

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENTEE PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE

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.

PARENT FOR COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

Arkansas code concerning attendance requirements for children between the ages of five (5) and seventeen (17) is amended to add to those under which there is a penalty for noncompliance regarding school attendance requirements:

- Every parent
- Legal Guardian
- Person having lawful control of the child, or
- Person standing in loco parentis

EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT TO INCLUDE CUSTODIANS

Custodians of a child are now included with Parents and Guardians concerning educational neglect and reports of educational neglect made to the Child Abuse Hotline.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences are those where a student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons:

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, 4-H, Quiz Bowl, Chess, or school academic/athletic 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 has 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 design.

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.
12. Absences due to conditions related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation:
 - Labor, delivery, and recovery
 - Prenatal and postnatal medical appointments and other medically necessary, pregnancy-related absences;
 - the illness or medical appointment of a child belonging to a parent who is enrolled at a District school;
 - A legal appointment related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation:
 - Adoption;
 - Custody; and
 - Visitation;
 - A reasonable amount of time to accommodate a lactating student's need to express breast milk or to breastfeed the student's child on the District's campus; and
 - At least ten (10) school days of absences for both a parenting mother and a parenting father after the birth of a child.
13. Absences for a student who is the child of a fallen service member or fallen first responder;
 - Due to a mental health concern; or
 - To attend an event from a sponsoring organization that provides support to families of fallen service members or first responders or provides support for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency.
14. Upon the written consent of a student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or the person standing in loco parentis to the student, the District shall grant an excused absence for the following purposes:
 - Social or public policy advocacy; or
 - Attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or federal level.

Students who serve as pages for a member of the General Assembly shall be considered on instructional assignment and shall not be considered absent from school for the day the student is serving as a page.

Up to one (1) time during each scheduled election, a student shall not be considered absent from school for the time the student accompanies the student's parent when the parent is exercising the parent's right to vote in a scheduled election.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences that are not defined above; do not have an accompanying note from the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the students; person standing in loco parentis, the student's treating physician, or a 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the 4-H activity or program; or have an accompanying note that is not presented or uploaded within the timeline required by this policy, shall be considered as unexcused absences. Students with five (5) unexcused absences in a course in a semester may not receive credit for that course. At the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the absences, the student may be denied promotion. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

When a student has two (2) unexcused absences, his/her parents, legal guardians, persons with lawful control of the student, or persons in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification shall be sent home with students, by telephone or regular mail. The following steps will be taken as absences are accumulated each semester:

(a) 2nd unexcused absence	Parent Letter
(b) 4th unexcused absence	Parent Letter
(c) 6th-unexcused absence	Parent Letter and Juvenile Authorities will be contacted

Whenever a student exceeds five (6) unexcused absences in a semester, the District shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

Students who attend In School Suspension (ISS) will not be counted absent for those days.

Days missed due to out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be unexcused absences

TARDY POLICY

The intent of the tardy policy is to ensure that students are in the classroom, so the teacher can begin instruction without undue delay or interruption.

A student is tardy if they check in between 7:35 AM and 8:45 AM or check out after 2:00 PM. If a student signs-in after 9:30, they are considered absent for half a day. If they check out prior to 2:00, they are considered absent for the afternoon.

Excessive tardies or absences can be detrimental to your child's education. Children are expected to be at school on time. If tardies or absences become excessive, parents will be referred to a counselor and/or juvenile court.

The following steps will be taken as tardies are accumulated each semester:

In order for the absence to be considered excused, the student must:

- Bring a written statement to the principal or designee upon the student's return to school from the student's parent, legal guardian, or treating physician stating the reason for the student's absence;
- If the student is attending the District's courses digitally, upload a written statement from the student's parent, legal guardian, or treating physician stating the reason for the student's absence through the District's digital course management platform for review by the principal or designee; or
- Provide documentation as proof of a student's participation in an activity or program scheduled and approved by the 4-H program that is provided by a 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the 4-H activity or program; or
- The student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student provides written documentation that the student's absence is to attend an event from a sponsoring organization that:
 - Provides support to families of fallen service members or first responders or provides support for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency; and
 - May be verified as an organization that provides support to the military and first responder community by reviewing the Resources Page for Military Family Engagement on the Department of Education website.

A written statement presented or uploaded for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation or upload will not be accepted.

A student shall not be eligible to receive an excused absence for #13 above if:

- The student is not in good academic standing;
- The student does not have a prior record of good attendance; or
- The absence occurs during a date on which standardized testing is administered.

The District shall annually provide a report by June 30 to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education that contains the following:

- The number of absences requested under number 14;
- The number of absences granted under number 14; and
- The stated purposes of the absence.

Maximum of 5 days will be allowed, per semester, with a written statement. Consecutive days absent for the same illness will be counted as 1 of the Maximum 5 days.

(a) 6 th unexcused tardy	Parent letter
(b) 10 th unexcused tardy	Parent letter
(c) 12 th unexcused tardy	Parent Letter

To have a tardy excused, the student must present a notice from the doctor or dentist to the office upon arrival at school. To be eligible for perfect attendance a student must be present every minute of every school day.

VIRTUAL STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Students who have been expelled shall be offered digital learning courses, or other alternative educational services, so that they can receive academic credits that are at least equal to credit that the expelled student may have received if still enrolled. (Act 709)

In order for STUDENTS to be counted Present for any and all virtual Classes:

General Guidelines and Expectations:

1. All Virtual Students must log into their Virtual Classes each day.
2. All Virtual Students must communicate in some way with their teacher (teachers) each day. This could be an e-mail, post, virtual meet, etc.
3. All Virtual Students must attempt to do their assignments as directed by their teacher (teacher) each day.

*(The Building Principal has the discretion to determine if a student should be counted absent based on the above criteria).

Failure to comply with the guidelines of the virtual attendance policy in combination with failing 2 or more courses (grades 3-12 or performing below grade level standards for K-2) will result in a FINS petition being filed with the juvenile court.

MAKE-UP WORK

If your child needs to do make-up work or work missed because of absences, please contact the school before 9:00 AM. This will allow the teacher time during the day to gather all work. The assignments will be in the office by 4:00 PM. If contacted after 9:00 AM, the assignments will not be ready until the following day by 4:00 PM.

Work for students serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be in accordance with the District's programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during the student's period of suspension or expulsion,

