

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is a major component of academic success. Through implementation of this policy, the Board expects to minimize the number of unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures (referred to in this policy as “ATEDs”), encourage full attendance by all students, maintain an adequate attendance recordkeeping system, identify patterns of student ATEDs and develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance.

To be successful in this endeavor, it is imperative that all members of the school community are aware of this policy, its purpose, procedures and the consequences of non-compliance. To ensure that students, parents/guardians, teachers and administrators are notified of and understand this policy, the following procedures shall be implemented.

- The attendance policy shall be included in student handbooks and shall be reviewed with students at the start of the school year.
- It is recommended that the PTA/PTSA of each school discuss and disseminate the attendance policy at a meeting early in the school year.
- School newsletters and publications shall include periodic reminders of the components of this policy, and the school district calendar shall include a summary.
- The District shall provide a copy of the attendance policy and any amendments thereto to faculty and staff. New staff shall receive a copy upon their employment.
- At the beginning of each school year, the attendance policy shall be reviewed at faculty meetings to clarify individual roles in its implementation.
- Copies of this policy shall also be made available to any community member, upon request.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Excused ATEDs are defined as absences, tardiness, and early departures from class or school due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads or weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, medical or dental appointments, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, or such other reasons as may be approved by the principal, including, but not limited to, absences due to circumstances related to homelessness. All other ATEDs are considered unexcused absences.

All ATEDs must be accounted for. It is the parent’s/guardian’s responsibility to notify the school office within 24 hours of the ATED and to provide a written excuse upon the student’s return to school. For homeless students, the District homeless liaison shall assist the student in accordance with *Policy 5151 Homeless Students* in providing or obtaining documentation if needed.

General Procedures/Data Collection

- When a student is absent, tardy, or leaves early from class or school without excuse, designated staff member(s) shall notify the student's parents/guardians by phone and mail of the specific ATED, remind them of the attendance policy, and review ATED intervention procedures with them.
- In non-departmentalized grades, attendance shall be taken once each day.
- In departmentalized grades, attendance shall be taken during each class period except where pupils do not change classrooms.
- At the conclusion of each class period or school day, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the designated staff member responsible for attendance.
- The nature of an ATED shall be coded on a student's record (see **5100-E**).
- Student ATED data shall be available to and should be reviewed by the designated school personnel in an expeditious manner.
- Where additional information is received that requires corrections to be made to a student's attendance records, such correction shall be made immediately. Notice of such a change shall be sent to appropriate school personnel subject to applicable confidentiality rules.
- Attendance data shall be analyzed periodically to identify patterns or trends in student absences.
- Where consistent with other school practices, teachers and staff shall identify students who are absent from a class period without excuse and refer the students to the appropriate school administrator.
- Continuous monitoring shall be conducted to identify students who are absent, tardy, or leave class or school early.
- Parents/guardians have access to their child's attendance records through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

Attendance Incentives

- Principals are requested to develop, with student and faculty participation, a system to acknowledge students' efforts to maintain or improve school attendance.
- Building Principals and teachers are encouraged to schedule special events (quizzes, game days, debates, etc.) for days of chronically high absenteeism, like Mondays and Fridays.
- Teachers are encouraged to assign special responsibilities (distribute and collect materials, lead groups, assist the teacher, etc.) to students who may need extra motivation to come to school.

Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused ATEDs shall result in disciplinary action consistent with the District *Code of Conduct (Policy 5300)*. Those penalties may include, for example, detention or in-school suspension. Students may also be denied the privilege of participating in or attending extracurricular events or field trips. However, absences related to homelessness shall not result in negative consequences when the District determines that it would be in the best interests of the student to retain the student in school.

In instances of excessive, unexcused ATEDs, designated staff member(s) shall contact the student's parents/guardians and the student's guidance counselor when an unexcused ATED occurs. Such staff member(s) shall remind parents/guardians of the attendance policy, explain the ramifications of unexcused ATEDs, stress the importance of class attendance and discuss appropriate intervention strategies to correct the situation.

In addition, if educational neglect is suspected, the designated staff member shall provide the information necessary to initiate a report to the building principal or his/her designee who shall then contact local Child Protective Services (CPS). If other staff members suspect education neglect, they shall follow the procedures outlined in *Policy 5460, Child Abuse in a Domestic Setting*.

Attendance/Grade Policy

The Board of Education recognizes an important relationship between class attendance and student performance. Consequently, each marking period a student's final grade may be based on classroom participation as well as a student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects, etc.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Unexcused ATEDs may be factored into the evaluation of a student's class participation.

Parents/guardians shall be kept informed of students' attendance records through quarterly report cards or periodic school progress reports.

Making Up Work

In implementing the policy set forth above, students who are unable to attend school or a class on a given day due to their participation in a school-sponsored activity may arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed. This also applies to any student who is absent, tardy or leaves early from school or a class due to illness or any other excused reason.

All students with an excused ATED are expected upon their return to consult with their teachers regarding missed work.

Only those students with excused ATEDs shall be given the opportunity to make up a test or other missed work and/or turn in a late assignment for inclusion in their final grade. Make up opportunities must be completed by a date specified by the teacher for the class in question.

Annual Review

The Board shall annually review building-level student attendance records and, if such records show a decline in student attendance, the Board shall revise this comprehensive attendance policy and make any revisions to the plan it deems necessary to improve student attendance.

Great Neck Public Schools

Adopted: 6/17/02

Amended: 2/13/17