

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

In order for the board of education to fulfill its responsibility for providing a thorough and efficient education for each student, the complete cooperation of parents and students is required to maintain a high level of school attendance.

Regular attendance at school is an indicator of responsible student behavior. Prolonged or repeated absences from school or from class deprive the student of the classroom activities deemed essential to learning and may result in failure to meet academic requirements and loss of credit toward the high school diploma. Any student who is absent from any given class more than thirteen times will be subject to administrative review and/or committee review. An intervention program, intended to improve attendance, will be implemented for students who accumulate more than thirteen absences. This program may include disciplinary action or removal from class and loss of credit.

#### A. Daily Notification by Parents/Guardians

Parents are responsible for notifying the school early in the day when a student will be absent and for informing the school of the reason for the absence. Such notification is necessary to ensure the safety of students; it does not replace or limit the responsibility of parents to maintain records and documentation of absences in the event that such becomes necessary for an administrative or committee review.

#### B. Notification by School Personnel

With the exception of long term illnesses requiring home instruction, all absences will accumulate, regardless of their nature. After seven, a school official will notify the parent in writing.

#### C. Administrative Review of Absences

##### After Seven Cumulative Absences

If, after notification of seven absences, the parent believes that certain absences qualify as excused, s/he may schedule an appointment with the principal (or designee) to provide documentation of same. The principal may reduce the cumulative absences for the following reasons only based on this documentation.

1. Subpoenaed or court ordered attendance
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Religious observance of a day recognized by the commissioner of education
4. Quarantine

Cases which indicate the need for educational intervention may be referred at this time to the review committee or other appropriate school personnel.

##### After Thirteen Cumulative Absences - (Seven for Semester Courses)

This same procedure will be repeated after thirteen absences from any given class (seven for semester courses). At this time, the principal may also consider and excuse absences due to illnesses when such illnesses are (1) documented as necessary by a family physician, (2) validated by the school physician, and (3) the cause of more than half of the thirteen absences (seven or more). Cases in which the thirteen absences remain unexcused will be referred to the review committee which will hold a hearing with the student and the parent/guardian to determine the appropriate response.

#### E. Review Committee

A review committee will be appointed by the principal and consist of representative staff, including pupil service personnel and classroom teachers. The purpose of the committee is to conduct hearings with students and their parents when absences accumulate to more than 13 in any given year. (Three for quarter courses such as Health). After the committee considers the reasons for excessive absences, they will recommend to the principal whether or not to grant additional excusal to any given absence(s).

When the review committee recommends such excusals, they shall consider the nature and causes of all absences. Documentation of the nature and causes of these absences shall be the responsibility of the student and parent.

This committee shall recommend appropriate modification to the program of any student who does not qualify for excusals. In doing so, the committee shall consider the rights of students with educational disabilities and the responsibility of the school to provide an appropriate educational experience for students.

F. Modification to Program Due to Excessive Absenteeism

Students who regularly and intentionally absent themselves from class(s) for inappropriate reasons and fail to demonstrate academic achievement and/or effort in any given course may lose the privilege to complete a course. Removal for this reason shall result in a grade of withdrawn failing. The withdrawn/failure option will be applied only when failure for the course is imminent based on teacher report of student progress.

In situations where academic achievement are proven, but unexcused absences exceed 13, the review committee may require alternative efforts from students to correct excessive absenteeism. Possible responses may include alternative class sessions/ assignments, school or community service; in-school suspension; or attendance during off-school hours, including Saturdays, for counseling/tutoring. Failure of the student to successfully complete the corrective plan will result in removal from the class and/or a failing grade for the course(s).

G. School Authorized Trips and Activities

Missed class(es) due to school sponsored trips and activities are not considered as absences for purposes of this policy. Students who miss class under these circumstances are responsible for making up work and for informing teachers of the reason for missing class.

H. Missed Time

Except for school authorized trips and activities, missing more than 15 minutes of a class period counts as an absence from class.

I. Truancy/Cutting of Class

The same procedures will apply to students who accumulate three or more absences due to truancy and/or individual class cuts. All students who illegally absent themselves from three classes will be granted a hearing before the review committee which may recommend the sanction of withdrawn failing or other appropriate responses.

The board will report to appropriate authorities infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of 16. Repeated infractions by enrolled students over the age of 16 may result in suspension or expulsion.

