

Board of Education Policy

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is a major component of academic success. Through implementation of this policy, the Board expects to discourage unexcused absences, encourage full attendance by all students, maintain an adequate attendance recordkeeping system, identify patterns of student absence and develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance. This policy shall be in effect for the entire twelve-month school year, including summer school, if offered.

I. Attendance Policy Notification

- A. To be successful in this endeavor, it is important that all members of the school community (students, parents, guardians, and staff) are aware of this policy, its purpose, procedures and the consequences of non-compliance. To ensure that the school community is notified of and understands this policy, the following procedures shall be implemented:
1. This attendance policy will be included in student handbooks in grade levels where appropriate and will be distributed to parents/guardians and/or students at the start of the school year and posted on the District's website.
 2. The school buildings will distribute to all parents/guardians of school age children enrolled in the District a plain language summary of this policy at the start of the school year. Parents/guardians may be asked to sign and return a statement indicating that they have read and understand the policy.
 - a. Parents/guardians will be notified when a student cuts class or is absent without excuse. At that time a designated staff member will review the attendance procedures with the parent/guardian.
 - b. At various school events, this policy will be reviewed and stress the parent's or guardian's responsibility for ensuring their children's attendance.
 3. The District will provide a copy of this attendance policy and any amendments thereto to staff.
 - a. New staff will receive a copy upon their employment.
 - b. All appropriate staff will meet at the beginning of each school year to review the attendance policy to clarify individual roles in its implementation.
 4. Copies of this policy will also be made available to any community member, upon request.

II. General Attendance Procedures

- A. All absences must be accounted for. It is the parent's and/or guardian's responsibility to notify the school office by phone on the morning of the absence or within 24 hours of the absence or tardiness.
1. At the secondary level, when students sign in after the start of the school day it is the parent's and/or guardian's responsibility to provide written notification as to the reason

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for the student lateness within 24 hours. An unexcused tardiness will result in student discipline.

- B. Attendance will be taken each class period at the secondary level. Attendance will be taken at the start of the student school day at the elementary level.
- C. At the conclusion of each class period for secondary, or school day for elementary, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the appropriate individual(s) responsible for attendance.
- D. The nature of each absence shall be recorded in the student management system.
- E. Where additional information is received that requires corrections to be made to a student's attendance records, such correction will be made as soon as practicable. Notice of such a change will be sent to appropriate school personnel.
- F. Attendance data will be analyzed each quarter to identify patterns or trends in student absences. This will be provided to the Building Principal or designee for necessary investigation and appropriate action.

III. Attendance and Course Credit

- A. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Academic achievement can be adversely affected by poor student attendance associated with **unexcused** or **excused** absences, tardiness and/or early departures. Students who miss classes or portions thereof are expected upon returning to class to consult with their teachers regarding missed work. However, successful completion of make-up work for absences, whether excused or unexcused, will not mitigate against the loss of course credit. Accordingly, even if a student makes up missed work, he/she will still be denied course credit. At the elementary level, when a child's overall attendance record drops below 90% a letter regarding the importance of attendance will be generated to the parent/guardian.
- B. At the secondary level, in order for a student to receive credit for a credit-bearing class, the student must be in attendance in that class at least 85%. A student will not be eligible for course credit according to the following schedule:
 - 1. Twenty-seven (27) excused or unexcused absences for a full-year course.
 - 2. Fourteen (14) excused or unexcused absences for a semester course or a full-year course that meets every other day.
 - 3. Seven (7) excused or unexcused absences for a semester course that meets every other day.
- C. Students shall be considered absent from a class if they are absent from a class for 20 or more minutes of the class period.
- D. For students who attend vocational courses at BOCES, the District reserves the right to withdraw students from the BOCES program at any time they fail to maintain a minimum attendance rate of 85%.

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- E. For summer school, any student who has three or more absences will not receive credit for that course.

IV. Notification of Potential Denial of Credit

- A. To ensure that parents/guardians, and students are aware of the implications of this minimum attendance requirement, the teacher and other school personnel will notify the student and contact the parent/guardian by telephone and mail at appropriate intervals. The following guidelines will be used:

Teacher conferences with students:

10 Full Year Class Absences

6 Semester Absences

3 Semester A/B Absences

Guidance Counselor or Administrator's designee contacts parent/guardian by phone for the first course:

16 Full Year Class Absences

8 Semester Absences

5 Semester A/B Absences

Assistant Principal or Principal's designee letter mailed home:

22-25 Full Year Class Absences

9-12 Semester Absences

5-6 Semester A/B Absences

Letter denial of credit mailed home:

