

ATTENDANCE POLICY (REGULATION)

The board of education believes that attendance in regularly scheduled classes is a key factor in student achievement and is necessary for learning and to demonstrate eligibility for course credit and/or promotion to the next grade. Thus, any absence from those classes represents an educational loss to the student. The board recognizes, however, that the cocurricular program of the school also has educational benefit. Therefore, it shall be the policy of this board to minimize absenteeism from regular classes while providing students the opportunity to participate in cocurricular activities.

In accordance with the policy of the board of education, each student in High School and Junior High School is required to attend each class a minimum of 88% of the time in order to receive credit for that class. Ten unexcused absences during the school year will result in a failure grade. Five unexcused absences during the semester will result in a failure grade.

General Provisions

In order to implement the board policy and to comply with state statutes and regulations, the following procedures and guidelines will be used:

1. Existing procedures for reporting absences will be implemented through the computerized student data base.
2. The use of the term “principal” in this regulation denotes responsibility and authority. The principal may delegate the outlined procedures to other employees, but the responsibility for implementing this regulation remains with the principal.
3. School will be in session a minimum of 175 days per school year. Student attendance is important.
4. Opportunity for enrollment and attendance at district alternative programs will be provided to assist students in meeting the attendance standard. Students who do not meet the attendance standard will receive no grade. Principals will make final determination on eligibility for promotion or receiving course credit.
5. A parent/guardian must verify absences by personally notifying the school the day of the absence. In case the parent/guardian does not call, the principal will attempt to contact the parent/guardian on the day of the absence.

6. Work (including tests) missed due to an excused absence will be made up and credit given for such work. Upon return to school, work must be made up within five school days for each absence, although additional time may be granted by the principal due to extenuating circumstances. A student will not be penalized for the teacher's absence. It is the student's responsibility to ask the teacher for make-up work. When the work is made up, the student will be given proper credit.
7. The following are excused absences:
 - A. Personal illness or injury
 - B. Medical appointments (doctor or dental)
 - C. Bereavement
 - D. Serious illness or emergency in the immediate family
 - E. Legal matters, including service on a grand, multicounty grand, or petit jury *
 - F. Extenuating circumstances deemed necessary by the principal
 - G. Observance of religious holidays required by student's religious affiliation.
 - I. School bus not running
 - J. Student suspension when student is found innocent following an evidentiary hearing.
8. Students will be allowed to be absent from the classroom for a maximum of ten days per semester to participate in activities sponsored by the school. Students will not be counted absent from school for participation in approved school activities, e.g., science fair, history fair, MATHCOUNTS, athletic events sanctioned by the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association, etc. Classwork missed due to attendance at school activities must be made up within five days after returning to school. Credit will be given.
9. Students absent for reasons other than those mentioned above are unexcused. When there is a question about an absence, the principal or other appropriate administrator will determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

If a pattern of unexcused absences is noted, the student will be counseled and/or alternative education programs provided. When a student has three or more unexcused absences, the principal or designee will promote attendance with the student and parents by explaining district policies and state law concerning truancy. Counseling, schedule changes, make-up

time, in-school suspension, etc., may be utilized. Opportunities shall be provided within each quarter to make up unexcused absences. Students will be given credit for make-up attendance at designated alternative education programs.

10. When a student has three consecutive unexcused absences or a total of five days of unexcused absences within a semester, the principal or designee will schedule a conference to develop an attendance improvement plan with the student, parent/guardian, the school counselor, and other persons deemed necessary.
 - A. The principal will inform the student and parent/guardian of the state law and district policy on attendance and attempt to develop a plan to improve attendance. Such a plan may include, but is not limited to, an alternative education program, curriculum changes, involvement of community programs, schedule changes, and Parent Effectiveness Training for the parent.
 - B. The principal or designee will monitor attendance of the student to determine if there is improvement in attendance. If there is improvement, the student and parent should be advised.
 - C. If there is no improvement, the principal shall determine if the student should or should not be evaluated for special services.
 - D. If poor attendance continues, the administrator of student services will initiate a complaint in a court of competent jurisdiction against the parent/guardian. The complaint may also be filed against students aged 16 and 17.
 - E. When the student returns to school, a conference will be scheduled by the principal with persons deemed appropriate to develop an educational program for the student.
11. If a student has ten consecutive unexcused absences, the student will be dropped from the roll on the eleventh day. If the absences are excused, the student will be dropped after twenty consecutive absences on the twenty-first day. Existing procedures for reporting such cases will be followed.
12. All excessive absences due to illness will be reported to the school nurse by the attendance clerk. The school nurse shall also have access to attendance records.

