

Attendance Update Fall 2011

Absence from school restricts and inhibits the ability of the student to successfully complete the prescribed curriculum requirements. It also violates New Jersey State Statutes requiring students to regularly attend school (18A-38:25-26).

“Every parent, guardian or other persons having custody and control of a child between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) years shall cause such child regularly to attend the public school of the district or a day school in which there is given instruction equivalent to that provided in the public schools for children of similar grades and attainments or to receive instruction elsewhere than a school.”

“Such regular attendance shall be during the days and hours that the public schools are in session in the school district, unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the Board of Education that the condition of the child is such as to prevent his/her attendance at school, but nothing herein shall be construed as permitting the temporary or permanent exclusion from school by the Board of Education of any district of any child between the ages of five and twenty, except as explicitly otherwise provided by the law.”

The Board of Education will not condone nor permit absences from school for any reason not specified in the law and will not issue course credit if the student attendance requirement is not met.

Long term or chronic illness will be considered individually by the Administration with the submission of an extended medical excuse and release form. The request will be approved and confirmed by the School Medical Officer. These forms are available in the Attendance Office. These forms must be updated and approved at the beginning of each semester or after 10 days absent, tardy, or early dismissal.

Absence Verification: School attendance is a basic responsibility of the student and parent. The student who avoids responsibility for learning by absenting himself/herself from school/class is clearly impeding and complicating the teaching-learning process.

Parents will be notified of the student’s absences at the fourth (4), seventh (7), tenth (10), and thirteenth (13).

Note: Whenever a student misses more than 20 minutes of a class period, it constitutes an absence from class. Class cuts are unexcused absences.

Excused Absences: Professional notes (doctor, dentist, lawyer, etc.) if accepted by the Administration will be counted as excused absences. All notes should be original copies and/or directly faxed from the professional office. Please be advised that notes will be validated at the request of the Administration. **All professional notes must be submitted within five (5) school days after returning (including the day of return) and the notes must be acceptable to the Administration. Professional notes received after the five days must be accompanied by a written appeal to the Assistant Principal for Instruction stating reasons for the delay.**

Religious Holidays as prescribed by the NJDOE are excused with a written parental note.

Unexcused Absences are those that are not verified with a professional note. Parents who do not send their child to school for minor illnesses, family obligations, personal problems, etc., do not need to send a parental note. **These are unexcused absences.** Students are allowed six (6) unexcused absences in a semester course and twelve (12) unexcused absences in a full year course. In addition, three (3) unexcused lates to a class equals one unexcused absence. Whenever a student misses more than twenty (20) minutes of a class, it constitutes an absence from class. Class cuts are considered unexcused absences.

College Visits: Seniors and Juniors are permitted to go on college visitations during the school day. **For these days to be excused absences, the student must complete a college visitation form and submit to the Guidance Office at least three (3) days prior to the visit.** Upon return to school, the student must provide **written verification on school letterhead** of their campus visit within (5) school days to the Attendance Office. If there are any questions regarding this policy, please see your guidance counselor.

Late Arrivals: Students arriving late to school after 7:45 AM need to sign in at the attendance office or with school security. Students with excuse notes need to sign in at the Attendance Office to have the notes approved. All late arrivals without a validated excuse note will be marked unexcused absent in all classes prior to arrival.

Early Dismissal: A student needing an early dismissal from school is to present an early dismissal note, signed by his/her parent or guardian, to the Attendance Office, **PRIOR TO HOMEROOM.** All early dismissal requests must be validated by a parent or guardian. All students must be picked up by an adult (18 years or older), immediate relative, or an adult designated on the Emergency Card that is submitted by the parent/guardian at the beginning of the school year.

Students who leave school unexcused may not return to participate in after school activities.

NOTE: Out of School Suspension will be an Excused Absence.

Absence for any other reason not listed here must be excused by the Administration or the absence will be considered truancy and disciplinary action will be taken. Appeals to any section of this regulation may be made directly to the Principal. Any days missed due to vacations taken during other than Board Approved vacation periods will count toward the six (6) or twelve (12) days. Family vacations are not considered excused absences.

Loss of Course Credit: Students missing over six (6) unexcused school days/periods of a semester course, or over twelve (12) days of a full year course, will not qualify to receive the assigned credit for the course unless they can present a professional note (i.e., doctor, dentist, lawyer, etc.) within five (5) school days or written substantiation of religious holidays as prescribed by state law as an excused absence.

Appeal Process: Students who lose credit due to attendance may appeal the loss of credit to the Assistant Principal of Instruction in writing, detailing specific facts as to why credit should not be withheld and provide any relevant back up documentation.