

Attendance in school and participation in class are an integral part of academic achievement and the teaching-learning process. Regular attendance develops patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory: the State of North Carolina (*G.S. 115C-378*) requires that every child in the State between the ages of seven (or younger if enrolled) and 16 years attend school. Parents or legal guardians have the responsibility for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily.

A. ATTENDANCE RECORDS

School officials will keep an accurate record of attendance, including accurate attendance records in each class. Attendance records will be used to enforce the Compulsory Attendance Law of North Carolina.

B. EXCUSED ABSENCES

When a student must miss school, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be presented to the teacher on the day returning after an absence. An absence may be excused for the following reasons:

1. personal illness or injury which makes the student physically unable to attend school;
2. isolation ordered by the State Board of Health;
3. death in the immediate family;
4. a medical or dental appointment
5. participation under subpoena as a witness in a court or administrative proceeding;
6. observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent(s) with prior approval by the principal; or
7. participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel, with prior approval by the principal.

Extended illnesses generally require a statement from a physician.

In the case of excused absences and out of school suspensions, the student will be permitted to make up his or her work. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

C. SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES

All classroom activities are important and difficult, if not impossible, to replace if missed. It is the intention of the board of education that classes missed be kept to an absolute minimum through close scrutiny and a monitoring system on the part of the principal. The following school-related activities will not be counted as absences from either class or school:

1. field trips sponsored by the school;
2. school-initiated and scheduled activities;
3. athletic events requiring early dismissal from school; or
4. in-school suspension.

Assignments missed for these reasons will be completed by students. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

D. ATTENDANCE IN GRADES K-5

In order for a student to be considered for promotion to the next grade level, an elementary student should be in attendance for a minimum of 164 days. Absences exceeding 16 per school year may result in retention. Extenuating circumstances shall be considered by the principal.

When total absences (excused and unexcused) exceed 8 days per semester, further documentation will be required (doctor's statement, court documentation, etc.). Absences not documented will be referred to the appropriate authorities.

Since students are expected to be in attendance and to participate in instruction throughout the school day, excessive tardies and early checkouts will be referred to the appropriate authorities and may also result in retention.

The superintendent or designee will develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy.

E. ATTENDANCE IN GRADES 6-8

In order for a student to receive credit for a course, a middle school student must be in attendance for 168 days per year-long course, 84 days per semester course, or 42 days per quarter course. All students will be given the opportunity to make up missed time on an hour for hour basis beginning with the first absence. The superintendent or designee will develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy.

F. ATTENDANCE IN GRADES 9-12

In order for a student to receive credit for a course, a student must be in attendance 84 class periods per semester. All students will be given the opportunity to make up missed time on an hour for hour basis beginning with the first absence. The superintendent or designee will develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy.

G. EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process and may be taken into account in assessing academic achievement.

The principal will notify parents and take all other steps required by G.S. 115C-378 for excessive absences. When a student has accumulated ten (10) unexcused absences, the principal will conduct an investigation to determine if the parent or guardian has made a good faith effort to comply with the law. Dependent upon the outcome of the investigation, the principal may notify the District Attorney and the Director of Social Services.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -84, -288(a), -378 to -383

Cross References:

Adopted: June 28, 2000

Revised: April 28, 2004

Revised: December 14, 2004