

**ABSENCES AND EXCUSES**

When students who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Written note from parent/guardian or parent-representative.
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
  - a. Name of student.
  - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative.
  - c. Name of verifying employee.
  - d. Date(s) of absence.
  - e. Reason for absence.
3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee.
4. Any other reasonable method which establishes the fact that the student was actually absent for the reasons stated. A written recording shall be made, including information outlined above.

**Excused Absences**

When students contemplate absence for personal reasons, their parents/guardians should write the principal to ask that the expected absence be excused. The principal or designee may deny the request if he/she believes that the absence would be educationally harmful to the student or set a poor example in matters of school attendance for the student or other students. If the request is denied, reasons will be given.

**Unexcused Absences**

If a student misses classes as a result of unexcused absences, a zero will be recorded for the work missed. The student may arrange with his/her teacher to make up the work in accordance with the individual teacher's grading policy.

**Truancy**

Unless a child subject to compulsory attendance laws is exempted, excluded or expelled from school attendance, each five days of unlawful absence constitutes a separate violation of state law. (A.S. 14.30.020)

**ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (continued)**

The parents/guardians shall be notified of any unexcused absence of their child and informed of state compulsory attendance laws.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish procedures for notifying parents/guardians and students when a student's absenteeism violates the district's attendance policies.

Students experiencing difficulty with attendance shall be counseled in an attempt to alleviate the problem. The district, the parents/guardians, and the student shall work together to develop an appropriate plan for improving school attendance.

Continued truancy will ultimately result in suspension. A student suspended under this provision is entitled to due process protections and appeal procedures as set forth in Board policy and administrative regulation.

**Minimum Attendance Limit**

A student can miss no more than 20 days of school per semester. The school administration shall notify the parent/guardian when the 20-day limit is approached.

All excused and unexcused absences are considered in the calculation of a student's absence record. Absences due to an academic, credit bearing class or state or national competition from the result of a qualifying event or special selection do not count toward this limit. The principal may, in exceptional circumstances, grant a waiver to exceed this number. Exceptional circumstances are defined as serious illness, family emergencies such as the death of an immediate family member, or circumstances otherwise determined by the principal to be exceptional.

If a student wishes to appeal a loss of credit because of attendance problems, s/he may do so in writing to the Superintendent. If further action on the matter is desired, an appeal may be made to the Board of Education.

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