

## **Elementary Student Absences and Excuses**

One criteria of a student's success in school is regular and punctual attendance. Frequent absences may lead to poor academic work, lack of social development and possible academic failure. Regular attendance is of utmost importance for school interest, social adjustment and scholastic achievement. No single factor may interfere with a student's progress more quickly than frequent tardiness or absence.

According to state law, it is the obligation of every parent/guardian to ensure that every child under their care and supervision receives adequate education and training and, if of compulsory attendance age, attends school.

Continuity in the learning process and social adaptation is seriously disrupted by excessive absences. In most situations, the work missed cannot be made up adequately. Students who have good attendance generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more and are more employable after leaving school. For at least these reasons, the Board believes that a student must satisfy two basic requirements in order to earn full class credit: (1) satisfy all academic requirements and (2) exhibit good attendance habits as stated in this policy.

### **Absence Notification**

Parents/guardians should call the Elementary School Office (854-3411) by 9:00 am to verify an absence for their son or daughter. The school will make every effort to contact home by 9:00 am if the school has not been contacted.

### **School Related Absences**

All absences directly related to school activities (i.e. field trips, contests, or school sponsored events) will be waived and will not count against a student's individual attendance record.

### **Excused absences**

The following shall be considered excused absences:

1. A student who is ill, injured, or absence for an extended period due to physical, mental or emotional disability will require written documentation from the medical provider.
2. Prearranged absences shall be approved for appointments or circumstances that cannot be taken care of outside of school hours.
3. A student who is pursuing a work-study program under the supervision of the school.
4. A student who is attending any school-sponsored activity or activities of an educational nature with advance approval by the administration.

The district may require suitable proof regarding the above exceptions, including written statements from medical sources.

If a student is in out-of-home placement (as that term is defined by C.R.S. 22-32-138 (1)(e)), absences due to court appearances and participation in court-ordered activities  
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shall be excused. The student's assigned social worker shall verify the student's absence was for a court appearance or court-ordered activity.

**Unexcused absences**

An unexcused absence is defined as an absence that is not covered by one of the foregoing exceptions. Each unexcused absence shall be entered on the student's record. The parents/guardians of the student receiving an unexcused absence shall be notified orally, in writing, or preferably in person by the district of the unexcused absence.

In accordance with law, the district may impose consequences that relate directly to classes missed while unexcused, including a warning, school detention or in-school suspension. Unexcused absences shall not be grounds for academic penalties, out-of-school suspensions, or expulsion. Research indicates that course failure and truancy is highly correlated with dropping out. To reduce the risk of students dropping out, the administration shall develop regulations to implement appropriate consequences and strategies to re-engage the student.

Students and parents/guardians may petition the Board of Education for exceptions to this policy or the accompanying regulations provided that no exception shall be sustained if the student fails to abide by all requirements imposed by the Board as conditions for granting any such exception.

The maximum number of unexcused absences a student may incur before judicial proceedings are initiated to enforce compulsory attendance age is four (4) days per month and/or ten (10) days, during any calendar year or school year.

The maximum number of unexcused absences a student may incur before judicial proceedings are initiated to enforce compulsory attendance is 10 days during any school year.

**Make-up work**

Make-up work shall be provided for any class in which a student has an excused absence unless otherwise determined by the building administrator. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up any make-up assignments permitted on the day returning to class. There shall be 2 days allowed for make-up work for each day of absence. Make-up work shall be allowed following an unexcused absence with the goal of providing the student an opportunity to keep up with the class and an incentive to attend school. This work may receive full or partial credit to the extent possible as determined by the building administrator.

**Tardiness**

Tardiness is defined as the appearance of a student without proper excuse after the scheduled time that a class begins. Because of the disruptive nature of tardiness and the detrimental effect upon the rights of the non-tardy student to uninterrupted learning, consequence shall be imposed for excessive tardiness. Parents/guardians shall be notified of all consequences regarding tardiness. Students who report to the elementary between 8:25 and 10:00 am are considered tardy. Students who arrive after 10:00 am are considered absent for one half of a day. Students who leave before 2:00 pm are also considered absent for one half of a day.

In an unavoidable situation, a student detained by another teacher or administrator shall not be considered tardy provided that the teacher or administrator gives the student a pass to enter his next class. Teachers shall honor passes presented in accordance with this policy.

The principal shall be responsible for providing appropriate consequences for tardies.

### **Excessive Unexcused Absence Notification**

Students and parents/guardians will be notified by letter when a student reaches their fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) day with an unexcused absence in a school calendar year, excluding school related absences. The letter will include: a copy of the policy as stated in the elementary handbook, and the number of excused and unexcused absences, consequences for continued unexcused absences, and the steps which will be followed with additional unexcused absences.

After seven (7) unexcused absences, the principal will contact the parents and set up a meeting to enter into an attendance contract which will include: not to miss any more class, turning in missing work related to prior absences, agreement to turn in future homework, and an agreement to avoid minor or major write-ups for behavioral issues.

If the student has an eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) or ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence, the principal and classroom teacher will meet with the parent/guardian to review the attendance contract. A home visit will be made if necessary.

After ten (10) unexcused absences, again excluding school related absences, the principal will determine the most appropriate action to be taken:

- 1.) Continuation of the attendance contract;
- 2.) Refer to the superintendent
- 3.) If all options have been exhausted, the principal may recommend to the superintendent that the student be retained in that grade for another year.

The provisions of this policy shall be applicable to all students in the district, including those above and below the age for compulsory attendance as required by law.

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