

Student Personnel

Series 500

Policy Title: High School Attendance Policy

Code No. 501.10A

I. RATIONALE

Research studies demonstrate a positive correlation between good attendance records and good achievement in specific subject matter areas. Further, students with a lower absence rate tend to develop a more responsible attitude, to display more satisfaction with school, and to achieve greater success in school endeavors.

A. The Greene County Board of Education in its policies says the following:

1. The Board of Education has commissioned the schools to provide the best possible education for the pupils of the Greene County Community Schools. In order to make the most efficient use of facilities and teachers, it is essential to have regular attendance.
2. The educational progress of each student is directly related to regular classroom attendance.
3. Whenever a pupil is absent from school, the value of the work missed is something that is difficult to make up by out-of-class work.
4. Many out-of-school activities have educational value, but these may or may not contribute to the skills and concepts taught in the classroom. They cannot be considered a substitute for classroom attendance.
5. Parents have the right to make the decision concerning school attendance for their children within the limits prescribed in the laws of our state. The school has the responsibility of deciding whether or not the reason provided by the parents is "excused" or "unexcused."

B. We at GCHS further believe the following to be important:

1. It is the student's responsibility to learn, and to practice good attendance habits.
2. Classroom presentations, class activities and student interaction can seldom, if ever, be duplicated for absent students.
3. All students in the classroom suffer when teacher time must be devoted to working with a student to help him/her get caught up because of absence.
4. All students should know that their attendance record is a part of their permanent school record which follows them throughout their entire lifetime.

II. POLICIES AND DEFINITIONS

Students who have been absent from any school must provide parental permission. The reason for absence will be supplied by the parent to the school. The school will then classify the absence as Excused or Unexcused. A lack of parental permission and/or prior knowledge will cause the absence to be classified as Truancy in accordance with the law.

- A. Excused Absences are defined as those absences that, in the opinion of the administration, are necessary and unavoidable, or that have significant educational value. Examples of excused absences are:

1. Illness. Doctor or dentist "emergency appointments."
 2. Death or serious illness in family.
 3. Occasional work at home.
 4. In-school or out-of-school suspension.
 5. Any absence deemed unavoidable and unpredictable by the school.
 6. Travel with family.
 7. College/Military visit. (two per year unless going with a family member)
- B. Unexcused Absences are defined as those absences that, in the opinion of the administration, would be unnecessary and avoidable with prior planning, or that have little or no educational value. Examples of unexcused absences are:
1. Skipping school or class(es).
 2. Shopping or pleasure trips.
 3. Haircuts or hair appointments.
 4. Oversleeping.
 5. Staying home to study or prepare an assignment.
 6. Work for pay.
 7. Car trouble.
 8. Senior pictures.
 9. Travel with friends, not family.
 10. Attending major events such as state tournaments as a spectator unless going with family, or going in accord with administrative guidelines for the event.
- C. Field Trips and School-Related Activities. Students whose absence from a class or classes is caused by attendance at a school function such as a field trip, or because of participation in a school organization's meeting or contest, shall not be considered absent. They are at school even though they are not actually sitting in the classroom.
- D. Truancy is defined to be the act of a pupil, who willfully, of his/her own volition, absents himself/herself from a class or school. The penalties for truancy are prescribed in the disciplinary code.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. EXCUSED ABSENCES: Following an excused absence, if work has not been made up in advance, the student will be responsible for contacting the instructors and completing all work assigned. This work must be done within a time period of the number of days missed plus one day unless the time period is extended by the instructor. Work not completed in this time period may result in loss of opportunity to make up the work for credit, and a consequent grade reduction. All work missed during this time period is required to be made up prior to the end of the term's grading period, unless otherwise expressly stated by the instructor or administrator.

NOTE: If the class activities missed were of such nature, the instructor may always require time make-up to produce the desired laboratory or activity type of performance missed. Student study hall time may be used.

- B. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES: Following an unexcused absence, this procedure shall be in force:
1. All work must be made up within the limit of number of days (or periods) missed plus one.
 2. The principal or teachers, at their discretion, may require time make-up rather than work make-up if the activity missed was such that time is required to catch up, or makeup time is

- appropriate. This time make-up will be done at the convenience of the teacher. Student study hall time may be used unless the makeup time is assigned by the principal, in which case it must be done before or after school. Failure to get work and/or time made up within prescribed time limits may result in loss of opportunity to make up the work for credit, and a consequent grade reduction.
3. A call will be made to the parent/guardian advising them that their student is not in attendance.
 4. At the third (3rd) unexcused absence, a letter will be sent home advising the parent/guardian that their student has attained 3 unexcused absences in a class or classes.
 5. At the sixth (6th) unexcused absence, a meeting will be held with the student, parent, counselor and principal. Student could receive various forms of consequences that range from: detention, ISS, OSS, and short-term alternative education placement. However, these will only be used if administration feels they will deter future attendance problems or are needed for behavioral issues linked with attendance. These decisions will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
 6. At the ninth (9th) unexcused absences, the student may be dropped from the class or classes in which the student has been unexcused. Student could receive various forms of consequences that range from: detention, ISS, OSS, and short-term alternative education placement. In some cases, students and their guardians or families may be referred to the County Attorney if unexcused absences persist. All efforts will be made to ensure consistent and positive attendance at Greene County High School. As such, these decisions will be handled on a case-by-case basis. However, these will only be used if administration feels they will deter future attendance problems or are needed for behavioral issues linked with attendance. These decisions will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- C. COURSE CREDIT: Greene County High School teachers are authorized to adopt classroom grading policies which give points and/or percentages for classroom participation. While absent students may make up work missed for full credit, they will have lost the opportunity for participation points. It is entirely possible that the loss of those points or percentages may result in a lowered grade or even a failing grade even though all absences have been excused types of absences. Should the application of this procedure result in a grade that was lowered more than one full grade, or lowered into the failing category, such a reduction must be cleared with the building principal or his/her designee prior to being assigned.

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January 8, 2014

Legal References (Code of Iowa):
Chapter 282.3

Date Amended:
June 21, 2023

Related Administrative Rules and Regulations:

Date Reviewed:
June 21, 2023