

4170 ATTENDANCE POLICY

References:

Utah Code Ann. 53G-6, Part 2
Utah Administrative Code R277-609

I. PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

It is the philosophy of Weber School District that achievement in school and in the future is directly linked to school attendance. Students who are present during the instructional portion of the school day are both more likely to succeed in school and more likely to succeed outside of school. The purpose of this Policy is to set expectations for attendance in Weber District's schools and to encourage restorative practices where applicable as the means to ensure student attendance.

II. POLICY

Students are required to attend school unless they have a valid excuse. Students who are not in attendance for all or part of the school day and do not have a valid excuse are considered truant. Truancies will be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth in this policy.

Students enrolled in a Weber District online program are also required to attend school. Attendance for online students is defined in this policy in Section VI.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Absence:** means the failure of a school-age child assigned to a class or class period to attend a class or class period. "Absence" or "absent" does not mean multiple tardies used to calculate an absence for the sake of truancy.
- B. **Minor:** means an individual who is under 18 years old
- C. **Parent:** means a biological or adoptive parent or legal guardian
- D. **School-age Child:** means a minor who is at least six years old but younger than 18 years old and is not emancipated.

- E. **School day:** means the portion of a day that school is in session in which a school-age child is required to be in school for purposes of receiving instructions.
- F. **Student:** a school-age child. For purposes of this policy, the terms “school-age child” and “student” will be used interchangeably
- G. **Tardy:** means failure to attend class on time.
- H. **Truant:** a condition in which a school-age child, without a valid excuse, is absent for at least half of the school day; or if the school-age child is enrolled in a learner verified program, as that term is defined by the state board, the relevant amount of time under the LEA's policy regarding the LEA's continuing enrollment measure as it relates to truancy.
- I. **Valid Excuse:** means an illness, which may be either mental or physical, regardless of whether the school-age child or parent provides documentation from a medical professional; mental or behavioral health of the school-age child; a family death; an approved school activity; an absence permitted by a school-age child’s IEP or Section 504 Plan; a scheduled family event or scheduled visit to a health care provider if the parent submits a written statement at least one school day before the scheduled absence and the student agrees to make up missed work

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General Procedures:

1. A roll will be kept and marked by the teacher for each class period. A teacher will not delegate roll-keeping to a student.
2. A reasonable attempt will be made by the school to contact parents when the student is absent for any part of the school day.
3. Tardies will be handled by individual teachers through student conferences and/of contact with parents. When additional assistance is needed, students may be referred to an administrator.

B. Absences:

1. Schools will inform students and parents concerning procedures to submit valid excuses for a student’s absence.
2. If a student intends to be absent for a scheduled family event or a scheduled visit to a health care provider, the student’s parent must submit a written

statement at least one school day before the scheduled absences, and the student must agree to make up missed work.

3. Teachers shall allow a student with a valid excuse for an absence to make up coursework missed during the absence. It is the student's responsibility to work with the teachers in making up work.
4. Students who are absent for all or part of the school day without a valid excuse are considered truant.
5. Schools will address trancies in accordance with Section V. of this policy.
6. Students enrolled in concurrent enrollment courses may be held to the attendance standard of the college or university those students are enrolled in.
7. A student enrolled in Weber Online or another online program through the Statewide Online Education Program will have attendance verified in accordance with Section VI. of this Policy.

C. Attendance Credit

1. General Information
 - i. Students earn .25 units of attendance credit in each class for each term by having no more than four absences or tardies, excused or unexcused, throughout the term. (Students with special needs may have difference attendance requirements.)
 - ii. Five absences or tardies during any term may result in a loss of .25 units of attendance credit; however, teachers have the option of allowing tardies to be made up, and allowances may be granted for prearranged absences, students experiencing a long-term illness, or absences incurred for circumstances beyond the student's control.
2. Graduation and Extracurricular Eligibility
 - i. Attendance credit loss over .75 must be made up before graduation and to meet eligibility requirements for athletics, team events, student government, and all other activities in which students represent any District high school.
 - ii. If attendance credit is in jeopardy due to absences or tardies, the teacher will inform the student and parent in sufficient time to allow the student to make up the lost attendance credit.
3. Attendance Credit Make-Up
 - i. Attendance credit may be made up by engaging in community services hours or alternative attendance recovery options.

- ii. Every ten (10) hours of community service (off campus) worked equals .25 attendance credit.
- iii. Alternative attendance recovery options are outlined in the handout at the end of this policy.

