

Attendance/High School

The administration expects that students will attend every class daily. Students, Parents/Guardians, Teachers, School Counselors, and Administrators share responsibility for student attendance.

Students must attend class and keep track of any absences. They must make up any work missed during absences.

Parents/Guardians must provide the school with updated phone numbers and must support the emphasis on regular daily attendance.

Teachers must record attendance daily.

School Counselors must inform administrators of absence patterns.

Administrators must enforce the attendance policy and regulation.

Definitions (related to chronic absenteeism)

Chronically absent child: An enrolled student whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than ten percent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during such school year.

Absence: An excused absence, unexcused absence or disciplinary absence, as those terms are defined by the State Board of Education pursuant to C.G.S. 10-198b.

District chronic absenteeism rate: The total number of chronically absent children in the previous school year divided by the total number of children under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education for such school year.

School chronic absenteeism rate: The total number of chronically absent children for a school in the previous school year divided by the total number of children enrolled in such school for such school year.

Documentation of Absences

In order for an absence to be marked as excused, Parents/Guardians are required to notify the school in writing when a student is absent within ten(10) school days of the student's return to school. High School students will complete the online form and upload appropriate documentation, when required. In addition, the absence must meet the following criteria:

- A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered "excused" when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation to school officials.
- B. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused only for the following reasons and with the proper documentation:

1. **Student Illness** - verified by a licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of the absence
2. **Religious Holiday** - student's observance of a religious holiday must be documented with a parent/guardian note
3. **Mental Health Wellness Days** - Absences during which the student attends to such student's emotional and psychological well being in lieu of attending school. Such days shall not be consecutive, nor shall they exceed a total of two days per school year.
4. **Death in the Family** - or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family; documentation must be provided by the parent/guardian
5. **Mandated Court Appearance** - official documentation required
6. **Lack of Transportation** - is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation required);
7. **Field Trips or School-Related Activities** - Absences relating to school activities may include, but are not limited to, field trips, early dismissal for participation in athletic events, and meetings with school personnel.
8. **Extraordinary Educational Opportunities** - pre-approved by District administration and to be in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

C. A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless:

1. The absence meets the definition of an excused absence and meets the documentation requirements; or
2. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence, which is the result of school or District disciplinary action and is excluded from these State Board of Education approved definitions.

Responsibility for completion of missed classwork lies with the student, not the teacher. Unless a student has an extended illness, all make-up work will be complete within five days after the student returns to school.

Tardiness

Students are expected to come to school and class on time. Students who arrive late and have a pass get marked Excused Tardy (ET). Students who arrive without a pass will be marked Unexcused Tardy (UT). Unexcused Tardies cannot be appealed and will be considered unexcused absences as follows:

- A. Four (4) Unexcused Tardies to a class will be recorded as one (1) Unexcused Absence.
- B. Any Unexcused Tardy of more than 10 minutes (including arriving at school 10 minutes after the bell) will be counted as one (1) Unexcused Absence, even if the student is present for the remainder of the class period.

- C. Students arriving to school on a late bus, or due to any other situation communicated by administration by announcement/email, will be marked Excused Tardy.

Excessive tardies – defined as more than sixteen (16) in a semester – shall necessitate school official communication with the parent/guardian to support regular attendance. Students with excessive tardies are subject to disciplinary action.

Absences and Excessive Tardies to Study Halls and Other Classes

Study Halls and other “non-credit bearing” classes are not an “optional” part of a student’s schedule and must be attended. Privileges, such as attending prom, parking on school property, or participation in extra-curricular activities may be revoked at the discretion of the principal or designee due to a lack of attendance

Loss of Credit

To achieve a passing grade and credit in a course, students must be in attendance. Should a student be absent from a course in excess of five (5) unexcused absences per .5 credit course or ten (10) unexcused absences per 1 credit course, the student will lose credit for that course if an appeal is not granted. Absences will be coded as AE for “absence excused” or AU “absence unexcused”.

If a student violates the Attendance Policy, his/her transcript will reflect the appropriate loss of credit. Students are expected to attend class when credit is lost; regular attendance following loss of credit strengthens a student’s appeal. Students losing credit can still earn a passing grade in the course. The grade will be factored into the student’s grade point average and may be used as a prerequisite for future courses as follows:

- A. **GPA:** The full grade will count as if the loss of credit did not exist. On the transcript there will be a letter grade with “LC,” which indicates the loss of credit. If/when a course is taken a second time, both courses (the first time the course was taken and the second time the course was taken) will appear on the transcript.
- B. **Prerequisites:** If a student receives a passing grade in a course that is part of a sequence, but loses credit toward graduation due to absences, the student will not need to repeat the course to move on in the sequence (e.g., a passing grade in Spanish 1 will allow the student to move on to Spanish 2, regardless of credits).