When a student's absences due to illness occur, the principal will confer with the nurse and attempt to determine possible causes and suggest remedial health and/or educational programs for the student, including homebound instruction, when deemed appropriate.

13. The director of student services will develop a list of social agencies that may provide assistance to students and distribute a copy to each principal.

High Schools and Middle Schools

1. High school students in grades 9-12 are required to earn a minimum of 70 clock hours for a course credit. No student will be eligible for course credit if he/she has more than five unexcused absences per semester. Students living in the attendance area enrolling after the fifth day of the semester will be allowed to make up absences by attending alternative programs. Students not earning a minimum of 70 clock hours for a course credit will receive no grade. Principals will make final determination on eligibility for course credit.
2. Middle school students living in the attendance area enrolling after the first day of school will have those days recorded as absences unless those days were missed for reasons which would constitute excused absences pursuant to district policy. Students will be allowed to make up absences by attending alternative programs.
3. For each class period, secondary school teachers will provide a list of those students absent or tardy.
4. Principals will collect information from teachers and construct a master list of those students absent.
5. Attendance clerks will record daily absence/tardy information through the on-line computerized student data base.
6. Attendance clerks will attempt to contact a parent/guardian, if a parent/guardian has not contacted the school to determine reasons for absence.
7. At the end of the day, the attendance clerk will prepare a list of student absentees to be distributed to teachers at the beginning of the next school day.
8. Teachers will record absences and tardies in their class record books. Three tardies will count as one absence.
9. To be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, secondary student must maintain attendance and scholarship requirements as outlined in board policy and the rules and regulations of the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association. (See also policies FM and FMA.) For purposes of this section, an absence from one or more classes during a day will be considered as one absence.

- A. The attendance clerk will notify the principal when a student becomes ineligible due to non-attendance.
- B. Teachers, coaches, and sponsors of the various student organizations of the school will inform students of these provisions and will not permit students to participate in activities when the requirements are not fulfilled.

Elementary Schools

1. Elementary students living in the attendance area, who enroll after the first day of school, will have those days recorded as absences unless those days were missed for reasons that would constitute excused absences pursuant to district policy. Alternative programs can be used to make up absences.
2. The principal and staff will periodically review the plan for record keeping and notification of parent/guardian of student absences.
 - A. The plan must have approval of the appropriate director.
 - B. The plan must include provisions for notifying the parent/guardian of the state statutes and district policy concerning truancy.
 - C. The attendance clerk/secretary will record daily absence/tardy information through the on-line computerized student data base. Tardies will not be counted toward an absence for purposes of state and local reporting.
3. A plan for follow-up will be developed and monitored to determine if there is improvement in attendance. If there is improvement, the student and parent should be advised.
4. When the student returns to school, a conference will be scheduled by the principal with persons deemed appropriate to develop an educational program for the student.

Absence by Arrangement

The board recognizes that parents retain certain rights to determine appropriate experiences for their children. Parents who do not want their children to attend portions of classes because of personal or religious beliefs may request excuses for not attending the class. The request must be made to the building principal. The principal will make a decision to honor or deny the request. The decision by the principal may be appealed to the appropriate director.

Other absences by arrangement are absences in which the parents deem it necessary that a child miss school for reasons other than those that fall within an excused absence.

1. A student may take up to five (5) days of absences by arrangement per semester.
2. A student may make up all work missed without penalty. It is up to the student, on the day of return, to make arrangements to see that the work is made up.
3. In order to take an absence by arrangement, the parent, or guardian, must submit, at least two days prior to the absence, a written request for the student to be absent. If the request is not made as required, the absence will be treated as an unexcused absence.
4. Absences by arrangement will count against a student's exemption from semester tests.

Truancy

A student is considered truant when absent from the classroom without the knowledge of either the school or the parent.

If a student is absent from school four or more days or parts of days within a four-week period without a valid excuse or is absent without valid excuse for ten (10) or more days during a semester, the attendance officer will inform the parents that they are not in compliance with Oklahoma Statutes, Title 70, Section 10-101, et seq., and will notify the district attorney for Oklahoma county. **Parents can be fined up to \$100.00 for each day their child is truant from school.**

Tardies

In secondary schools, three tardies will count as one absence.

1. A student who enters the classroom after the last bell rings is tardy.
2. A student who is more than 15 minutes late is counted absent for the period.
3. Three tardies will count as one absence from that class.
4. A student who is one hour or more late in the morning will be counted absent for ½ day. A student must be present at least two hours in the afternoon to be counted present for the day.

*** REFERENCE: 38 O.S. §37**

CROSS-REFERENCE: Student and Parent Handbook

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