

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Preamble

Every student has a right to educational opportunities that will enable the student to develop his or her fullest potential. Attendance policies are based on the principle that regular school attendance maximizes the student's interaction with his or her teachers and peers and is a major component of academic success. Improved school attendance generally increases student achievement and reduces the drop-out rate. Therefore, attendance policies that provide for the early identification of attendance problems and effective methods to address them are most likely to succeed. Successful implementation of any attendance policy requires cooperation among all members of the education community, including parents, students, teachers, administrators and support staff.

Attendance Requirements/Conditions/Penalties

1. Students must attend each class a minimum of 85% of the time in order to be eligible for academic credit.

Full year course: The minimum attendance shall be 85% or 153 days per year ($.85 \times 180 = 153$); therefore, a student may be absent no more than 27 times per year per class. A student will be in violation on the 28th absence.

Half-year course and Physical Education Class - the minimum attendance shall be 85% or 77 days ($.85 \times 90 = 76.5$ days); thus, a student may be absent no more than 13 times per semester per class. A student will be in violation on the 14th absence.

BOCES - the district reserves the right to withdraw students from vocational courses at BOCES at any time that they fail to maintain a minimum attendance rate of 85%.

All absences from class shall be covered by this policy. In accordance with the decisions of the New York State Commissioner of Education, no distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences insofar as such absences relate to eligibility for credit.

1. Students on home instruction, whether due to illness or suspension, serving in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension, are considered to be in attendance and shall not be considered absent. Each two hour session of home teaching is equivalent to five classroom days of instruction in a particular subject.
2. All absences, tardiness and early departures will be recorded as excused or unexcused. Excused absences, tardiness and early departures are defined as those due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads due to inclement weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, school-approved college visits, and cooperative work programs, military obligations, alternative education activities, including attendance at school sponsored activities, personal reasons upon confirmation by parent/guardian and with prior approval by the district (not to exceed five days), or such other reasons as may be approved by the Commissioner of Education. Excused absences, tardiness and early departures must be confirmed by parental note upon student's return to school. Teachers will provide credit-bearing make-up work with due dates for students who are absent. They will also provide credit-bearing make-up work with due dates for students who are excused for school authorized situations, such as meetings, music lessons, conferences with school personnel, field trips, out-of-district athletic trips, testing, in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension. Students must make up this work no later than three days from the date of return to school for each absence. This make up time cannot exceed three weeks.
3. For each course, when a student reaches the maximum number of absences the student's work will no longer be evaluated. The report card will indicate that the student was denied credit.
4. The filing of a school PINS will be implemented for students under the age of 16 who establish patterns of poor attendance.
5. The administrator may assign ALC School with parental agreement to any student receiving two "NCA designations."
6. Once a student is denied credit, he/she must attend class regularly and maintain appropriate behavior. He/she will not be entitled to participate in course assessments. Failure to continue to attend classes on a regular basis and maintain appropriate behavior will result in disciplinary action and may result in the student's being permanently removed from the class.
7. Summer School Eligibility Requirement: Any student who fails to continue to attend classes will not be eligible to attend summer school after more than 35 absences. Lists of students not eligible for summer school will be generated by the attendance office.

8. If 35 absences in any one course occur within the first semester, enrollment in another semester course will be required as determined by the District. Lists of students requiring enrollment in another semester course will be generated by the Attendance Office at the discretion of the building administration.
9. If a student is eligible to take a Regents examination, pursuant to Commission's Regulations, the score will be noted on the student's permanent record.
10. This attendance requirement shall apply to all students enrolled in the Middle Country Central School District high schools in grades nine through twelve, except those students whose IEP (individualized education plan) states otherwise. Students entering the school after the first day will be expected to comply with the attendance policy and shall make up such work as is determined by the District to be necessary. If a student enters a class after the first day, the number of days of attendance will be prorated using 85% as the minimum required and in accordance with the make-up policy.
11. The attendance record of a student making a schedule change in the same subject area will be forwarded to the new teacher as authorized by administration.

Attendance/Grade Policy

1. The Middle Country Central School District recognizes an important relationship between class attendance and student performance. Consequently, each marking period 15% of a student's final grade will be based on classroom participation* while 85% of the student's final grade will be based on the student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects, etc.
2. Any student who fails to continue to attend classes will not be eligible to attend summer school after more than 35 absences.
3. In implementing the policy set forth above, students who are unable to attend a class on a given day/period due to their participation in a school sponsored activity (i.e., music lessons, field trips, etc.), who arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed, shall, upon the completion of any make-up work assigned, be given credit for class participation for the day/class period missed. This also applies to any student who is absent from school due to illness** who either receives home instruction from the District or makes arrangements with the teacher to make up the work missed.
4. Any student who misses a class is expected immediately upon his or her return to identify the material covered. The student may earn his or her *classroom participation grade by arranging an assignment with the teacher to cover the work missed.
5. Make up opportunities must be completed by a date specified according to the guidelines in section IV, number 3 of this policy.

* For purposes of this policy, class participation means that a student is in class, ready to work.

Appeal Process

A parent may appeal the denial of course credit for medical and/or personal reasons by making a formal request to the grade administrator within ten days of the notification of denial of credit.

The grade administrator will notify all appropriate staff that an appeal process is in progress. The grade administrator will gather all pertinent data, then meet with the parent, student, and appropriate staff. The grade administrator will make the appropriate determination and notify the parent, student, and appropriate staff.

Students with six days of cuts in a full-year course or three days of cuts in a half-year course are excluded from the appeal process.

** A student's parent(s) or guardian(s) should make arrangements with the main office for home instruction once they anticipate that the student's illness will cause him or her to be out of school for more than ten days. For the absences of less than ten days, we urge a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) to contact the main office to allow the student to make up the work to enable him or her to earn a grade for work completed and class participation.

*** Excused absences are defined as absences due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads or weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, or such other reasons as may be approved by The Commissioner of Education.

Any absence not meeting the above requirements for "excused absence" shall be considered an unexcused absence.