

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 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 within 2 days after returning from an absence. An absence may be excused for the following reasons:

1. **Illness or Injury:** when the absence results from illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
2. **Quarantine:** when isolation of a student is ordered by the local health officer or by the State Board of Health.
3. **Death in the Immediate Family:** when the absence results from the death of a member of the immediate family of the student: For the purpose of this regulation, the immediate family of a student includes, but is not necessarily limited to grandparents, parents, brothers, and sisters.
4. **Emergency Medical or Dental Appointments:** when the absence results from a medical or dental appointment of a student or such an appointment that has been approved in advance by the principal:
5. **Court or Administrative Proceedings:** when the absence results from the attendance of a student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
6. **Religious Observance:** when the student is absent due to a religious observance and the absence has been approved in advance by the principal.
7. **Educational Opportunity:** when it is demonstrated that the purpose of the absence is to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a legislative or Governor's page, and the absence has been approved in advance by the principal; or

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8. absence due to pregnancy and related condition or parenting, when medically necessary.

Extended illnesses generally require a statement from a physician. Once a student has accumulated more than 15 absences in a school year, a doctor's note or other documentation approved by the principal will be needed to excuse further absences. This standard does not apply to medically fragile students as defined in the NC School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual and approved by the principal.

Whether absences are excused, unexcused or because of school suspensions, the student will be permitted to make up his or her school 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:

- field trips sponsored by the school;
- school-initiated and scheduled activities;
- athletic events requiring early dismissal from school; or
- 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. EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

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

Elementary, Middle, and High Schools

The principal will notify parents and take all other steps required by G.S. 115C-378 for excessive absences.

High School only

Students who miss more than a total of 8 days (excused and/or unexcused) per course during a semester will not receive credit toward graduation except when one of the following conditions are met:

1. Students make-up absences: The high school will provide opportunities for students to make-up time missed from classes. The maximum number of days which a student can make-up per semester is 4; the maximum number of class periods which a student can make-up per semester is 16. All make-up time must be completed in the same semester as the absences.
2. The principal grants a waiver: Students whose academic standing is adversely affected by this standard have the right to appeal for a waiver. The appeal must be submitted to the principal in writing along with any appropriate and/or required documentation. Waivers of absences may be granted by the principal only when extenuating circumstances exist.

This standard does not apply to medically fragile students as defined in the NC School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual and approved by the principal.

E. TARDIES

The principal is responsible for handling tardies and for establishing relevant school procedures that are in compliance with the NC School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -84.2, -288(a), -378 to -383; 16 N.C.A.C. 6E.0102-.0103; State Board of Education Policies EEO-L-002 and EEO-L-003

Cross References: Education for Pregnant and Parenting Students (policy 4023)

Adopted: April 9, 1998 to become effective July 1, 1998

Administrative Procedure: None

Revised: April 10, 2008