

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY
August 2008

Purpose:

To establish procedures and guidelines for implementing the High school Attendance Policy to be utilized by parents, students and school and district staff.

Procedures:

1. General

- A. All questions relating to the attendance policy are to be directed to the school. The concerned party should contact the school's attendance office for clarification first and then, if not satisfied, the school principal.
- B. Each of the schools will document attempts to notify parents of each absence. However, failure to successfully notify parents/guardians shall not negate the attendance policy.
- C. Students will be allowed to make work up provided that the absence is excused. However, an unexcused absence will result in the student not being allowed to make up work for that class.

2. Tardies

- A. A student who arrives unexcused to class after the scheduled beginning time will be recorded as tardy for that class.
- B. A student more than ten minutes unexcused tardy to class is to be marked "unexcused absent" for that class.
- C. Consequences for an unexcused tardy in a class may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1) First tardy: verbal or written warning.
 - 2) Second tardy: in-school detention, detention during lunch or after school.
 - 3) Third tardy: in-school suspension, Saturday school, or as determined by the principal.
 - 4) Fourth and subsequent tardies will be marked as "unexcused absent" and parent will be notified and notification documented.
- D. The attendance scan sheet, signed, by the teacher, and the teacher's gradebook will be the final authority in determining the number of tardies for each student. However, it is the right of the school principal to excuse any student from any consequence arising from recorded tardies.

3. Absences

A. Students are to sign in/out when missing a class for excusable appointments or emergencies and are to comply with the individual school procedures established with the school's attendance office. Failure to sign out may result in an unexcused absence and the consequences thereof.

B. Excused Absence

Excused absences will be given for the following reasons:

- Religious instruction and/or religious holidays.
- Sickness, injury or other medical condition.
- Other academic classes or programs.
- School leave – school approved trips such as instructional field trips, club events, athletics, etc.
- Educational trips – when requested by parents, trips for educational purposes may be granted.
- Pre-approved absences – absences from school approved by the administration prior to occurrence.
- Funerals
- Legal reason (documentation must be provided).

Students must bring a written excuse to explain their absence. A parent note within reason with an excuse will be accepted for any three absences during a nine (9) week period. Any other absences will only be excused with a note from a doctor, dentist, funeral program of an immediate family member, or documentation for a legal reason. Students must turn in excuse notes to the office within five (5) days after an absence. Excuse notes brought in after five (5) days will not be accepted.

C. Unexcused Absence

Students shall receive a zero for all work missed and will not be allowed the privilege to makeup work. All unexcused absences in excess of three (3) will require an attendance conference with the parent/guardian and student in order for the absences to be designated as excused/unexcused. A parent/guardian must request an attendance conference within five (5) calendar days of the student's return to school, after all unexcused absences in excess of three (3). When a student has four (4) or more unexcused absences in a class during a nine (9) week grading period, that student will receive a grade of no more than F/59 and will be referred to Truancy Court.

If a student has received a 59/F as a result of unexcused absences, the student's attendance will be checked the following 9 weeks. If the student has no unexcused absences or tardies, the preceding 59/F will be forgiven and replaced with the appropriate grade earned for that 9 weeks of that school year.

D. The attendance edit sheet, signed by the teacher, and the teacher's grade book will be the final authority in determining the number of absences for each student.

4. Attendance Conference

A. In order to appeal an unexcused absence, the student and parent must request a hearing, at the school.

B. The Child Study Team will hear and rule on the appeal.

C. The principal may overrule the findings of the Child Study Team should special circumstances occur or excuse any student from any consequence arising from recorded absences.

5. Non-compliance with Attendance Requirements for Students Under Sixteen Years of Age

A. Contact – Upon each unexcused absence, or absence for a period or day for which the reason is not known, the principal or his or her designee shall contact the student's parent.

B. Refer – If the student exhibits a pattern of nonattendance, that is a student who has 5 absences (excused or unexcused) in a rolling 30 day cycle calendar period or 10 in a rolling 90 day cycle calendar period, the principal shall refer the parent and student to the Child Study Team. If the initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the child study team shall implement intervention that best addresses the problems. These may include, but not be limited to:

1. frequent communication between the teacher and the family
2. changes in the learning environment
3. mentoring
4. student counseling
5. tutoring, including peer tutoring
6. placement into different classes
7. evaluation for alternative education programs
8. attendance contracts
9. referral to other agencies for family services
10. other interventions, including, but not limited to a truancy petition pursuant to s.984.151

The Child Study Team shall work diligently in facilitating the intervention services, however, if a parent or child refuses to attend the CST meeting, the child and parent will be referred to truancy court.

C. Enforcement

1. If the Child Study Team efforts are unsuccessful in resolving the truancy/absence programs, the Superintendent shall institute a criminal prosecution against the student/parent once the student becomes habitually truant under state law.
2. The Superintendent, or his designee may file a truancy petition, notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, refer to Truancy Court or refer to Children and Family Services for reduction in cash assistance.