Appeals Process

A. Appeals Process to Regain Credit

The attendance policy is not designed to deny credit to students who, through no fault of their own, are unable to attend school or class. Students will be notified in writing that they are in danger of losing credit in a course based upon their attendance as well as information

regarding the appeal process. In January and June, students who have lost credit will have an opportunity to go before the Appeals Board to have credit reinstated. To be eligible for the Appeals Process, students must continue classroom responsibilities and attend class regularly. The following applies to the Appeals Process:

1. Students must have made up any missed work as outlined in the course syllabus for any half credit/full credit course and have a passing grade to qualify for an appeal.
2. At the discretion of the principal or his/her designee, unexcused absences may be changed to excused. In such cases, no further appeal is required.
3. Students must sign up for an appeal. Therefore, students should monitor their attendance. Teachers are not required to inform students of the opportunity to appeal.

B. Appeals Board

The Appeals Board will be selected by the principal and composed of:

- 1-2 administrators
- 2-3 classroom teachers
- 1-2 student support staff
- 1-2 school counselors

In an effort to preserve impartialness, Appeals Board members will not hear any appeal for which: 1) they have the student in class, or 2) the student is on their case-load, or 3) they are the student's grade-level administrator.

The Appeals Board will hear cases and make decisions. All decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

1. Appeals will be heard on a "first to sign up, first to be heard" basis.
2. Appeals will be heard during February for loss of first semester ½ credit courses, and in June for second semester ½ credit courses or 1 credit full year courses. Appeals should be made immediately following the semester in which the credit is lost.
3. The Appeals Board may hear cases if the deadline for submitting the appeal request is missed.
4. The decision of the Appeals Board will be based on a majority vote.
5. Decisions will be made within one week of the Appeals Process deadlines. The Appeals Board will notify the student and the parents/guardians, in writing, of its decision.

Communication to Students and Parents/Guardians

A. Students and parents/guardians will have access to information concerning attendance in the PowerSchool Parent Portal or PowerSchool app.

B. A daily automated call will be made at approximately 6:00pm each evening notifying parents/guardians of an absence from any particular period(s) during the school day. Parents/Guardians can also sign up for notifications on the PowerSchool app which

provides an alert on their device when their student is absent from a particular class. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to regularly monitor their child's attendance and if there is a problem/discrepancy they should contact their student's teacher and follow up with their child's counselor or administrator, if necessary.

- C. The Appeals Process, including the deadline to sign up for an appeal, will be communicated to students and posted on the school's website. Students will be instructed how to file for an appeal. After a student files for an appeal, a hearing will be scheduled. If a student fails to attend the scheduled appeal hearing, the appeal will be denied unless the student provides a physician's note or other official documentation.

Students and parents/guardians will be notified concerning absences by email utilizing the following letters:

1. Loss of Credit Warning Notice: The purpose of this notification is to inform the parent/guardian and the student of the possibility of loss of credit if the student's attendance does not improve (tied to progress report and report card dates).
2. Loss of Credit Notice: generated when a student loses credit in any course.
3. Appeals Board Hearing Results Notification: used to communicate the decision of the Appeals Board to the student and parent/guardian when a student appeals a loss of credit.

Notification of Regulation

This regulation 5113A-R will be emailed to parents/guardians before each school year. This regulation will be included in the Student Handbook and posted on the school website. This regulation will be reviewed with incoming 9th grade students in First Year Seminar at the start of the school year and will be provided to students and parents/guardians when they register during the school year.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-198a Policies and Procedures Concerning Truants (As Amended by PA 21-46, An Act Concerning Social Equity and the Health Safety and Education of Children)

[10-199](#) through [10-202](#) Attendance, truancy - in general (Revised, 1995, PA 95-304)

Action taken by State Board of Education on January 2, 2008, to define "attendance."

Action taken by State Board of Education on June 27, 2012, to define "excused" and "unexcused" absences.

Regulation Adopted:

May 27, 1997

Amended:

June 27, 2000
June 28, 2016
June 13, 2022