

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Absences

Education is more than the grades students receive in their courses. Important as that is, students' regular attendance at school is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them to accept responsibilities they will face as an adult. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction that results in higher student achievement.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons and the parent/guardian contacts the school upon his/her return to school from the parent or legal guardian stating such reason:

1. The student's illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students. A maximum of seven (7) such days are allowed per semester unless the condition(s) causing such absences is of a chronic or recurring nature, is medically documented, and approved by the principal;
2. Death or serious illness in their immediate family;
3. Observance of recognized holidays observed by their faith;
4. Attendance at an appointment with a government agency;
5. Attendance at a medical appointment;
6. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal,
7. Participation in an FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activity;
8. Participation in the election poll workers program for high school students.
9. Absences granted to allow a student to visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and been called to active duty, is on leave from active duty, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.
10. Absences granted, at the Principal's or Superintendent's discretion, to seventeen (17) year-old students who join the Arkansas National Guard while in the eleventh grade to complete basic combat training between grades eleven (11) and twelve (12).
11. Absences for students excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak because the student has an immunization waiver or whose immunizations are not up to date.

In order for the absence to be considered excused, the student must:

- a. Bring a written statement to the principal or designee upon the student's return to school from the student's parent or legal guardian stating the reason for the student's absence; or
- b. If the student is attending the District's courses digitally, upload a written statement from the student's parent or legal guardian stating the reason for the student's absence through the District's digital course management platform for review by the principal or designee.

A written statement presented or uploaded for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation or upload will not be accepted.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly's intention that students having excessive excused absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Excessive absences may, however, be the basis for the denial of course credit, promotion, or graduation.

Unexcused Absences

RIS and RMS Policies

- A. Ten absences per school year will be considered excessive. It is at this point that school officials may notify authorities as determined by the principal.
- B. Accumulating an excessive number of absences may be a basis of denial of promotion.
- C. The student's parents or guardians shall be notified as required by law and as necessary. As a minimum, this notification shall occur when the student has accumulated five (5) absences. Notice may be by telephone contact or by mail with the student's parents or guardian.

RJHS and RHS Policies

Absences that are not defined above; do not have an accompanying note from the parent or legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student; or person standing in loco parentis; or have an accompanying note that is not presented or uploaded within the timeline required by this policy shall be considered as unexcused absences. Students with six (6) unexcused absences in a semester may not receive credit for that course. At the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the unexcused absences, the student may be denied promotion or credit. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

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When a student has three (3) unexcused absences, his/her parents, guardians, or persons in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification shall be by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day. Whenever a student exceeds six (6) unexcused absences in a semester, the District shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, guardian, or persons in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly's intention that students having excessive absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Therefore, at any time prior to when a student exceeds the number of unexcused absences permitted by this policy, the student, or his/her parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis may petition the school or district's administration for special arrangements to

address the student's unexcused absences. If formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement's requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student, the student's parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis, and the school or district administrator or designee.

Students who attend in-school suspension shall not be counted absent for those days. Days missed due to out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be unexcused absences.

Applicants for an instruction permit or for a driver's license by persons less than eighteen (18) years old on October 1 of any year are required to provide proof of a high school diploma or enrollment and regular attendance in an adult education program or a public, private, or parochial school prior to receiving an instruction permit. To be issued a driver's license, a student enrolled in school shall present proof of a "C" average for the previous semester or similar equivalent grading period for which grades are reported as part of the student's permanent record.

A student will be allowed to make up all assignments during absences by presenting an explanation of the absence signed by the student's parent or person legally responsible. Any time a student presents a note from a licensed medical professional, or the student absence is cleared by the building administration, the absence(s) will not count toward the allowed number and the student will be allowed to make up all assignments.

The building administrator (Principal) shall determine when absences are excessive for the purpose of this policy.