

4.7—ABSENCES

If any student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan conflicts with this policy, the requirements of the student's IEP or 504 Plan take precedence.

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 which results in higher student achievement.

Absences for students enrolled in digital courses shall be determined by the online attendance and time the student is working on the course rather than the student's physical presence at school. Students who are scheduled to have a dedicated period for a digital class shall not be considered absent if the student logs the correct amount of time and completes any required assignments; however, a student who fails to be physically present for an assigned period may be disciplined in accordance with the District's truancy policy.

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 student brings a written statement to the principal or designee upon his/her return to school from the parent or legal guardian stating such reason. A written statement presented for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation will **not** be accepted:

1. The student's illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students. A maximum of six (6) 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 the student's 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 Superintendent's discretion, to seventeen (17) year-old students who join the Arkansas National Guard while in eleventh grade to complete basic combat training between grades eleven (11) and (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.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-4-302
 A.C.A. § 6-18-107
 A.C.A. § 6-18-209
 A.C.A. § 6-18-220
 A.C.A. § 6-18-222
 A.C.A. § 6-18-229
 A.C.A. § 6-18-231
 A.C.A. § 6-18-507(g)
 A.C.A. § 6-18-702
 A.C.A. § 7-4-116
 A.C.A. § 9-28-113(f)
 A.C.A. § 27-16-701
 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Distance and
 Digital Learning

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