

ATTENDANCE

Compulsory Attendance Requirements

In accordance with G.S. 115C-378, every parent, guardian, or other person in North Carolina having charge or control of a student between the ages of 7 and 16 years shall cause the student to attend school continuously while the public school to which the student is assigned is in session. Every parent, guardian, or other person in North Carolina having charge or control of a child under age seven who is enrolled in a public school in grades Kindergarten through two shall also cause such child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school. No person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any student to be unlawfully absent from school. The term "school" is defined to embrace all public schools and such non-public schools which have teachers and curricula that are approved by the State Board of Education.

Attendance

Regular attendance is a significant factor in educational achievement and should be encouraged in an effort to facilitate each student's optimum development. The public schools, like business and industry, must have rules and regulations concerning attendance. The purpose of this policy is to promote attendance, to help students form habits of acceptable attendance and punctuality, and to place the responsibility for school attendance on the student and his/her parents. The school supports attendance through maintaining attendance records and communicating with parents concerning any issues that may arise. The school's staff shall endeavor to cooperate fully with parents and students in matters concerning absences, tardies, and early departures.

Power School

The Power School database is considered the legal document for calculating daily school attendance and will be used in the prosecution for non-attendance and in calculations for perfect attendance awards. In order for a student to be counted present for the school day, the student must be present at least one-half of the school's instructional day. The determination of excused or unexcused absence will be made by the homeroom (advisory) teacher or attendance clerk through a documented excuse from the parents, legal guardian, or doctor. If, on the day of the student's return to class, a teacher or clerk receives no notification from the parent regarding the reason for the absence, the teacher or clerk shall assume the absence was unexcused and code it as such in the Power School database. Counted absences shall include, but are not limited to, the following reasons: sickness, routine medical and dental visits, family trips, college visits, funerals, truancy, religious holidays, out-of-school suspension, and any personal reason. In the case of excused absences, short-term out-of-school suspensions, and absences under G.S. 130A-

440 (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school) the student will be permitted to make up his or her work. (See also policies 4110, Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission, and 4351, Short-Term Suspension.) The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

A minimum of two days each academic year can be excused for the observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or student's parent(s) with written prior approval from the principal. The student shall have the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed due to the excused absence for a religious observance. On days of inclement weather when a school bus cannot run a child's road and the child is unable to attend school for that day, the absence will be considered excused and the homeroom teacher will code it as such.

As soon as a parent anticipates extended absences of two or more weeks because of a severe, prolonged, or chronic illness, the parent shall notify the principal. The principal shall make arrangements for home-bound, hospital-bound, or other appropriate instruction only upon the advice of the attending physician. (See Policy 3133 Homebound Instruction.). Parents should address all questions to the principal.

A student will be granted additional excused absences whose parent or legal guardian (a) is an active duty member of the uniformed services as defined by policy 4050, Children of Military Families, and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The superintendent or designee will have discretion in this matter.

A student not in attendance is counted absent.

GRADES K-8

The student's report card is considered notification of absences and tardies. North Carolina General Statute 115C-378 requires that letters of notification that their student has accumulated three (3), six (6) and ten (10) unexcused absences per school year. (See sample letter, Appendix 4400A.)

The principal may refer a student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to mediation at a Community Mediation Center to attempt to resolve attendance issues in cases in which:

- A student has 3 or more unexcused absences;
- A student has noticeable or suspicious absences that seem to follow a pattern, (i.e. every Friday);
- A student has more than 10 tardies or early releases;
- A student has an excessive number of excused absences.

GRADES 9-12

The Avery County Board of Education follows state law concerning daily attendance. This policy addresses per-period class attendance in grades 9-12 only. It is designed to encourage regular attendance and relates to the requirements for credit.

