

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT**

ATTENDANCE POLICY: K-12

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Research and studies have demonstrated that regular attendance is a key factor in the success a student achieves in school. Much of what a student learns deals with facts, concepts, and theories that are presented and discussed in class everyday. In addition, other learning processes take place each day that are vital to a student's overall growth and education.

Connecticut State law requires Public Schools to provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of their obligations under Connecticut General Statute §10-184. This law provides that each parent(s)/guardian(s) or other person having control of a child seven years of age and older and under eighteen years of age, is obligated to cause the child to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Failure to comply with Connecticut General Statute § 10-185 requirement is punishable each day by a \$25.00 fine.

It is the position of the Board of Education that mandatory attendance by students is required. Furthermore, the Board of Education requires that accurate attendance records be kept for every child. The following school attendance procedures for grades K to 12 have been developed to encourage students and parent(s)/guardian(s) to minimize absences in order to gain maximum benefits and success from daily classroom activities.

GRADES K-8

I. Attendance to School

A. Absences-Excused

1. Whenever a student is absent from school, a parent(s)/guardian(s) must notify the school by telephone on the morning of the absence. The school will call the home of any absentee or may involve the school attendance officer if the school has not been notified the day of the absence.
2. Absences may be excused for the following reasons:
 - a. Illness;
 - b. Death in the family;
 - c. Medical/professional/legal appointments which cannot be made before or after school hours;
 - d. Religious observances;
 - e. Any other reason, which the school principal deems valid.

Please Note:

While the above stated reasons for absences are classified as excused, they will count toward the total number of absences in any school year.

3. Students participating in a school-sponsored activity/program will be considered present for attendance purposes.

4. Family vacations are discouraged during the school year.
- B. Absences-Unexcused (Truancy)
1. Students who stay out of school for an entire day without parental or school consent are considered truant.
 2. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by mail by the school administration when a child has five (5) or more unexcused absences.
 3. Each school will conduct regular attendance committee meetings with the district attendance officer in accordance with Connecticut General Statute § 10-198a,b,c to discuss truancy/attendance issues and possible intervention strategies/agencies.
 4. Students who are not achieving to their potential and have fifteen (15) or more absences in June, will become part of the *at risk* list for the following school year.

II. Early Dismissal from School

Any dismissal from school can only be authorized by the school office or building administrator(s). Parent(s)/guardian(s) that wish their child to be dismissed early should send the student to school with a signed note stating the time of dismissal. This note should be presented to the school administration before homeroom period on the day of the dismissal. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are to sign out their child in the main office. For the protection and safety of the student, dismissals are routinely made only to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of that student. If there are special circumstances that necessitate someone other than the parent(s)/guardian(s) to pick up the student, their name should be stated in the dismissal note.

III. Tardy to School

Tardy to school is defined as a student that enters the school building after the start of the school day or homeroom period. Ensuring that a student arrives to school on time is a parental responsibility. If a student arrives late to school, they need to report to the school office/housemaster's office to sign in. The student needs to bring a signed note from a parent(s)/guardian(s) to explain their tardiness. Each time an unexcused tardiness to school occurs, the student will be assigned a demerit in grades seven and eight.

GRADES 9-12

Since the classroom is the primary area where most learners experience the acquisition of knowledge, it becomes apparent that attendance in class is a valid, reasonable requirement. It is the position of the Board of Education that mandatory attendance by students is required. The following attendance procedures have been developed to encourage students and parent(s)/guardian(s)

to minimize absences in order to gain the maximum benefits from daily classroom activities. Students who fail to meet their responsibilities may lose course credit.

I. ATTENDANCE TO SCHOOL

A. Absences/Tardies – Excused

1. Whenever a student is absent from school, a parent(s)/guardian(s) must notify the school by telephone on the morning of the absence. A note signed by the parent, guardian, medical professional or similar authority is also acceptable. If neither of the above is provided, the absence will be classified as unexcused.
2. Absences/tardies may be excused for the following reasons:
 - a. Illness;
 - b. Death in the family;
 - c. Medical/professional/legal appointments which cannot be made after school hours;
 - d. Religious observance;
 - e. Any other reason which the Principal deems valid.

