

STUDENTS

Series 500

Policy Title: Truancy – Unexcused Absences Regulation

Code No. 501.10R1

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I. General Attendance Policy

A. Absences

1. Parents are expected to notify the school prior to 9:00 am regarding a student's absence on the day of the absence. All absences must be reported by 1:00 pm of the day of the absence to be considered excused.
Students absent from school for any reason may be required by the school to submit a written explanation or specific reason for their absence, the specific days of times they were absent, verification by the doctor or dentist where appropriate and a signature of the parent.
2. Acceptable reasons for a student's absence from school are limited to the following:
 1. Religious observances;
 2. Extended illness, hospitalization or doctor's care;
 3. Death in the family or family emergency; and
 4. Court appearance or other legal situation beyond the control of the family.
3. Classes missed because of attendance at a school-sponsored trip or activity will not be considered an absence. However, the student will be required to make up missed work.
4. Suspensions from class will be treated as school-initiated student absences and will not count toward the days absent. However, the student will be required to make up work missed.
5. When an absence is planned, make-up work shall be finished before the absence occurs. The office and teachers shall be notified at least five (5) days prior to a scheduled absence. Teachers will provide the student with make-up work at least three (3) days prior to the absence. Some activities cannot be made up prior to the absence, such as a lab, speech, etc.
6. School work missed because of absences must be made up within two times the number of days absent, not to exceed 10 days. The time allowed for make-up work may be extended at the discretion of the classroom teacher.
7. Students are to report to the office prior to going to a class if arriving to school late for a partial day. Students should report to the office prior to leaving the building for ANY reason. Students will not be allowed to leave the building without parent permission by telephone, written note, or in person.

B. Tardiness

1. A student is tardy when the student initially appears in the assigned area any time after the designated starting time.
2. If the student is tardy, he or she must report to the office prior to attending class to avoid being counted absent for the day.
3. All incidents of class tardiness will be the responsibility of the teacher. Teachers will emphasize the importance of being on time and explain the classroom rules and procedures for tardiness. The tardy sanctions should be consistently applied and sequential. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to warning, assigned detention,

parent contact and referral to the liaison officer and principal.

C. Truancy

1. A student is truant when the student is absent from school or an assigned class or classes without school permission.
2. Work missed because of truancy must be made up the same as work for all other absences.
3. Incidents of truancy will be recorded as part of a student's attendance record and will count toward the absences per semester. The principal will also determine what, if any disciplinary action is appropriate including, but not limited to, warning, detention, in-school suspension or administrative referral.

II. Excessive Absenteeism

Excessive absenteeism is any absence beyond ten (10) days or individual class meetings per semester.

- A. When a student has been absent from school or a class five (5) times during a given semester, the student's parent will be contacted via telephone or mail regarding the student's attendance by the liaison officer.
- B. When a student has been absent from school/class ten (10) times during a semester, the principal and the liaison officer will inform the county attorney of the student's status. The principal will notify the student and parent of the excessive absences and schedule a meeting with the parents. Sanctions may be initiated.
- C. Any instructional time lost beyond 10 days missed, will be required to be made up on the student's time, outside of the regular school day.
- D. If the student reaches 15 days absent, the County Attorney will be involved with mediation.

III. Application of Sanctions

Excessive absences will result in the following:

1. If a student is absent 20 days from any given class, a truancy council meeting will be held to determine credit eligibility or loss.
2. If a student is absent 25 days in a semester, the district's truancy council will meet with the student and the parent(s) to develop an alternative learning plan.

IV. Appeals

A. First Level of Appeal

1. When notified that the student has missed (5) days, the parent should contact the liaison officer and/or principal to discuss the student's attendance and prevent any further absences.
2. When notified that the student has exceeded 20 absences and that the student may be ineligible for credit, the student and parent may file a written appeal with the principal within five(5) days of the notification. Sanctions imposed under this policy will be final unless a written appeal is submitted to the principal.
3. Written appeals will be referred to the principal.
4. The student will remain in the class or in the school pending completion of the appeals process.
5. The informal appeals hearing will be scheduled within five (5) school days after the appeal is filed. The principal will consider the following in reaching a decision;

- a. Absences caused by religious holidays, documented chronic or extended illness, hospitalization, family death or emergency, emergency medical or dental care, court appearances or other legal situations beyond the control of the family, school-related class or program activities:
 - b. Attendance history of the student
 - c. Extenuating circumstances particular to the student;
 - d. Educational alternatives to removal from class or school; or
 - e. The total educational program for the individual student.
6. The decision of the principal will be reached within one day of the hearing. The parent will be notified of the decisions in writing.

B. Second Level of Appeal

Students and parents seeking a review of the principal's decision regarding sanctions rendered under this attendance policy may do so by filing a written request for review with the superintendent within five (5) days after the principal's decision. The superintendent will determine an agreeable time, place and date for the review and notify the student and parent. At the conclusion of the review, the superintendent will affirm, reverse or modify the principal's decision.

C. Appeal to Board of Directors

Students and parents may appeal the superintendent's decision by filing a written request for review by the board within five (5) days with the board secretary. It is within the discretion of the board to determine whether to hear the appeal. If the appeal is accepted, the board secretary will determine an agreeable time, place and date for the review and notify the interested persons. At the conclusion of the review, the board may affirm, reverse or modify the superintendent's decision.

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