

REGULATION

Eastern Camden County Regional
School District

Section: Students
5200. ATTENDANCE (M)
Date Created: November, 2003
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A. Definitions

1. "Attendance" is a pupil's presence in school and in the classroom to which he/she is assigned at the times scheduled for instruction or other school activities.
 - a. A pupil will be considered to have attended school if he/she has been present at least four (4) hours during the school day.
 - b. A student shall be present at least one hour during both the forenoon and the afternoon in order to be recorded present for the full day (N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3)
 - c. A pupil not present in school because of his/her participation in an approved school activity, such as a field trip, meeting, cooperative education assignment, or athletic competition will be considered to be in attendance.
2. "Excused absence" is a pupil's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for one or more of the following reasons:
 - a. Medical/Dental note signed by a physician with a specific date and reason for absence indicated
 - b. Verification of a family death
 - c. Official verification of a college visit (Maximum 3 days)
 - d. Excused religious observances, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16,
 - e. Where appropriate, when consistent with Individualized Education Programs, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§ 794 and 705(20), and individualized health care plans pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.3,
 - f. The pupil's suspension from school,
 - g. The pupil's required attendance in court,

h. Examination for a driver's license,

i. Written Parental Permission

- ❖ Limited to one parent-note per semester for a family obligation (note may excuse a series of consecutive days absent)

- ❖ Parent-note must be approved by the Principal or designee

j. All excused notes are due within five (5) days after returning from the absence

3. "Unexcused absence/Truancy" is a pupil's absence for all or part of a school day for any reason other than those listed in A2 above.

A. Notice to School of a Pupil's Absence

1. The parent/legal guardian will receive an automated message indicating their child's absence.

2. The parent(s)/ legal guardian(s) or adult pupil who anticipates a future absence or anticipates that an absence will be prolonged should notify the counselor, who will assist in the arrangement of make-up work.

B. Readmission to School After an Extended Absence

1. A physician's note explaining a pupil's absence for non-communicable illness for a period of more than three (3) school days is required upon return.

2. A pupil who has been absent by reason of having or being suspected of having a communicable disease must present to the school nurse written evidence of being free of communicable disease, in accordance with Policy No. 8451.

C. Instruction

1. Teachers are expected to cooperate in the preparation of home assignments for pupils who anticipate an excused absence of three (3) or more consecutive school days. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult pupil must request such home assignments.

2. A pupil who anticipates an excused absence due to a temporary or chronic health condition may be eligible for home instruction in accordance with Policy No. 2412. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult pupil must request home instruction through the Guidance Department.

3. Pupils absent for any reason are expected to make up the work missed. The pupil is responsible for requesting missed assignments and any assistance required. Teachers will provide make-up assignments as necessary.

4. In general, pupils will be allowed one (1) day to make up missed work for each one day of absence. Teachers shall make reasonable accommodations to extend time for pupils. A student who is present when a test/project is announced, is expected to take the test or submit the project upon return to school.

5. A pupil who missed a test because of an excused absence shall be offered an opportunity to take the test or an alternate test.

D. Denial of Course Credit

1. The teacher will determine the credit to be awarded a pupil for make-up work, subject to the rules set forth in this section. Where class participation is a factor in the learning process, absences for the observance of a pupil's religious holiday or for a suspension from school cannot adversely affect the pupil's grade. The teacher may record an incomplete grade, in accordance with Regulation No. 2624, for a pupil who has not had full opportunity to make up missed work.

2. A secondary pupil will be denied course credit, due to the accumulation of eleven (11) or more unexcused absences, and failure to comply with the action plan. These students must meet with the committee.

E. School Districts' Response to Unexcused Absences During the School Year That Count Toward Truancy

1. For up to four cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, the Principal or designee shall:

- a. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day;
- b. Make a reasonable attempt to determine the cause of the unexcused absence, including through contact with the student's parent;
- c. Identify, in consultation with the student's parents, needed action designed to address patterns of unexcused absences, if any, and to have the child return to school and maintain regular attendance;
- d. Proceed in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 9:6-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10, if a potentially missing or abused child situation is detected; and
- e. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.

2. For between five and nine cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, the Principal or designee shall:

- a. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day;
- b. Make a reasonable attempt to determine the cause of the unexcused absence, including through contact with the student's parent;
- c. Evaluate the appropriateness of action taken pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.i.(3) and H.1.c. above;
- d. Develop an action plan to establish outcomes based upon the student's patterns of unexcused absences and to specify the interventions for supporting the student's return to school and regular attendance, which may include any or all of the following:

- (1) Refer or consult with the building's Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8;

