

TRUANCY - UNEXCUSED ABSENCES REGULATION

Daily, punctual attendance is an integral part of the learning experience and is required of all students to receive the maximum benefit of the educational program. The habit of good attendance established early is one which helps a person be successful throughout their lifetime. More and more, employers, colleges and vocational schools expect good attendance and are checking student attendance records. They are aware that good and prompt attendance indicates dependability in a student.

The education that goes on in the classroom builds from day to day and as a result, absences always cause some disruption in the educational progress of the absent student. Students who are absent may not understand what the teacher is currently presenting, and may also become discouraged with the double burden of keeping current and making up missed work. In order to maintain interest and understanding in the instructional program, students should not expect to be absent any more than is absolutely necessary. Irregular attendance or tardiness by students not only limits their own studies, but also interferes with the progress of those students who are regular and prompt in attendance. Attendance is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation and communication among students, parents and school.

Students who are absent without a reasonable excuse, as determined by the principal, will be assigned to detention, in-school suspension, or other appropriate disciplinary sanction. Reasonable excuses include illness, family emergencies, recognized religious observances and school sponsored or approved activities. Reasonable excuses may also include family trips or vacations, if the student's work is finished prior to the trip or vacation. Parents are expected to telephone the school office to report a student's absence prior to 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. Students with unexcused absences may also be referred to the at-risk coordinator/counselor.

Homework/class assignments are an integral process of the student's educational program. Students are expected to hand in their homework when the teacher so specifies. The district recommends that teachers permit students who have been absent to hand in homework after the specified date for at least partial credit within two times the number of days after the assigned time. The teacher makes the final judgment for credit to be awarded.

School work missed because of excused absences must be made up within two times the number of days absent, not to exceed 10 days. This provision covers assignments given during a student's absence, not assignments given previous to the student's absence which will be due upon the student's return and not subject to a time extension unless subsequently agreed to by the instructor and student. The time allowed for make-up work may be extended at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Teachers shall not have attendance or grading practices that are in conflict with this provision.

The administration and guidance staff will make reasonable efforts to advise and counsel and may impose discipline upon any student after an unexcused absence. Such advice, discipline and counseling includes, but is not limited to, oral or written notices to the student and his or her parents, conferences with the student and parents, written contracts, or loss of non-academic privileges such as extracurricular activities, late arrival or early dismissal. If a student accumulates 5 unexcused absences

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in a class, he or she may lose credit for the class. Prior to imposing the loss of credit in one or more classes, the principal will provide the student an opportunity for an informal hearing. Consecutive unexcused absence for consideration of dropping a class or classes will be considered as one infraction for removal from the class. Parents must have an opportunity to work with the school in correcting the student's absence behavior before a class is dropped.

Students will remain in class until the principal makes a decision regarding loss or restoration of credit. Full credit is awarded to all assignments and tests submitted that meet the teacher's specifications until a decision regarding credit has been made. If a student is removed from the class and loses credit for unexcused absences, that fact shall be recorded in the student's record.

A student who loses credit due to unexcused absences is assigned to supervised study hall, for the period(s) in which the course(s) meet or the student may be reassigned to another class or location. A student who, after a hearing before the principal, loses credit in a course due to unexcused absences, will be declared academically ineligible.

Appeal Process

- A. First level of appeal
 1. When notified that the student has been unexcused for a day(s) or class period(s), the parent should contact the principal to discuss the student's attendance and prevent any further absences.
 2. When notified that the student has five unexcused absences, the student may be dropped from a class. The student and parent may file a written appeal with the principal within 5 school days of the notification. Sanctions imposed under this policy will be final unless a written appeal is submitted to the principal.
 3. Written appeals will be referred to the principal.
 4. The student will remain in the class or in school pending completion of the appeals process.
 5. The informal appeals hearing will be scheduled within 5 school days after the appeal is filed. The principal will consider the following in reaching a decision:
 - a. attendance history of the student;
 - b. extenuating circumstances particular to the student;
 - c. educational alternatives to removal from class or school; or
 - d. the total educational program for the individual student.
 6. The decision of the principal will be reached within one day of the hearing. The parent will be notified of the decision in writing.

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B. Second Level of Appeal

Students and parents seeking a review of the principal's decision regarding sanctions rendered under this attendance policy may do so by filing a written request for review with the superintendent within five days after the principal's decision. The superintendent will determine an agreeable time, place and date for the review and notify the student and parent. At the conclusion of the review, the superintendent shall affirm, reverse or modify the principal's decision.

C. Appeal to Board of Directors

Students and parents may appeal the superintendent's decision by filing a written request for review by the board within five days with the board secretary. It is within the discretion of the board to determine whether to hear the appeal. If the appeal is accepted, the board secretary will determine an agreeable time, place and date for the review and notify the interested persons. At the conclusion of the review, the board may affirm, reverse or modify the superintendent's decision.

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