The principal may review the appeal committee's notes, and given important considerations, may overturn the committee's decision.

Instruction

Attendance and High School (Grades 9-12) Course Credit (cont.)

Implementation of the Attendance Policy

If the parents, guardians, or students choose not to appeal or if the appeal is denied, the parents, guardians, or students should contact the student's guidance counselor to determine a plan for making up lost credits.

It is recognized that this policy may require minor modification in order to ensure the achievement of its objectives. It is also recognized that specific action by the Board of Education to each such modification is impractical. Therefore, the Superintendent of Schools is authorized by the Board of Education to make such modification to the policy, provided that all such actions are promptly called to the attention of the entire Board of Education and that such actions are consistent with the underlying purposes and objectives of the policy.

Administrative Procedures and Responsibilities for Attendance at the high school

Procedures for Apprising the School of a Student's Absence:

When a student is absent from school for any reason, the parents or guardians must notify the school. A parent or guardian must call the school's Attendance Secretary – 860 673-0423 extension 1, before 9:30 a.m. on the day of the absence.

A student whose absence has been verified with the parent by telephone with the appropriate secretary will still present a note explaining the reason for the absence and follow readmit procedures. Notes will be accepted only if they contain a telephone number at which the parent or guardian can be reached for verification. Absences not verified by a phone call or note will be considered as class cut, and students will have forfeited the right to make up missed work.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- report to class on time;
- obtain a pass to be admitted to any class after the bell has rung;
- follow the procedure for absences from class for religious holidays, death in the family, participation on field trips, interscholastic athletic events, and disciplinary suspensions.
- obtain a note from his/her parent/guardian explaining the absence

It is the parents/guardians' responsibility to:

- call the appropriate school office to indicate that a child will be absent. Notify the school within 48 hours when there is an absence, in order to avoid the legal ramifications of truancy;

Instruction

Attendance and High School (Grades 9-12) Course Credit (cont.)

Implementation of the Attendance Policy

- provide a written note the next school day, explaining the absence
- schedule appointments after school hours;
- limit vacations to scheduled school vacations;
- stress the importance of regular school attendance with their children;
- have their children complete all missed work;
- contact the Assistant Principal to initiate a review of the student's absence.

Attendance and High School (Grades 9-12) Course Credit (cont.)

It is the teacher's responsibility to:

- keep accurate class attendance records;
- notify the office of student tardiness, cuts, and absences;
- provide a schedule of assignments and make-up work, when appropriate;
- provide a reasonable length of time for assignment completion.

It is the guidance counselor's responsibility to:

- counsel student concerning absences and tardiness;
- explain ramification of loss of credit;
- call the parents/guardians and inquire about a meeting to discuss the absences.

It is the administration's responsibility to:

- keep accurate attendance records.
- mail notification to the family of students whose absences accrue to the numbers specified in the policy.
- send notification of loss of credit by mail to the family of students whose absences reach the numbers specified in the policy.
- convene an appeals committee, comprised of teachers and the nurse, and the Assistant Principal, to review the files of each student who wants to appeal the lost course credit. This committee will meet near the end of the fall and spring semesters.
- mail notification to the family of students whose course credit has been reinstated by the review committee.
- inform the guidance office in cases when the course credit has been reinstated.

Instruction

Attendance and High School (Grades 9-12) Course Credit (cont.)

Implementation of the Attendance Policy

The following procedure will be in effect for students who are absent from classes for any of the identified waived absences. The student will:

- report to the teacher(s) prior to the absence, when possible, to discuss work and submit homework; further, students will be responsible for work due the day following the absence;
- be responsible for all work missed during the class;
- make arrangements in advance, when possible, to make up quizzes or missed tests.