

Attendance in school is central to educational achievement and school success. Attendance and participation in class is an integral part of the teaching-learning process, and thereby a part of the grade earned. Additionally, regular attendance develops patterns of behavior essential to success in later life, both personal and business. While there are times when students must be absent from school due to physical inability to attend, it must be understood that parents or legal guardians have the responsibility for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily.

In the event of absence or tardiness, it shall be the responsibility of the student to bring to the principal or his/her designee a note signed by the parent or guardian citing the reason for such absence or tardiness. After accumulating ten absences due to illness or injury, a physician's statement will be required to deem an absence excused. A principal may require any additional documentation deemed necessary to verify an absence or tardiness.

Such notes shall be presented within two days of the student's return to school. Failure to comply will result in the absence or tardiness being recorded as unexcused.

- 6000.1 Every parent or guardian residing within the school system and having charge or control of a child between the ages of seven and sixteen years shall cause such child to attend school daily for a period equal to the time that the public schools are in session.
- 6000.2 It shall be the responsibility of the principal to be familiar with current rules and regulations relative to attendance and absences and to monitor regularly:
- A. Teacher compliance
 - B. Decisions relative to classifications of absences as excused or unexcused
 - C. Absence cases needing further review or action
- 6000.3 Teachers shall maintain accurate attendance records, both daily and by class where appropriate.
- 6000.4 To be counted present, a student shall be in attendance at least one-half of the student school day. A student shall be considered present for that portion of the day that he/she is present to attend an official school activity at a place other than the school with the approval of the principal. In grades 7-12 a student must be in attendance one half of the school day to participate in extra-curricular activities on that day.

- 6000.5 Valid conditions for excused absences are:
- A. Illness or injury which makes the student physically unable to attend school;
 - B. Isolation order by the State Board of Health;
 - C. Death in the immediate family;
 - D. Medical or dental appointment or such an appointment;
 - E. Participation as a party, or under subpoena as a witness, in a court proceeding;
 - F. Observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent(s) with prior approval by the principal;
 - G. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, with prior approval by the principal and meeting conditions set by the principal or designee;
 - H. Medical condition due to student pregnancy or medical condition related to dependent child.
 - I. Absence resulting from out-of-school suspension

In the event of an excused absence, a student shall be required to make up work without receiving penalties to their marks or grades.

The responsibility for securing and arranging for make-up work rests with the student in grades 7-12. Students in grades K-6 will have make-up work arranged at the direction of the teacher. Make-up work shall be assigned at the convenience of the teacher, and may be specific material missed by the student, or may be of a reinforcement or enrichment nature.

- 6000.6 Any absence not meeting the requirements of an excused absence shall be an unexcused absence. This includes any absence for which proper and timely notification is not furnished.

- 6000.7 The principal or his/her designee shall notify parents or guardians of the absences when a student accumulates three unexcused absences in a school year, or grades 9-12 in a semester. After six unexcused absences, the principal or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian in writing that he or she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified by the established attendance policies. The notice to parents or guardians shall include a warning of the possible consequences of additional absences and/or a copy of this policy. Once parents are notified, school personnel shall work with the student and the student's family to analyze the causes of the absences and determine steps to eliminate the problem. School

personnel may request that a law enforcement officer accompany him or her if a home visit is necessary.

If, after ten accumulated unexcused absences in a school year, or in grades 9-12 a semester, the principal or his/her designee determines that the parent/guardian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, school personnel may file a truancy petition in the county where the student resides. If the principal or his/her designee determines that the parent/guardian has made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the principal may file a complaint with the juvenile court counselor that the child is habitually absent from school without a valid cause. Documentation that demonstrates that the parents/guardians were notified and that the child has accumulated ten absences which cannot be justified under the established attendance policies shall constitute parent responsibility for absences.

6000.8 Principals shall adhere to all conditions of the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law, and shall notify parents or guardians of their responsibility under the same law. Students at any age who accumulate excessive absences may experience consequences ranging from extra make-up work to grade retention.

6000.9 Although classroom activities are important, the activities outlined below shall not be counted as absences from either class or school. Assignments missed for these reasons, however, shall be completed by students.

- a. Field trips sponsored by the school
- b. School-initiated and scheduled activities
- c. Athletic events requiring early dismissal from school
- d. Governor or legislative pages
- e. In-school suspension
- f. The student is participating in a job-shadow, Career and Technical Education student organization, or other work-based opportunity, as described in G.S. 115C-47(34a).

6000.10 In grades K-8, students who have unexcused absences from a class more than ten (10) days during a semester or twenty (20) days during a year may not receive credit for the semester or year where applicable. For students in grades 9-12, who have accumulated more than eight (8) absences in a semester may not receive credit for the semester where applicable. Upon the ninth absence in any course, the student has the option of appealing to

each teacher in which course credit may be lost. The following procedures must be met before an appeal will be considered.

- a. An appeal is made in writing to each teacher in whose class course credit may be lost. The student must include any medical documentation or other evidence of extenuating circumstances to be considered.
- b. All previous make-up work should be completed before the appeal is made.
- c. The student may be required to make up time for all absences exceeding eight with each teacher.
- d. The student's attendance will be monitored for the remainder of the course.

Absences due to participation in school-sponsored and approved events will not count toward the allowable days absent. Suspensions from school will not count towards credit loss; however, work missed due to class absences must be made up promptly.

6000.11 The principal shall have authority to waive the no-credit or retention provisions of the policy. Any review involving a child with disabilities recognized by Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 173 29 U.S.C. 702 et seq., or the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., shall be conducted in accordance with applicable laws or regulations, including review by the school-based committee, if appropriate.

6000.11 A student shall be physically in the classroom at the time appointed for the school day or class to begin, or be recorded as tardy for the day or class. Teachers may require additional work or give assignments to students who habitually are tardy. Principals may establish procedures in each school to enforce this policy.

Legal Reference: G.S. 115C-47, -84, -378 to -382
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