

STUDENTS

5113(a)

Attendance/Excuses/Dismissal

Attendance

Connecticut state law requires parents to cause their children, ages five to sixteen inclusive (to eighteen inclusive as of July 1, 2001) to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Parents or persons having guardianship of a child five years of age have the option of not sending the child to school until ages six or seven with a written statement signed by the parent or guardian and personally presented to the building principal. Mandatory attendance terminates upon graduation or withdrawal with written parental/guardian consent at ages sixteen or seventeen, effective July 1, 2001.

Classroom learning experiences are the basis for public school education. Time lost from class is lost instructional opportunity. The Board of Education requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child, and students should not be absent from school without parental knowledge and consent.

Cumulative absences greater than 25 in any school year, in Grades PreK-8, whether excused or unexcused, may result in the student being retained in that grade.

Tardiness to Class or School:

Students are required to be in their classes at the sound of the bell. Students arriving to class or school after the bell will be recorded as tardy. Any unexcused tardy of 10 minutes or more in grades 9-12 will constitute the equivalent of one unexcused absence. Thus, students should be on time if they wish to help ensure high school credit. In grades PreK-8, three unexcused tardies will constitute an unexcused absence.

Excuses

Excused Absences for Grades K-8

An absence shall be considered “excused” when a child does not attend school due to the following:

1. Illness or injury.
2. Death in the immediate family.
3. Religious obligation.
4. Emergency or other exceptional circumstances.

Written excuse for such absences should be submitted to school officials by the child's parent or guardian.

Unexcused Absences for Grades K-8

Unexcused absences will be defined as absences included the following but not limited to:

1. Vacations during school time.
2. All other absences, with or without written explanation, shall be considered unexcused.

Students who plan to be absent for reasons other than those listed above, should seek approval by presenting a note from home to the Principal. Responsibility for completion of missed class work lies with the student, not the teacher. Unless a student has an extended illness, all make-up work will be completed within five days after the student returns to school.

Dismissal

No school, grade, or class may be dismissed before the regularly scheduled dismissal time without the approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

No teacher may permit any individual student to leave school prior to the regular hour of dismissal without the permission of the Principal or his/her designee.

No student may be permitted to leave school at any time other than at regular dismissal without the approval of the student's parent/guardian. If a court official with legal permission to take custody of a child, or if a police officer arrests a student, the parent/guardian should be notified of these situations by the administration.

Dismissal before the normal end of the school day must be requested in writing. Students who become ill during the school day may be excused by the school nurse, and transportation home will be arranged by school personnel.

High School Credit (Grades 9-12)

It has been well demonstrated that regular attendance is a key factor in the academic success of a high school student. Thus, any absence from school represents an educational loss to the student. This policy is designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing high school students an opportunity to make up school-work missed due to absences that reasonable can be considered to be unavoidable.

A. Excused Absences for High School students will be defined as absences limited to the following:

Participation in school sanctioned activities with permission by the appropriate classroom teacher(s) and or administrator.

Medical reasons which are verified by a physician, dentist, etc. Written verification is required upon the student's return to school.

Funeral/death in the family.

Religious holidays/obligations.

Legal obligations, e.g., court appearances, probation appointments.

Verified college visitations and career observation experiences

In-house assignment such as in school suspension, mandatory tutoring etc.

Out of school suspension.

Other exceptional circumstances authorized by the school administration.

B. Unexcused Absences for High School students will be defined as absences included in the following but not limited to:

Absences without written verification from a physician, dentists, or court.

Failure to provide documentation for a college or career visitation.

Vacations during school time.

Cutting a class.

Truancy.

Out of school suspension (When student and/or parent has refused alternative such as "loss of privileges" or Saturday Detention.)

Any absence not listed above as authorized or approved by the Principal of his/her designee.

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards issued quarterly.

Attendance and Loss of Credit for High School Students – Grades 9-12

Those students who exceed established limits for certain types of absences from school or class will have credit withheld. If a student exceeds the established limits and loses credit toward graduation, only the credit toward graduation will be withheld; students will remain in their scheduled course(s). The grades earned by the student will be recorded on his/her permanent record along with the associated quality points for determining class rank. Parents and students will receive written notification that credit is being withheld. The student will have an opportunity to appeal the loss of credit to an APPEALS COMMITTEE of the school.

Circumstances Resulting in Loss of Credit for High School Students – Grades 9-12

- A. Credit loss will occur when a student accumulates ten (10) unauthorized absences in a full credit course, five (5) unauthorized absences in a half credit course.
- B. Credit loss will occur upon the third cut in a full year class and the second cut in a semester credit class. (Credit will be withheld only in those courses the student has cut.)

Written notification of possible credit loss will be sent to parents/guardians when students have accumulated one class cut in a semester course or two class cuts in a full year course.

Should unauthorized absences and/or class cuts exceed the limits specified above for permanent credit loss, both the student and the parent/guardian will be notified of the credit withdrawal. At that time, the parent/guardian and/or the student may elect to seek restoration of credit through the Appeals Committee.

Procedures Regarding Class Cutting - High School Students – Grades 9-12

Because the school takes seriously its responsibility to care and account for students who are in school, cutting class must result in serious consequences.

The following will be in effect for class cuts:

- A. Teachers will report all class cuts to the administration. Administration shall assign appropriate discipline and parents will be notified appropriately.

- B. If a student leaves school grounds without the permission of school personnel, all classes missed will be considered a cut.

Appeal Procedure

- A. A student who has exceeded the absence limit may appeal for retention of credit by petitioning for a meeting with the Appeals Committee. The request must be made in writing and submitted to the student's guidance counselor. The committee will consist of a guidance counselor, three teachers* selected to the committee by the faculty, and the Principal who shall serve as Chairperson.
- B. The student should bring to the meeting parents/guardians and/or all corroborating information in support of his/her case. A faculty member of the student's choice may also be present during the hearing to provide information.
- C. The Appeals Committee will convene twice per year near the end of each semester.
- D. A majority (3 votes) is required to reinstate credit.
- E. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final.
- F. The student's guidance counselor shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the committee's decision in writing within three days of the hearing.

* No teacher of a course for which the student is appealing loss of credit shall serve on the committee for that particular hearing.