

ATTENDANCE, ABSENTEEISM AND TRUANCY

The Board requires that school-aged children enrolled in the District attend school in accordance with all applicable state laws and board policies. The educational program offered by the District is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order for students to achieve and have consistent educational progress.

Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the District during the days and hours that school is in session, except that the Principal may excuse a student for temporary absences when receiving satisfactory evidence of conditions or reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence.

Definition of Excused Absence:

A student's absence from school is excused when the absence is for one of the following reasons, as documented by parent notification to the school:

- A. Personal illness. Absences beyond 3 consecutive days or a pattern of absences is evident require a note from a licensed medical professional;
- B. An appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day;
- C. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day;
- D. A family emergency;
- E. A planned absence for a personal, educational purpose, or family vacation which has been approved; or
- F. Scheduled Court appearance.

Any absence that has not been excused for any of these reasons will be considered an unexcused absence. A student or parent may appeal to the principal or designee for reconsideration of absences otherwise not excused.

If parents wish for their child to be absent for a reason not listed above, the parent must provide a written explanation of the reason for such absence, including why the student will be absent and for how long the student will be absent. The principal will make a determination as to whether the stated reason for the student's absence constitutes good cause and will notify the parents via telephone or writing of the decision. If the Principal determines that good

cause does not exist, the parents may request a conference with the Principal to again explain the reasons for the non-attendance. The Principal may then reconsider the initial determination. At this point, the Principal's decision shall be held. Parents may appeal this decision in writing to the Superintendent within 5 days. The Superintendent's decision may be appealed to the school board within 10 days and the ruling of the school board shall be final.

Family Vacations/Educational Opportunities

Generally, absences other than excused during the school year are discouraged. The school principal may, however, grant special approval of absence for family vacations or educational opportunities, provided written notification is given a minimum of two weeks prior to the scheduled absence. Teachers will not require to prepare individualized assignments for such situations. Make-up work/assignments will be given after a student's return, and the work must be completed within five (5) days, unless otherwise agreed upon. Parents may initiate an Alternative Learning Plan can be done with the Principal prior to the absence time which would be in place of learning missed during the absence.

Definition of Truancy

Truancy is any unexcused absence from school. Any absence that has not been excused for any of the reasons listed above will be considered an unexcused absence.

Ten half-days of unexcused absence during a school year constitutes habitual truancy.

A half-day absence is defined as a student missing:

1. More than two hours of instructional time; and
2. Fewer than three and one-half hours of instructional time.

Any absence of more than three and one-half hours of instructional time shall be considered a full-day absence and shall be counted as two half days.

When the principal identifies a student who is habitually truant or who is in danger of becoming habitually truant, the principal shall begin by informing the parents written or orally.

At fifteen half-days, the principal will begin an intervention with the student, the student's parents/guardians, and other staff members as may be deemed necessary. The intervention shall involve processes including, but not limited to:

1. Investigating the cause of the student's truant behavior;
2. Considering, when appropriate, the modification of the student's educational program to meet particular needs that may be causing the truancy;
3. Involving parents/guardians in the development of a plan designed to reduce the truancy;

4. Referral to support services both within and without the school;
5. Referral to special education;
6. Report filed with DCYF;
7. Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petition filed;

Legal References:

RSA 189:34, School Boards, Superintendents, Teachers, and Truant Officers: Appointment

RSA 189.35-a, School Boards, Superintendents, Teachers, and Truant Officers: Truancy Defined

RSA 193:1, Pupils: Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Pupil

RSA 193:7, Pupils: Penalty RSA 193:8, Pupils: Notice Requirements

RSA 193:16, Pupils: Bylaws as to Nonattendance NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section ED 306.04 (a) (1), Policy Development: Attendance and Absenteeism NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section ED 306.04 (c), Policy Development: Attendance and Absenteeism Adopted 2011

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