

Regulation 7140R

Students

SCHOOL AND CLASS ATTENDANCE

In keeping with Policy 7140, *School and Class Attendance* and with Commissioner's Regulation 104.1, this regulation establishes the procedural components of the district's attendance program.

Classification of Absences

Each student absence, tardiness, and early departure from scheduled instruction will be classified and recorded as "excused" or "unexcused" based on the reason for the absence.

Excused absences may be for the following reasons:

- Personal illness or hospitalization
- Medical or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled outside school hours
- Death in the family
- Religious observance
- Legal obligation (e.g., required to be in court)
- Authorized school activity (e.g., field trip, music lesson, etc.)
- College visits
- Other reasons as may be approved by the principal and are consistent with the intent of the policy

Absences for any reason other than those listed above are unexcused. Such absences include, but are not limited to:

- Family vacation
- Oversleeping
- Babysitting
- Car trouble
- Take your child to work day
- Truancy/class cut
- Other

Register of Attendance/Coding of Absences

Pursuant to Section 104.1 of the Commissioner's Regulations and commencing no later than the 2003-2004 school year, a register of attendance will be maintained for each building by a school employee designated by the principal. In addition, the principal (or another designee) will supervise the maintenance of the register.

For each student, the register will reflect the following information:

1. Name
2. Date of Birth
3. Full names of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation
4. Address where the pupil resides
5. Phone number(s) where the parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation may be contacted
6. Date of the pupil's enrollment
7. A record of the pupil's attendance on each day of scheduled instruction
 - a. For pupils in non-departmentalized kindergarten through grade eight such pupil's presence or absence will be recorded after the taking of attendance once per school day, provided that if pupils in such school are dismissed from school grounds during a lunch period, each such pupil's presence or absence will also be recorded after the taking of attendance a second time upon the pupil's return from the lunch period each school day. For purposes of APPR and Teacher-Student Data Linkages (TSDL), classroom attendance for all students K-12 must be recorded on a subject by subject basis for Teacher of Record Determinations.
 - b. For pupils in grades nine through twelve or in departmentalized classes at any grade level, each such pupil's attendance in each period of scheduled instruction except that where such pupils do not change classrooms for each period of scheduled instruction attendance will be taken as in nondepartmentalized contexts
 - c. Any absence for a school day or portion thereof will be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards articulated in this regulation
 - d. In the event that a pupil at any instructional level from kindergarten through grade twelve arrives late for or departs early from scheduled instruction, such tardiness or early departure will all be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards articulated in this regulation
8. A record of each scheduled day of instruction during which the school is closed for all or part of the day because of extraordinary circumstances including adverse weather conditions, impairment of heating facilities, insufficiency of water supply, shortage of fuel, destruction of or damage to a school building, or such other cause as may be found satisfactory to the Commissioner
9. The date when the pupil withdraws or is dropped from enrollment

Each student absence, tardiness or early departure from scheduled instruction will be coded to reflect whether the absence is excused or unexcused as well as the specific reason for the absence.

Incentives/Disincentives

Under the direction of the Superintendent, building principals and their staffs will establish incentives for attendance and disincentives, including disciplinary consequences, for unexcused absence. Incentives should complement and be consistent with the fundamental values of school attendance which center on student learning and achievement, healthful personal development, and the value of education. Both incentives and disincentives should be appropriate to the age and grade levels of students and to the culture of each school and school community.

Under the direction of the Superintendent, building principals will maintain procedures for parents to follow when reporting student absences and the reasons therefor. Principals will also establish and maintain a procedure through which the school contacts parents of students who are absent but not accounted for. Within 24 hours of an unaccounted student absence from school or class, the school should initiate the procedure for notifying parents of the absence and requesting that they provide a reason for it.

In the event of truancy, class cuts, or other absences of which parents are unaware or for which they cannot provide a reason, principals will assure that building officials work with parents to eliminate such absences.

Building procedures regarding attendance, the reporting of absence, and school-parent collaboration to promote good attendance will be set forth in each building handbook.

Intervention Prior to Denial of Credit for Absence

For courses that carry a unit of credit toward high school graduation, credit may be denied when a student's attendance falls below the minimum standard set forth in Board of Education Policy 7140.

When a student's absences from a class reach half the number of absences that could result in denial of credit, the school will inform parents that the student's eligibility for credit is at risk. School officials will collaborate with the student's parents to improve attendance and thereby to avoid the denial of credit for absence.

Guidelines for Principal's Review/Hearings

When a student's absences from class exceed the number of absences that could result in denial of credit, the principal will conduct a thorough review of the student's pattern of attendance and the reasons for the excessive absence.

Normally, the principal (or designee) will convene a committee of school personnel to hold a hearing and to make recommendations to the principal regarding denial of credit or specific conditions for continued eligibility for credit. The student and parents will be invited to attend the hearing and to present information to the committee. School personnel will also appear to present information. The committee will review the record of attendance along with other information presented, and will forward a recommendation to the principal who will render a decision based on the committee's recommendation. Parents will be notified of the decision in a timely fashion.

In making their determinations, the committee and the principal may consider extenuating circumstances regarding the student's pattern of attendance, the student's effort in making up missed work, the student's and parents' commitment to future attendance, and other relevant factors.

In cases where extenuating circumstances are patently obvious to the principal and where denial of credit would be unreasonable, the principal may waive the hearing and determine on his or her own to continue the student's eligibility for credit. However, the principal may not deny credit without providing the student and parents the opportunity for a hearing.

Annual Review of Building Attendance Data

Each building principal will review pupil attendance records annually for the purpose of initiating appropriate action as necessary to address unexcused pupil absence, tardiness, or early departure. In addition, the principal may designate another building staff person who, in collaboration with the principal, will also review attendance data and, as needed, initiate action to reduce unexcused absence.

Community Awareness

In order to sustain and promote a culture throughout the Irondequoit school community that reflects a shared commitment to high, productive school attendance, the district will communicate the value and seriousness of school attendance broadly through such materials as school newsletters, school handbooks, letters and other communications sent home to parents. Staff members are encouraged and expected to promote the district's position on attendance in discussions and individual conversations with students and parents.

In addition, the district will:

- Provide a plain language summary of the district's attendance policy and procedures to all parents at the beginning of each school year and take such other steps as deemed necessary to assure that students and parents understand the policy and procedures
- Provide each professional and paraprofessional staff member with and copy of the policy and this regulation as soon as practicable following adoption or amendment
- Make copies of the policy and regulation available to any other community resident upon request

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