Attendance is an essential element in the learning process. The primary responsibility of school attendance rests with students and parents. Because high school students daily receive 90 minutes of instruction in each class, the equivalent of two instructional days on a year-long schedule, good attendance is crucial. Based on these considerations, students missing more than ten (10) days in a class per semester will receive an "FF" (failure due to absences) on their report card. In an effort to provide students with absences in excess of the ten (10) allotted per semester an opportunity to prevent loss of credit, students will be provided with the opportunity to attend summer school. Students must make up time for time, meaning that 90 minutes missed requires 90 minutes to be made up.

It should also be noted that students must attend at least 75% of the class period in order to be counted as present. Students who are not in attendance for at least 75% of the class period will be counted absent.

I. Make-up Time for Excessive Absences in High School Classes

A student who is absent from a course/class during more than ten (10) classes within a semester shall be required to make up equivalent time for each class period missed in excess of ten (10) hereinafter, "excessive absences". In determining "excessive absences" no absence from a class due to the student's participation in an authorized school activity or because of in-school suspension shall be considered. Extenuating circumstances, i.e. an extended illness, should be brought to the attention of the administration, with such circumstances being dealt with at the discretion of the administration. The parent should notify the principal as soon as he/she anticipates a student's extended absence because of a severe, prolonged, or chronic illness under a physician's care. A student who has incurred excessive absences in a course and who either does not perform the make-up time or does not comply with any alternative program that may have been provided by the principal shall receive a grade no higher than **59/FF** in that course for the grading period (i.e. nine weeks). **[If a student earns a grade lower than 59 for the nine weeks in a course the student will receive the grade earned.]** Students who accrue greater than 10 absences per class per semester will be required to attend summer school in order to receive credit, provided course performance was such to warrant summer school as an effective

means of considering mastery of the subject.

Records shall be maintained of the amount of make-up time required, or principal's alternative program, and the work to be completed.

Parents shall be notified in writing of the requirements for a student to successfully make up excessive absences.

Procedures for Make-Up for Absences in High School Courses:

1. Absences must be made up “time for time”; i.e. a student wishing to make up one absence in one class must make up 90 minutes.
2. Assignments may be made up within five days of the end of the grading period (prior to exams). The principal (designee) may allow additional make-up time to students with extenuating circumstances.
3. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange to make up time and work.
4. Upon successful completion of make-up time/assignment, the student shall receive the grade earned.
5. The work assigned for make-up time will be supervised by a certified teacher or approved substitute teacher or an alternate plan approved by the principal.
6. Assignments given for/during make-up time shall be appropriate for the class(es) missed.
7. The student will be required to sign in and sign out of the make-up session.

II. Tardiness and Early Departures

Tardiness is defined as arriving to class or school after the scheduled time for class or school to begin. A tardy is considered “unexcused” unless there is a valid reason for being late. Valid reasons for being late include, but are not limited to, the reasons for an excused absence as defined above as well as circumstances beyond the control of the student, such as when a teacher or staff member detains a student.

Early departure is defined as the removal of a student from school prior to the end of the instructional day without a valid reason for an excused absence as defined above.

Consequences for Tardies / Early Dismissals

- 4 tardies/early dismissals = lunch detention
- 6 tardies/early dismissals = another lunch detention

- 8 tardies/early dismissals = afternoon detention
- 12 tardies/early dismissals or more = afternoon detention (non-drivers); parking privileges revoked for a specified length of time (student drivers)

Legal References:

G.S. 115C-47, -84.2, -288(a), -375.5, -378 to -383, -390.2(d), -390.2(l), -390.5, -407.5; 130A-440; 16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0102, .0103; State Board of Education Policies ATND-000, -003, NCAC-6E.0104;
www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/accounting/manuals/sasa.pdf

Cross References: Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations (policy 3620), Education for Pregnant and Parenting Students (policy 4023), Children of Military Families (policy 4050), Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission (policy 4110), Short-Term Suspension (policy 4351)

ADOPTED: 8-4-86

REVISED: 6-17-91, 12-6-93, 5-1-95, 7-16-01, 2/21/05, 7/16/07; 12/03/07, 11/03/08, 2/14/11, 7/10/12, 07/09/13, 09/01/15; 12/13/16; 4/28/17; 10/9/17