4. Review Procedure

- i. Students may appeal questions of attendance credit to the administration as unusual situations arise during the term.
- ii. A review committee is established in each school by the principal and consists of an administrator, two teachers, a parent, and three students. The purpose of this committee is to review, at the conclusion of each grading period, the requested appeal of students who did not meet requirements for credit.
- iii. Requests must be made in writing and may not be submitted later than 25 school days following the end of the term in question.
- iv. The committee takes into consideration the student's past history, productivity in class, attendance records, reasons for absence, recommendation of teachers, etc.

V. LEARNER VALIDATED PROGRAM

- A. A learner validated program is a District program that consists of eligible, enrolled students who receive instruction through an online learning program, a blended learning program, or a competency-based learning program. Utah law requires the District to document the continuing enrollment status for individual students enrolled in a learner validated program.

- B. Students enrolled in a learner validated program must log in to the course's learning management system or otherwise make contact with the instructor at least once every ten (10) school days until the course is completed. A student who fails to do so may be withdrawn from the course and enrolled in the student's neighborhood school.

- C. School or District staff will regularly track student log ins and other evidence of student engagement and provide support to students and parents. Additional procedures and requirements for student enrollment measurements in learner validated programs may be adopted through administrative directive.

VI. TRUANCIES

- A. The Law and District philosophy
 - 1. Utah law requires a school-age child who is enrolled in a public school to attend the public school in which the school-age child is enrolled.
 - 2. A school-age child who is absent for all or part of the school day without a valid excuse is considered truant.
 - 3. The District's ultimate goal with regard to truancies is for students to be present in school and learning. Therefore, schools will focus on restorative, rather than punitive, measures to achieve this goal. However, where a student is truant and engaging in other misconduct prohibited by Policy 5200, the student may be subject to discipline. For example, a student who is truant from the student's assigned class, and is disrupting the educational environment in another part of the school may be disciplined for disruptive behavior. Or a student who is truant after being directed to be in school may be disciplined for insubordination.

- B. Responses to Truancies
 - 1. School officials will make best efforts to contact parents when a student is truant.
 - 2. A school may call a parent-student-teacher conference to discuss the student's truancy/ies.

3. Every effort will be made to address the underlying reason a student is truant and to structure supports and services necessary for the student to attend class. Such truancy interventions will be developed and implemented by working with the student, and other school personnel.
4. Attendance credit may be affected by truanancies, as outlined in Section IV above.
5. Coaches and advisors of extracurricular activities may set expectations that condition participation in an activity on attendance at school or may only allow excused absences for continued participation in the activity. Any conditional participation based on attendance will be outlined in the coach/advisor's disclosure at the beginning of the year/season.
6. Students participating in co-curricular or non-curricular clubs may earn a graduation cord representing the club conditional on the student meeting certain attendance criteria, including no truanancies, as determined by the school administrator over clubs.
7. Classroom teachers may NOT reduce a student's academic grade on the sole basis of a student's truancy and are discouraged from disallowing make-up work when a student is truant; however, teachers may use in-class activities that incentivize students to be present.
8. Notices of Compulsory Education Violation
 - i. Except when state law or USBE rule dictate otherwise, Elementary school administrators may issue Notices of Compulsory Education Violations to the parent of a school-age child who has been truant at least 5 times during the school year.
 - ii. The Notice shall direct the parent of the school-age child to meet with school authorities to discuss the child's attendance problem.
 - iii. The Notice requires parents to cooperate with school authorities in securing regular attendance by the child.
 - iv. The Notice shall designate the school authorities with whom the parents is required to meet.
 - v. The Notice shall state that it is Class B Misdemeanor for the parent of the child to intentionally or recklessly fail to meet with the designated school authorities to discuss the child's attendance problem or fails to prevent the child from being absent without a valid excuse (truant) 5 or more times during the remainder of the school year.
 - vi. The Notice shall be served on the child's parent by school personnel or by certified mail.
9. Notice of Truancy
 - i. Except when state law or USBE rule dictate otherwise, secondary school administrators may issue a Notice of Truancy to a student who is at least 12 and have been truant 5 times during the school year.

- ii. The Notice shall direct the student and the parent to meet with the school authorities to discuss the trancies and cooperate with the school administration in securing regular attendance by the student.
- iii. The Notice shall be mailed to the student's parent by school personnel.