It is the policy of the board to consider the effectiveness and appropriateness of the educational program for those students who habitually and repeatedly absent themselves from their assigned classes and to refer such cases to the child study team for review.

Students who are truant or cut a class lose the privilege of making up tests or other class work given on the day of the illegal absence.

**Policy Revised: September 13, 1999**

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

Parents of students who are absent for illness or any of the above reasons should phone the attendance office by 9:00 a.m. the day of the absence. In addition, the student upon his/her return to school should bring in an absence note. It is the parents' responsibility to see that a student meets the legal attendance requirements. Generally, it is true that good attendance goes hand-in-hand with good academic achievement.

**Students must be in attendance at least four instructional hours in order to participate in school sponsored activities.**

**Students arriving to school after 8:00 a.m. will be marked absent for the 1st period.**

College visitations must be verified on college letterhead stationary. Absences due to college visitations will count towards the total number of absences allowed.

Adult students, 18 years of age or older, must still get parental permission as related to school matters, unless they are legally emancipated.

### **Tardiness to School:**

Students are expected to be in school on time. Students who are late to school must report to the attendance office to sign in. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. A record of tardiness will be maintained on a marking period basis, and action will be taken as described below:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1st – 3rd offense | - Reprimand                                 |
| 4th - 5th offense | - Administrative detention                  |
| 6th –7th offense  | - Saturday detention with parental contact. |
| 8th – 9th offense | - In-school suspension on assigned date.    |
- No participation in after-school activities will be permitted.**

**In addition, seniors with chronic tardiness problems may lose their parking privileges.**

### **Procedure for Early Dismissal**

- Signed note from parent/guardian must be submitted to the office at the beginning of the school day.
- The note must include parent/guardian telephone number for verification.
- The student must fill out a Late Entry/Early Dismissal card.
- The student must sign out at the attendance office at time of dismissal.
- Failure to produce a note will mean that the student will not be excused early unless a parent/guardian comes into the office to sign out the student in person.
- Any student who leaves school without following this process may face disciplinary action.
- If a student fails to comply with the above, the student will be considered truant.

Names of students excused early will appear on the daily absentee list. At dismissal time, the student must sign out in the attendance office.

**Class Attendance:** Students must attend all classes unless excused by the administration or teacher of the class to which an individual is assigned. No teacher may excuse a student from another teacher's class. Students are not to be in the Counseling Office unless excused by the classroom teacher.

At times some students claim to be legally absent from school but come into the building to get books and assignments, visit a friend, work in the library on a term paper, etc. If you are in the building, you are to attend all scheduled classes and study halls unless excused by the administration.

## **RELEASED TIME PROGRAM**

### **LATE ENTRY**

Juniors and seniors who are scheduled for a study hall during periods 1, 2, 3 or 4 when that study hall is the first session of the day may report to school by 8:25 a.m.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

Juniors and seniors who are scheduled for a study hall during periods 5, 6, 7 or 8 when that study hall is the last session of the day may sign out of school. Students must report to their study hall supervisor and sign out before leaving campus. Before leaving campus, students must report daily to their designated attendance area for sign-out.

Once you have signed out, you may not return to campus during regular school hours. If you fail to abide by the rules of this program, we will be forced to withdraw this privilege.

### **STUDY/ACTIVITY TIME**

Students are required to report to the cafeteria for attendance at the beginning of the day before 8:25 a.m. Following attendance, students may sign out to the library, lobby (grades 11 and 12) or counseling areas. Ninth and tenth grade students are allowed to sign out to the library. Movement outside these areas requires a written pass.

#### Cafeteria/Study:

- students are responsible for cleaning their tables and the adjacent floor area
- there is to be no sitting on the tables or on the floor
- no food, trays, cans, plates or utensils are to be taken out of the cafeteria
- no card/game playing
- 9th graders will be assigned seats

#### Library/Resource Centers:

- a quiet atmosphere is maintained to permit serious study
- plan to go to the library to use library materials
- students who use the library for reasons other than this will be asked to leave
- extra help is available from teachers on department duty

#### Lobby:

- discussion groups with talk at a low conversational level
- read, study and prepare homework
- students may not sit on the tables or on the floor

**Failure to abide by the rules or to maintain appropriate behavior in the aforementioned areas may result in disciplinary action.**