

Board Policy

Code No. 501

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Daily Attendance

Daily attendance is required for all students, including students who are enrolled in the district online learning program. Regular school attendance is essential to obtaining all the learning opportunities offered within the district's educational programs. The daily attendance of each student is recorded and maintained on file by the records custodian, which is overseen by the building principal.

Student Absence

Student absences are a concern requiring the cooperative effort of students, parents and the school staff. Repeated absences and tardiness not only impedes an individual's studies, but also interferes with the instruction of students who are regular and prompt in attendance. While it is possible for an absent student to make up school work missed, it is impossible to recreate all the activities, demonstrations, and interactions that occurred during the student's absence.

Absence Notification

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the student's school office as soon as the parent knows the student will not be attending school on that day. The principal may request evidence or written verification of the student's reason for absence.

When the student's absence is caused by a suspension or expulsion, such absence will be treated as an administrative absence rather than excused or unexcused absence.

Excused Absence

While it is possible for a student absent from school to make up much of the school work missed, it is impossible to completely compensate for absence from class. Therefore, any absence from class creates the potential for a severe hardship for the student. This is true regardless of the reason for the absence (illness, planned trips, family vacations, truancy, etc.) It is the intent of this policy to address excessive absences from school. The term "excessive absence" may include a combination of excused and/or unexcused absences.

The following absences are exempt from the absence policy. It is important that parent/guardian contact the administration immediately when these situations occur:

1. Hospitalization or extended illness/accident, which requires extended care. Any student absence due to illness/accident that goes beyond five (5) continuous school days must be verified by a doctor, dentist, or school nurse.
2. Death or serious illness/injury in the immediate family or household.
3. Attendance at a school sponsored and supervised activity when class requirements have been completed by the student before the activity.
4. Any absence approved exempt by the administration. All absences exempt from the excessive absence policy requires parental notification and administrator approval.

School-Sponsored Activities

Students who wish to participate in school-sponsored activities must attend school the entire day of the activity unless permission has been given by the building principal/designee for the student to be absent.

Trips and Vacations

Planned trips and family vacations are expected to coincide with school vacation periods on the school district calendar. If it is absolutely necessary for a child to be absent from school because of a planned trip or family vacation, then a parent should discuss the approaching absence with the classroom teacher to learn the impact this absence will have on a child's educational progress.

Make-Up Work

Make up work shall be provided upon request by the student or parent/guardian. Failure to make arrangements for make-up work may result in loss of credit for school work missed during an excused absence.

In the case of an emergency absence related to personal serious illness or death in the family, a plan for make-up work will be handled on an individual basis with the classroom teacher and/or building principal.

Truancy- Unexcused Absence

The term "unexcused absence" means any non-attendance by the student without permission of the building administrator/designee. The following examples are considered unexcused absences:

1. Absence without permission of the building principal/designee
2. Family vacations which have not been given prior approval by the building administrator/designee
3. Work outside of school when not approved by the building principal/designee.
4. Leaving school without administrator/designee approval.

The building administrator will investigate the cause for a student's truancy. If the principal is unable to secure the truant student's attendance, the principal should discuss the next step with the superintendent, and additional interventions will be considered. If the interventions are unsuccessful, the principal will refer the matter over to the Scott County Attorney.

The school will participate in mediation if requested by the county attorney. The superintendent will represent the school district in mediation. The school district will monitor the student's compliance with the mediation agreement and will report violations of the mediation agreement to the County Attorney.

Tardies

Tardy students not only affect their own studies, but also interfere with the progress of those students who are prompt. Tardiness to class creates an obvious interruption and confusion for all class members. In the event that your child is going to be late, please call and let the office know. Upon arriving, the student is to check in at the office and get a pass before going to his or her class. Tardiness may be excused or unexcused at the discretion of the building administrator/or designee. Building guidelines for tardies are defined in the parent/student handbook.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code SS274.1; 279.8; 299.8
Court Cases: *Burdick v. Babcock*, 31 IA 562 (1871). *DPI Decision:* *In re Sandra Mitchell v. Benton Community School District*, 1 DPI, App. Dec. 20, June 1978.

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