Please Note:

While the above stated reasons for absences are classified as excused, they will count toward the total number of absences when determining course credit. Suspensions from school do not count towards the total number of absences for loss of credit.

3. Family vacations are discouraged during the school year. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students should be aware that school days missed as a result of family vacations; will be included in the attendance requirements for each course.
4. Students who are participating in school sponsored activities will be considered present for attendance purposes.
5. Students who exceed ten (10) absences in semester courses, and twenty (20) absences in yearlong courses, will lose full course credit.
6. The school administration will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) by mail as follows:
 - a. Semester Courses: 5th absence – warning
11th absence – loss of credit
 - b. Yearlong Courses: 10th absence – warning
21st absence – loss of credit
 - c. At the time of notification, the student will be required to date and sign the warning/loss of credit sheet, indicating the impact of the student's attendance on his/her credits. Notification may be sent home unsigned if the student's absenteeism prevents the student from signing the notification in a timely manner. Students who lose

credit as a result of this policy, will be given an opportunity to appear before an Appeals Committee.

The intent of this policy is not to say that a certain number of absences from school or a course are acceptable or allowable.

B. Absences - Unexcused (Truancy)

1. Students who stay out of school for an entire school day without parental or school consent are considered truant.
2. After each truancy, the student will receive a written notification of possible loss of course credit in accordance with the following procedures:
 - a. Upon the student's first truancy from school or from an individual class, the student shall be issued a written warning that an additional truancy from school or from the specified class, will result in a loss of $\frac{1}{4}$ credit in any classes from which the student was truant. The student shall be required to sign this notification. Notification may be sent home unsigned if the student's absenteeism prevents the student from signing the notification in a timely manner. The student shall be provided a copy of this notification. Additional copies shall be maintained in the student's records.
 - b. Upon the student's second truancy from school or from an individual class, the student shall be issued a written notification that he/she has lost $\frac{1}{4}$ credit in any classes from which the student was truant. The student shall be required to sign this notification. Notification may be sent home unsigned if the student's absenteeism prevents the student from signing the notification in a timely manner. The student shall be provided a copy of this notification. Additional copies shall be maintained in the student's records.
 - c. A similar pattern of warnings and credit losses will be followed for subsequent trancies. A third truancy from school or from a specified class will result in a warning for potential loss of credit. A fourth truancy from school or from a specified class, will result in an additional loss of credit.
3. These absences will also count towards the total number of absences under the attendance policy.
4. Students will receive a zero (0) for all schoolwork on the day of truancy.

C. Homeroom

1. All students are to report immediately to homeroom upon entering the building.
2. Students arriving after the completion of homeroom must report to the Assistant Principal's office before being admitted to class.
3. Tardiness to homeroom or failure to sign in with the Assistant Principal's office when arriving on school property after the completion of homeroom shall result in disciplinary action.

D. Participation in After School Activities

1. Students who are absent from school will not be allowed to participate in any after school activity on the day of the absence.
2. Students absent on Fridays will not participate in Friday or weekend events.
3. At the discretion of the building principal, or the principal's designee, tardy students who have established a pattern of tardiness, may be suspended from after school activities for that day.
 - a. A pattern of tardiness shall be defined as three or more unexcused tardies in a given marking period.
 - b. Students who have established a pattern of tardiness are to be warned that continued tardiness would result in suspension from after school activities before such suspensions are to take place.
 - c. Students suspended from after school activities on Friday, will not participate in Friday or weekend events.
 - d. The decision of the building principal, or the principal's designee is final.
 - e. The principal or the principal's designee is to notify the student's coach or activity advisor of such a suspension.

