

The State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of 7 (or younger if enrolled) and 16 attend school. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily. Students, parents, and school personnel are encouraged to recognize their individual responsibilities governing the attendance of children in school.

For a student to be considered present for an academic day, they must be in attendance for at least ½ of the operational day. For example, with a regularly scheduled elementary day of 8 am to 3 pm sign-in to start the day after 11:30 or a check-out prior to 11:30 would not constitute a full day of attendance and shall be documented as an absence.

### **A. Attendance Records**

School officials shall keep accurate records 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 student's teacher on the day the student returns after an absence. Absences due to extended illnesses may also require a statement from a physician. An absence may be excused for any of the following reasons:

1. personal illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school;
2. isolation ordered by the State Board of Health;
3. death in the immediate family;
4. medical or dental appointment;
5. participation under subpoena as a witness in a court proceeding;
6. observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent or legal guardian;
7. participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a legislative or Governor's page, with prior approval from the principal;
8. visitation with the student's parent or legal guardian if the student is not identified as at risk of academic failure because of unexcused absences and the student's parent or legal guardian (a) is an active duty member of the uniformed services, and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting.
9. inclement weather restricts the safe travel for a student from their home when the school conducts an instructional day.

In the case of excused absences, short-term out-of-school suspensions, and absences under G.S. 130A-440 (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school) the student will be permitted to make up his or her work 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. Tardy and Check-out Procedure**

A tardy is defined as:

- In Grades K-8 a student that is not present in their assigned classroom at the start of the school day.
- In grades 9-12 a student that is not present at the beginning of each class.

A tardy is determined to be excused or unexcused by applying the same guidelines as defined in Section B above. For attendance purposes 3 tardies will be the equivalent of 1 absence.

### **D. Remote Instruction Exception**

Certain medical situations will require that a student learn remotely. When this occurs, student attendance will fall under Policy 4405: *Remote Attendance Policy*.

For a student to be eligible for attendance under Policy 4405, one of the following must apply:

- a. The student is not allowed on campus for more than 3 days due to an illness or exposure as determined by the SRCA school nurse
- b. A guardian of the student provides a waiver signed by a Nurse Practitioner (NP), Physician Assistant (PA), or Physician (MD) stating that the student is unable to function in a public setting due to the fragility of themselves or a domiciled family member

### **E. School-Related Activities**

All classroom activities are important and difficult, if not impossible, to replace if missed. Principals shall ensure that classes missed by students due to school-related activities are kept to an absolute minimum. The following school-related activities will not be counted as absences from either class or school:

1. field work sponsored by the school;
2. school-initiated and -scheduled activities;
3. athletic events that require early dismissal from school;
4. in-school suspensions.

Assignments missed for these reasons are eligible for makeup by the student. 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.

## **F. Excessive Absences**

Class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process and may be taken into account in assessing academic achievement. Students are expected to be at school on time and to be present at the scheduled starting time for each class.

The Head of School or designee shall notify parents and take all other steps required by G.S. 115C-378 for excessive absences.

If a student is absent from school for five or more days in a semester, the Head of School or a committee established by the Head of School shall consider whether the student's grades should be reduced because of the absences. The Head of School or committee shall review other measures of academic achievement, the circumstances of the absences, the number of absences, and the extent to which the student completed missed work. A committee may recommend to the Head of School who may make any of the following determinations:

1. The student will not receive a passing grade for the semester;
2. the student's grade will be reduced;
3. the student will receive the grade otherwise earned; or
4. the student will be given additional time to complete the missed work before a determination of the appropriate grade is made.

Students with excused absences due to documented chronic health problems are exempt from this policy. In addition, for students experiencing homelessness, school officials must consider issues related to the student's homelessness, such as a change of caregivers or nighttime residence, before taking disciplinary action or imposing other barriers to school attendance based on excessive absences or tardies.

Excessive absences may impact eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics

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