

ELEMENTARY STUDENT ATTENDANCE

PHILOSOPHY

Administrative procedures for implementing Board policy on Regular Student Attendance (Policy 501.3), are based on the following beliefs:

- a. that daily attendance is directly related to better school success.
- b. that knowing District expectations is essential for the parents/guardians and students.
- c. that understanding attendance-related terminology is needed.
- d. that the consequences of poor school attendance and punctuality must be known.

Good attendance and punctuality are indicators of responsible, well self-disciplined students. They are traits that are also good predictors of success in school, employment, and life. Students who attend regularly and are on time help their own growth and do not interfere with the potential progress of other students. Students who, due to irregular attendance or frequent tardiness, are unprepared and often create the need for unnecessary re-teaching or interruptions to class progress.

The successful implementation of school attendance-related policies and procedures is founded on fostering good communication between the home and school, providing the school information on all student absences, supporting the strong relationship between regular attendance and academic success, establishing increasingly higher expectations for school performance of students, and shifting the responsibility for school success from the family to the student as he/she progresses through the system.

Some absences are unavoidable and to help compensate for the instructional time missed, make-up work may be assigned. While it is impossible to completely compensate for absences in class, make-up work may be required for all absences. At times, school officials may determine that the problems associated with absence from school are outweighed by the advantages of an activity in which the student participates and they may endorse or sponsor activity trips. Absences due to attendance at such approved trips and activities will not be considered an absence from school; but, will require a student to make-up work missed.

DEFINITIONS

There are three (3) terms with which a person needs to become familiar. They are: absence, tardy, truant. Definitions of the terms are important to understanding the District's position on school attendance.

- A. ABSENCE:** Elementary students will be considered absent if they miss one-half or more of the morning or afternoon session. School sponsored activities will not be considered an absence but students will be required to make-up assigned work. Excused absences will include but not be limited to: 1) personal illness; 2) death or serious illness in the immediate family or household, 3) special exemptions if approved by the Principal or designee; 4) school initiated suspensions; 5) medical, dental, or legal appointments which cannot be made other than during school time; and 6) request to accompany parents/guardians (or an individual(s) approved by the parent/guardian) on trips. Unexcused Absences will include but not be limited to: tardiness, shopping, hunting, concerts, preparation or participation in parties and other celebrations, and other absences not identified as excused in the procedures for this policy.
- B. TARDY:** A student who is late to school will be considered tardy. Students are recorded as tardy up to 10:30 a.m. After 10:30, the student is recorded as absent.
- C. TRUANT:** A student who fails to attend class or school, or leaves the building without permission from his/her parent/guardian and a school official will be considered truant. Truancies accumulate throughout the entire school year. Being truant is counted as an unexcused absence.
- D. VERIFIED:** After the fifth (5th) verified absence, a letter of concern for the student's frequent absences will be sent home. After the tenth (10th) verified absence (accumulated during the year), a conference will be held to discuss how the absences are affecting the student's performance and what might be done to correct the situation. Participants in the conference may include the student, parent/guardian, counselor, and principal/designee. If the parent/guardian does not call to set up and attend this conference any further violation of the attendance policy could result in a notification to the

County Attorney.

- E. UNVERIFIED:** (1) An unverified absence means that no reason or excuse has been given to the office. (2) After the third (3rd) unverified absence, a letter will be sent home. (3) After the fifth (5th) unverified absence, a conference will take place with the student, parent, principal/designee, and support staff as deemed necessary and a phone call will be made to the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian does not call to set up and attend this conference any further violation of the attendance policy could result in attending summer school for three weeks for continuing violations in a semester.

INFRACTIONS

- A. ABSENCE:** (1) Parent/guardian will notify the school anytime. (2) The principal/teacher may involve other resources (i.e., nurse, counselor, social worker, home/school liaison, County Attorney) when working with parents in cases of excessive absences. (3) School-work missed must be completed to the satisfaction of the teacher whose class or classes were missed: a) Make-up work satisfactorily completed will receive full credit. b) Being absent from school will not be cause for an automatic reduction of credit. 4) The principal/teacher will review the student's attendance and a parent conference may be required. After the (fifth) 5th absence, a letter of concern for the students frequent absences will be sent home. After the tenth (10th) absence, a conference will be held to discuss how the absences are affecting the student's performance and what might be done to correct the situation. A total of 10 absences accumulated any time during the year, will be considered excessive.
- B. TARDIES:** (1) Upon late arrival to school, the student must report to the school office, (Students are recorded as tardy up to 10:30 a.m. After 10:30, the student is recorded as absent. Students leaving school for the day, after 2:00 p.m. are NOT counted as absent. Absences are recorded once a day.) (2) When deemed necessary, a principal/designee, working with appropriate support staff, (i.e., nurse, counselor, social worker, home-school liaison), may contact the parent in regard to the excessive tardiness.
- C. TRUANT:** A student who fails to report to class or school and/or leaves the building without permission from the parent/guardian and the office will be considered truant.

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