

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND EXCUSES

Connecticut state law requires parents to cause their children, ages five through eighteen inclusive, to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Mandatory attendance terminates upon graduation or withdrawal with written parent/guardian consent at ages sixteen or seventeen.

Effective with the start of the 2008-2009 school year, a student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent.

Classroom learning experiences are the basis for public school education. Time lost from class is lost instructional opportunity. The Board of Education requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child, and students should not be absent from school without parental knowledge and consent. It is the position of the Board of Education that class and school attendance should be emphasized. To this end, the Board of Education instructs the administration to construct a set of attendance procedures.

(cf. 5142 Student Safety)

(cf. 5113.2 Truancy)

(cf. 6113 Released Time)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-184 Duties of parents (as amended by PA 98-243 and PA 00-157)

10-185 Penalty

10-199 through 10-202 Attendance, truancy – in general

*Action taken by State Board of Education on January 2, 2008, to define attendance.*

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5113  
Student Attendance and Excuses

Northwestern Regional School staff and administration consider timely and regular attendance as significant contributors to school success as well as important behaviors for success in the world of work. Students are encouraged to maintain a high standard of school attendance. The cooperation of parents/guardians is solicited in this effort.

All students, regardless of age, including those eighteen or older and not living with a parent or guardian, are obligated to comply with the school's attendance policy.

Absence from school and/or class(es) falls into two categories:

1. **EXCUSED:** Absence from school and/or class(es) due to illness, death in the family, religious holy day, emergency medical or dental treatment or other such unavoidable circumstances shall be classified as excused. Such absences must be approved by the administration and the parent/guardian.
2. **UNEXCUSED:** Any absence from school which does not meet the criteria established in the Excused definition, including truancy from school.

For the purposes of this policy, the student who misses school or class(es) due to disciplinary sanctions, participation in athletics, field trips, or school related activity is not charged with an absence.

**A. SCHOOL ABSENCE**

When a student is absent from school, the parent or guardian is requested to call the House Office. If a phone call is not received, the house secretary will attempt to contact the parent or guardian. Students whose parents or guardians have not confirmed by telephone the given absence are expected to present a written excuse to the house secretary upon return to school. A student eighteen (18) or older and not living with a parent or guardian may present a written excuse directly to the house secretary upon return to school.

Any absence not so documented by either telephone contact and/or written excuse will be considered as unexcused. Any work, including tests and quizzes, missed during an unexcused absence may not be made up. If numerous absences occur due to illness, the Housemaster may require written documentation from an attending physician validating the dates of the illness.

Approved 8/91, Revised 8/29/85

Approved 11/28/95

Revised 8/2/01; Reviewed 7/20/2010

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5113  
Student Attendance and Excuses (Continued...)

**B. CLASS ABSENCE**

Referral Procedures

When a student is absent from class the following procedure is followed:

1. A triplicate class absence slip is submitted to the House Office by the teacher. The first copy of the absence slip is returned to the teacher with a determination of whether the absence was excused or unexcused. In the case of an unexcused absence, the second copy is retained in the House Office and the third copy is mailed home.
2. The student is called to the House Office to explain his/her class absence. If the absence is unexcused appropriate disciplinary action may be taken by the Housemaster. This may include after school detention, Saturday morning extended detention, and/or revocation of privileges. Students who demonstrate a pattern of continued class cutting may be subject to external suspension.

**CLASS CUTTING**

All students are expected to follow their class schedules at all times. Any class cutting, including unexcused absence from an assigned study hall, will be considered a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action. The second class cut in any one semester (1/2 year) course shall result in loss of potential credit for that course. The third class cut in any one course shall result in a loss of potential credit for that course.

If a student's schedule drops below 5-1/4 credits because of loss of credit, then he/she will be assigned to study hall that same class period.

**ATTENDANCE REVIEW BOARD**

Excessive class absence, excused or unexcused, shall result in the following:

1. **After six absences** in a class in a semester, a letter shall be mailed home;
2. **After ten absences** in a class in a semester, credit for that class may be suspended pending review by an Attendance Review Board conducted by the Housemaster to review the circumstances leading to the ten absences.

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5113  
Student Attendance and Excuses (Continued...)

**B. CLASS ABSENCE - ATTENDANCE REVIEW BOARD (continued...)**

One or more of the following interventions and/or consequences may be imposed by the Review Board:

- a. Listing conditions for make-up work;
- b. Social probation (no participation in extra-curricular activities including athletics);
- c. Attendance probation (the attendance required for the remainder of the course would be specified in order to retain credit);
- d. Referral to the Child Study Team;
- e. Loss of credit for the course.

**C. ABSENCE DUE TO VACATION**

Parents are discouraged from scheduling vacations while school is in session. Such absences are disruptive to the educational process, and may impact student learning as well as grades.

In all cases, it is very important for parents to consult with the student's counselor prior to the scheduling of such a vacation. All written work, tests, or quizzes must be made up within two weeks of the student's return to school at the convenience of the teacher.

**D. TARDINESS**

**Lateness To Class**

All students are expected to be on time for all classes. Excessive and/or chronic tardiness to class may be counted as unexcused absences from class. A student whose attendance pattern caused him/her to be subject to this regulation can expect that for each three instances of unexcused tardiness to class, he/she will be charged with one unexcused class absence.

Absences earned in this manner will be counted toward the potential loss of class credit as well as other disciplinary sanctions.

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5113  
Student Attendance and Excuses (Continued...)

**D. TARDINESS (Continued...)**

**Lateness to School**

Students who arrive at school any time after morning attendance is taken will be considered late to school. These students must sign in at their respective House Offices and will be recorded as "tardy" in the school attendance register. Such tardiness will be reported on the quarterly report card. The House Office will determine if such lateness to school was excused or unexcused and process any referral slips submitted by teachers. Students who demonstrate a pattern of unexcused lateness to school may be subject to the disciplinary sanctions to include revocation of driving privileges.

**E. EARLY DISMISSAL**

Early dismissal may be permitted by the Principal or Housemaster provided written or phone permission is received from a parent or guardian. The cases when early dismissal would be permitted are the same as stated above under "absence."

Written requests for early dismissal may be presented in the morning to the homeroom teacher or the house secretary. The early dismissal pass may be obtained later in the day at the House Office.

**F. TRUANCY**

Truancy is defined as being absent from school without knowledge of parent or guardian. A student who is truant is subject to disciplinary action. Repeated truancy will prompt a school review to include in some cases a home visit by school personnel.

A student who intentionally fails to report to homeroom or sign into school late is considered "truant in school," and is subject to appropriate discipline.