- (2) Conduct testing, assessments, or evaluations of the student's academic, behavioral, and health needs;
 - (3) Consider an alternate educational placement;
 - (4) Make a referral to or coordinate with a community-based social and health provider agency or other community resource;
 - (5) Refer to a court or court program pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.iv. and H.4. below;
 - (6) Proceed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 9:6-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10, if a potential missing or abused child situation is detected; and
 - (7) Engage the student's family.
 - e. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.
3. For cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy a student between the ages of six and sixteen is truant, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, and the Principal or designee shall:
- a. Make a determination regarding the need for a court referral for the truancy, per N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.iv. and H.4. below;
 - b. Continue to consult with the parent and the involved agencies to support the student's return to school and regular attendance;
 - c. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate; and
 - d. Proceed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:38-28 through 31, Article 3B, Compelling Attendance at School, and other applicable State and Federal statutes, as required.
4. A court referral may be made as follows:
- a. When unexcused absences that count toward truancy are determined by school officials to be violations of the compulsory education law, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, and the Board of Education's policies, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a), the parent may be referred to Municipal Court.
 - (1) A written report of the actions the school has taken regarding the student's attendance shall be forwarded to the Municipal Court; or
 - b. When there is evidence of a juvenile-family crisis, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:4A-22.g, the student may be referred to Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part.

(1) A written report of the actions the school has taken regarding the student's attendance shall be forwarded to the Juvenile-Family Crisis Intervention Unit.

5. For a student with a disability, the attendance plan and its punitive and remedial procedures shall be applied, where applicable, in accordance with the student's IEP, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 et seq., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; the procedural protections set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:14; accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§794 and 705(20); and individualized health care plans and individualized emergency healthcare plan pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.3(b)5.xii.

6. All receiving schools pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-7.1(a), shall act in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.i. and H.1. above for each student with up to four cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy.

a. For each student attending a receiving school with five or more cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, the absences shall be reported to the sending school district:

(1) The sending school district shall proceed in accordance with the Board of Education's policies and procedures pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a) and H.5. above and the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.ii. through iv. and H.2. through H.5. above, as appropriate.

F. Discipline

1. Pupils may be denied participation in co-curricular and extra curricular activities if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth in Policy No. 2430.

2. Pupils may be denied participation in athletic competition if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth in Board Policy No. 2431.

3. No pupil who is absent from school for observance of a religious holiday may be deprived of any award or of eligibility for or opportunity to compete for any award because of the absence.

4. In addition to the requirements as outlined in F.3.a. through e. above, a pupil deemed truant shall be subject to appropriate pupil discipline.

5. The absence of a pupil missing from school for unexplained reasons will be handled in accordance with Regulation No. 8464.

G. Recording Attendance

1. Teachers must accurately record the pupils present, tardy, and absent each day in each session or each class. Attendance records must also record pupils' attendance at out-of-school curricular events such as field trips.

a. Students arriving ten (10) or more unexcused minutes late to class will be recorded as an unexcused absence.

2. Teachers must record each absence. The Attendance Office will classify each as excused, unexcused, or truant.
3. Daily pupil attendance is available to teaching staff on Power School.
4. A report card will record the number of times the pupil was absent and tardy in each marking period.
5. A pupil's absence for observance of a religious holiday will not be recorded as such on any transcript or application or employment form.

H. Appeal

1. A truant pupil may be suspended or expelled for trancies in accordance with Policy Nos. 5610 and 5620.
2. A pupil who has been denied credit for a course due to the accumulation of eleven (11) unexcused absences and failure to comply with the action plan may appeal that action in accordance with Policy No. 5410.
3. A pupil who has been dropped from a course and/or denied course credit for excessive unexcused absences may appeal that action in accordance with the following procedures:
 - a. The pupil shall file a written appeal to the grade level Vice Principal within five school days of receiving notice of the action. The appeal should state the reasons for admitted absences, documentation that would reduce the number of absences, and reasons why the pupil should continue to be enrolled in the course and/or receive course credit.
 - b. The grade level Vice Principal will respond in writing no later than seven working days after receiving the pupil's appeal.
 - c. If the pupil is not satisfied, he/she may submit a written request to the Attendance Appeals Committee for consideration.
 - d. On the pupil's request, the grade level Vice-Principal shall convene the Attendance Appeals Committee, which may consist of the grade level Vice-Principal, counselor, nurse, teacher, and Child Study Team member. The Attendance Appeals Committee shall meet informally to hear the pupil's reasons for reenrollment and/or credit restoration. The pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may attend the meeting.
 - e. The Attendance Appeals Committee shall decide the appeal and inform the pupil in writing within seven working days of the meeting. The committee may impose conditions on any reenrollment and may require the pupil to agree to those conditions.
 - f. The pupil may appeal an adverse decision of the Attendance Appeals Committee to the Building Principal, Superintendent, the Board of Education, and the Commissioner of Education, in that order and in accordance with Policy No. 5710, Pupil Grievance. Resort to the Attendance Appeals Committee shall be considered to have exhausted the first step of the grievance.

I. Attendance Improvement Plan

1. The Attendance Office will collect attendance data from each of the schools in the district and calculate the average daily attendance rate for the district and for each school. The attendance rate shall be

calculated by dividing the total number of pupil days present for all pupils by the total possible number of pupil days present for all pupils and multiplying the result by one hundred.

2. When the average daily attendance for the district or for a school does not meet the New Jersey Department of Education requirements, performance objectives to improve pupil attendance pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-12.2(a)3 shall be developed.

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