

	ABERDEEN SCHOOL DISTRICT	NEPN Code: JH
	POLICIES AND REGULATIONS	

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

The School Board of the Aberdeen School District is aware that student absenteeism affects a number of people, including students, parents, and staff members. Our schools are very concerned about how student absenteeism can interfere with the student's education, disrupt the learning process, impose on staff time and strain relationships between parents and children.

It is recognized that some student absenteeism is unavoidable. It is also recognized that students, parents, and school personnel share the responsibility for student attendance with the goal being to allow the student to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available at school. It is essential that all concerned parties work together to support regular daily attendance.

Due to Federal requirements, our District subscribes to a minimum attendance rate of 95%. Further, in compliance with the Compulsory Attendance Laws of the State of South Dakota (SDCL Chapter 13-27), the following procedures are in effect for the Aberdeen School District.

1. In accordance with state law, all students ages six (6) and not exceeding eighteen (18), and any child enrolled in school, must attend school.
2. Any student who has reached the age of eighteen (18) may withdrawal from school attendance. Any student who withdraws from school under the law has the right to be readmitted to school upon request, so long as the student has not completed the secondary school program and remains under twenty-one (21) (unless attainment of age 21 occurs during the fiscal school year).
3. Excused Absences:
 - a. Personal illness, death in the family, family emergencies, and days designated by state law will generally be excused, but will be counted for cumulative attendance record purposes.
 - b. When arranged in advance, certain absences may be permitted (but not encouraged), i.e., family trips, extreme situations which require the student's presence at home, and doctor and dental appointments which cannot be arranged during non-school hours. Such absences will be counted for cumulative attendance record purposes.
 - c. Absences due to delay in school-provided transportation will not be counted for cumulative attendance record purposes.
 - d. Absence for participation in school related activities will not be counted for cumulative attendance record purposes. Student involvement in school related activities is encouraged unless such involvement has a detrimental effect on classroom work. Maintaining the proper ratio of academics to activities is the combined responsibility of school officials, parents, and students.
 - e. When a student's excused absences has a detrimental effect on his/her classroom work, a referral may be made to the Student Assistance Team.

4. Truancy

- a. South Dakota Law (13-27-11) states that, "Any person having control of a child of compulsory school age who fails to have the child attend school as required by the provisions of this title, is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor for the first offense. For each subsequent offense, a violator of this section is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor."
- b. Truancy is defined as any absence **not approved by the school or a pattern of irregular excused attendance**. Skipping a class and/or leaving school grounds without permission is considered truancy.
- c. School procedures / consequences for truancy may include making up missed time through detention, parent notification, parent conference, loss of open campus, suspension, loss of credit, and/or referral to the Student Assistance Team. Repeated truancy instances will result in a referral to legal authorities.

5. Unexcused Absences

- a. An unexcused absence is defined as any absence not approved by the school. All absences not approved in advance, except those cited in 3a above, may be defined as unexcused.
- b. The school may or may not grant a request by a parent or guardian for an excused absence.
- c. In the case of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the administration may request a physician's statement certifying the validity of such absence.
- d. School procedures / consequences for unexcused absences include parent notification and may include making up missed time, parent conference, loss of open campus, suspension, loss of credit, Student Assistance Team referral, and/or recommendation of expulsion.

6. Student Responsibility

- a. Students are responsible for being in school on time every day for every class, unless excused.
- b. Students are responsible for contacting their teachers upon returning to school to obtain make-up work and to complete that work within the designated amount of time.
- c. A student must be in attendance at school for the entire school day in order to participate in any school sponsored activity conducted on that day. The principal / designee may grant an exception to this limitation.

7. Parent / Legal Guardian Responsibility

- a. Parents / legal guardians are responsible to see to it that students are in school and on time each day unless excused by school authorities.
- b. Parents / legal guardians are to contact the school by 9:00am each day when the student is absent.
- c. When the parent fails to contact the school on the day of the student's absence every attempt will be made by the school to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- d. When a student has been absent, the parent / legal guardian may request homework for the student. This will be prepared and available in the office as soon as possible.

8. Teacher Responsibility

- a. Teachers are responsible for taking attendance each period every day and informing the attendance office personnel of students who are absent from class.
- b. Teachers are expected to emphasize the importance of good attendance in order to achieve well in class.
- c. Teachers are to provide assignments or make-up work upon the student's return to class or on request from office personnel.

9. Administrator Responsibility

- a. The principal or designee will be responsible for establishing attendance procedures and for informing parents and students of these requirements at the beginning of each school year.
- b. The principal or designee will maintain cumulative attendance records for each student and inform parent/legal guardian/students of attendance data at each grading period.
- c. The principal or designee may request written notification of the reasons for a student's absence when he/she deems it necessary.
- d. When student absenteeism reaches designated levels, the school will implement consequences according to administrative guidelines.

LEGAL REFERENCES:

SDCL 13-27-1 Responsibility of person controlling child for school attendance
SDCL 13-27-2 Child excused from school
SDCL 13-27-3 Child excused if provided alternative instruction
SDCL 13-27-7 Notification for excuse from attendance
SDCL 13-27-9 Record of certificates of excuse from attendance
SDCL 13-28-5 Public school privileges free to children until age twenty-one

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