

**6180.21.**

Procedures outlined are intended to underscore the expectation of the Board and school administration that students be in attendance daily and participate in classroom activities. Regular, productive attendance is the cornerstone to education and key to student success in school and in life. Connecticut General Statutes 10-184 and 10-198 require that parents or guardians ensure school attendance for their children, and that school systems employ consistent and comprehensive procedures to monitor and reinforce attendance.

It is expected that parents will notify their child's school of absence related to:

illness

infectious disease

family emergency

medical appointments which *must* occur during school hours

severe weather conditions

religious observances.

A parent may choose to excuse student absence; however, such authorization may not be made in the child's best interest and may not be made legitimately as based on expectations noted above. Accordingly, the approval of the principal is also required to excuse student absence.

## Guidelines

1. Teachers and office staff will record daily attendance and indicate whether an absence is excused or unexcused.
2. Parents are requested to notify the school by phone (by 8:00 a.m. - high school; 8:30 a.m. - middle school; 9:30 a.m. - elementary school) when a child is absent. They may request that school work be sent home.
3. The school will attempt to verify absence by phone if a call is not received.
4. Parents are to provide children with a written excuse for each absence within three (3) days of the child's return.
5. The first instance of unauthorized absence (truancy) will result in a school conference scheduled with the principal (or designee), the parent and the child.
6. All work missed due to absence must be completed by the student. A child absent without parent authorization will be required to make up time and work after school hours. (Does not apply to students in grades 9-12.)
7. Students displaying patterns of poor attendance (four or more instances of truancy) will be referred to the school's child study/at-risk team for case review, intervention and management. Students will be added to the caseload of the attendance counselor or outreach worker.
8. Subsequent absences will result in a home visit and conference with the parent to reinforce school attendance and to assist in overcoming barriers to regular school attendance.
9. Since poor school attendance can be associated with educationally handicapping conditions, students who evidence academic difficulty associated with the possible presence of a disability

will be referred to Planning and Placement Team for evaluation.

10. Continued absence will result in school initiation of a referral for truancy (4-10 unexcused absences) or habitual truancy (20 unexcused absences) to the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters. A referral to the Department of Children and Families will also be made on the grounds of educational neglect for children under age 11.

## Tardiness

- Students who arrive to school tardy must report to the office in order to be admitted to class.
- School administration will validate excused tardiness. Students found to be willfully tardy in avoidance of school or class may be subject to sanctions outlined under guidelines for attendance.

## Additional High School Guidelines

1. A valid absence is one for which the student has school or parent permission. A student will be considered truant if the school confirms that the student is absent without parent permission or knowledge.
2. Absence from class will be considered a class cut and truant behavior unless the student presents a valid excuse or pass to that teacher by the next school day.
3. Attendance will be taken every class period and absence noted to the office.
4. Students will not be permitted makeup opportunities for daily participation requirements unless there is an authorized excuse for the absence.
5. Course curricula and grading will reflect application of department standards for daily classwork, quizzes, tests and class participation. Work and participation missed as a result of truancy will be assigned zeros. No alternative assignments or extra credit/makeup work may be applied to negate the effect of zeros accumulated through truancy upon grade average.
6. Course standards will be printed and distributed to each student and reviewed at the beginning of each marking period.
7. Students may appeal decisions related to authorization of absence to the school administration. Matters not resolved at the building level will be referred to the Associate Superintendent for Instruction.