II. CLASS ATTENDANCE

A. Tardiness to Class

1. Excused Tardies to Class
 - a. Students who arrive late to class are expected to obtain a pass from another teacher, excusing their tardiness.
 - b. Students have up to 24 hours to secure an official pass for the tardiness; otherwise it will be considered an unexcused tardy to class.
 - c. Students who arrive to class after the mid-point of the period with a pass, will be charged with an absence.
2. Unexcused Tardies to Class
 - a. Unexcused tardies to class will be treated as part of the attendance policy.
 - b. Every two (2) unexcused tardies will be the equivalent of one (1) absence from class and will be included in the total number of absences that cannot be exceeded in order to gain course credit.

- c. Students who arrive to class after the mid-point of the period without a pass excusing their tardiness, will be charged with an unexcused absence.
- d. Students will be subject to disciplinary action for each unexcused tardy in the form of teacher detention, office detention or possible suspension from school.
- e. Teachers will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) when a student is developing a pattern of habitual tardiness to class.

B. Unexcused Absences from Class

1. Students who deliberately miss class will be subject to disciplinary action in the form of administrative detention and possible suspension from school.
2. Students will receive a zero (0) for all schoolwork missed.
3. Unexcused absences from class will result in possible loss of course credit in accordance with Section I, Part B, Item 2.
4. These absences are also included in the total accumulated per class.

C. Dismissals from School

1. Included here are classes missed when a student has an early dismissal. The only acceptable reasons for leaving school early are those stated in the section dealing with excused absences from school.
2. Dismissals from class due to activities such as field trips, band lessons, and other school sponsored activities, will not count towards the total number of course absences.

III. APPEAL PROCEDURE

- A. Any student who has lost credit as a result of any portion of the attendance policy may request from his/her Assistant Principal, a hearing for the purpose of restoring the credit.
- B. The student will meet with his/her guidance counselor and submit a written explanation for the reason(s) why the credit should be restored.
- C. The completed request form is to be returned to the student's Assistant Principal no less than five (5) school days before the end of the quarter. Appeals filed after that date; will not be heard unless the student was notified of his/her loss of credit after that date. In such cases, students are to file their appeals to the Appeals Committee during that quarter.
- D. An Appeals Committee will meet at least quarterly. The voting members of the Appeals Committee will consist of an administrator, a guidance counselor (or a neutral teacher), and a neutral teacher.

- E. The Appeals Committee may re-instate credit for absences in excess of ten (10) for semester courses, twenty (20) for yearlong courses, or for unexcused absences.
 - 1. Re-instatement of credit may only be granted when the excessive or unexcused absenteeism is the result of extraordinary circumstances.
 - 2. The Appeals Committee may grant waivers on a conditional basis, requiring changes in student behaviors to validate the waiver.
- F. The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the opportunity to present all corroborating information in support of the appeal at the hearing.
- G. The Appeals Committee will render a decision within three (3) school days after the conclusion of the hearing and so notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student of the decision in writing.
- H. The decision of the Appeals Committee panel is final.

IV. CREDIT LOSS/RESTORATION

- A. Students who lose course credit due to the attendance policy may be permitted to remain in the course and receive a grade for the following purposes: to maintain full-time student status, G.P.A. computation, eligibility for summer school, eligibility for extra curricular activities and for the student's transcript.
- B. Credit lost due to the attendance policy may be restored by one of the following methods:
 - 1. Repeat the course during the school year.
 - 2. Attend summer school (provided summer school requirements are satisfied).
 - 3. Repeat the course during the summer at an approved college.
- V. The Board of Education recognizes the seriousness of absenteeism and authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Adopted: September 11, 1979
Effective: September 24, 1979
Amended: August 25, 1981
Amended: June 16, 1986
Effective: September 1, 1986

Amended: July 10, 1989
Amended: December 11, 1990
Amended: May 9, 1995
Revised: May 11, 2004