27 Full Year Class Absences

14 Semester Absences

7 Semester A/B Absences

- B. Prior to the denial of course credit, appropriate school personnel shall notify the parent, guardian, and/or student regarding attendance.
- C. If a student does not meet the minimum attendance requirement, the student will receive no credit for that course. The student will receive a final course grade of 50. This notation will appear on the report card and the transcript. An appeal of the no credit status can be made in writing by the student and/or parent/guardian to the Principal at the time the student exceeds the allowable number of absences. Further appeals to this process can be made to the Superintendent.
- D. Students who are in no credit status before the end of the course are obligated to continue to attend the class. Failure to do so will result in school disciplinary procedures being implemented and will deny the student the privilege of attending summer school should

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- that course be offered during the summer session. Students will then be withdrawn/fail and receive a final course grade of “0”.
- E. Students attending approved alternative educational activities, which include attendance in a school sponsored activity, on home instruction, whether due to illness or suspension, serving in-school suspension or out of school suspension are considered “in attendance” and are not considered absent. Participation in these events will not count towards the total number of absences.
 - F. Students who are unable to attend a class on a given day/period due to their participation in a school sponsored activity (e.g., music lessons, field trips, etc.), must arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed.

V. Absences, Tardiness, and Early Departures

- A. Absences, tardiness, and early departures can be excused for the following reasons:
 - 1. Personal illness
 - 2. Death in the family during immediate grieving
 - 3. Practicing religious observance
 - 4. Government imposed quarantine
 - 5. Required court appearances
 - 6. Attendance at health clinics for health reasons
 - 7. Approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs
 - 8. Military obligations. Moreover, absences related to a student visiting and/or spending time with his or her parent related to leave or deployment activities shall be excused by the District (the District will permit no more than 5 excused absences per year for this purpose).
 - 9. Other reasons as may be approved by the Superintendent or designee (including, but not limited to, absences due to circumstances related to homelessness).
- B. All other absences, tardiness, and early departures are considered unexcused and will result in student discipline. For example, the following are invalid excuses for absence, lateness or early departures:
 - 1. Oversleeping
 - 2. Missing the bus
 - 3. Vacation trips and/or visiting relatives or friends
 - 4. Baby-sitting and/or helping at home
 - 5. Shopping
 - 6. Studying for a test
 - 7. Truancy
 - 8. Working
 - 9. Cutting classes

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C. The nature of an unexcused absence, tardiness and/or early dismissal shall be coded on a student's record. Codes for the Miller Place Union Free School District are as follows:

Title	Abbreviation	Title	Abbreviation
Absent Authorized	AD	Medical Hospital	MD
Absent Bereavement	BR	Nurse	NU
Absent Excused	AE	Occupational Therapy	OT
Absent Illness	AI	Office	OE
Absent Injury	IN	OSS	OS
Absent Music Lesson	MU	Outside Placement	OD
Absent Other	AO	Pursuant to Agreement	AG
Absent Personal Family	AF	Return to School	RS
Absent Religious	AR	Physical Therapy	PT
Absent School Injury	SI	Right Reason Tech	RT
Absent Unexcused	AN	Superintendent's Suspension	SS
Absent Unknown	AU	Tardy Excuse	TU
Alternate Learning Center	AL	Tardy Unexcused	TU
Bus Late	BU	Truancy	TR
College Visit	CV	Vacation	VA
Cut	CT	Unexcused with Discipline	UD
Early Release	ER	No Note	NN
Early Release Medical	EM	Returned	XX
Field Trip	FT	Speech Consultation	SC
Guidance Visit	GV		
Home Tutoring	HT		
In School Activity	IA		
ISS	IS		
Legal	LG		
Library	LB		
Medical Exempt	ME		

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VI. Attendance Incentives

- A. Attendance awards will be given as deemed appropriate by each building administration and as per building procedures to those students who maintain perfect attendance. This is done in an effort to acknowledge a student's efforts to maintain perfect attendance.

VII. Disciplinary Consequences

- A. Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed progressively.
- B. In accordance with the District's Code of Conduct, the following range of disciplinary sanctions may be imposed to discourage unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures:
1. Oral/Written warning notification to parent/guardian
 2. After-school detention
 3. Saturday Detention, if offered, may be elected as an alternative with parental/guardian consent.
 4. In-school suspension
 5. Suspension from athletic participation, pursuant to building procedure
 6. Suspension from extracurricular activities
 7. Suspension from other privileges

VIII. Educational Neglect

In addition, a designated staff member will contact local Child Protective Services (CPS) if they suspect that the child is being educationally neglected. The designated staff member will provide CPS with the information necessary to initiate a report. If other staff members suspect education neglect, they must follow the procedures outlined in Board Policy No. 5460, *Child Abuse, Maltreatment or Neglect in a Domestic Setting*, and advise the Executive Director for Educational Services.

Reference: Education Law §§ 1709; 3024; 3025; 3202; 3205-3213; 3225
8 NYCRR §§ 104.1; 175.6

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