

**COMPREHENSIVE ATTENDANCE POLICY****1. OBJECTIVES TO BE ACCOMPLISHED:**

Attendance is a critical factor in school success for students. Consistent school attendance, academic success and school completion have a positive correlation. School attendance is both a right and a responsibility in New York State. Children have the right to attend school between the ages of 5 and 21, and are mandated to attend between the ages of 6 and 16 (students must complete the school year in which they turn 16). Parents are expected to make sure that their children attend school on a regular basis.

The goal of this attendance policy is to encourage students to come to school ready to learn. The purposes for attendance taking in schools are:

- \* to know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons.
- \* to determine the district's average daily attendance for State Aid reimbursement.
- \* to verify that individual students are complying with Education Law in relation to compulsory attendance.
- \* to determine eligibility for course credit
- \* to identify individual and group attendance patterns in order to provide attendance improvement programs and services, to improve student academic performance and increase school completion.

**2. STRATEGIES TO BE EMPLOYED:**

Per State regulations, the North Colonie School District must maintain a "Register of Attendance" accounting for the whereabouts of all children throughout the entire school day. The Register, which may be in written or electronic format, must account for each pupil's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure from every period that a pupil is scheduled to attend actual instructional or supervised study activities during the course of a school day from July 1 through June 30.

The Register shall contain, at least, the following information for each pupil:

- \* Name;
- \* Date of Birth;
- \* Full names of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation;
- \* Address where the pupil resides;
- \* Phone number(s) where the parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation may be contacted;
- \* Date of pupil's enrollment; and
- \* A record of the pupil's attendance for each day of scheduled instruction.

A. Requirements for Elementary Grades (K-6):

For students enrolled in kindergarten through sixth grade, the presence or absence of each student shall be recorded after the taking of attendance once per school day.

B. Requirements for Grades 7-12:

Each student's presence or absence shall be recorded by the teacher after the taking of attendance in each period of scheduled instruction.

C. Requirements for All School Districts at any Grade Level:

Any absence for the school day or portion thereof shall be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the district's comprehensive attendance policy. In the event that a student arrives late for or departs early from scheduled instruction, then such tardiness or early departure shall also be recorded as excused or unexcused. The Register must also include the date when any student withdraws from enrollment or is dropped from enrollment in the school. All entries in the Register must be made by a teacher, or an employee designated by the Board, and must be verified by oath or affirmation.

The North Colonie School District must also maintain a record of each scheduled day of instruction during which the school is closed for all or part of the day due to adverse weather conditions, impairment of heating facilities, insufficiency of water supply, shortage of fuel, destruction of or damage to school building, or such other cause approved by the Commissioner of Education.

D. Duties of the School District:

The Board of Education must designate a teacher or other district employee to supervise the keeping of the Register of Attendance.

3. **EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES AND TARDINESS:**

Excused absences and tardies are those due to illness or injury, death in family, medical appointments, appearance in family court, take your child to work day (with completed essay), suspension during which a student of compulsory school age attends tutoring, internal restriction, military obligations, religious observances, and school sponsored or school authorized activities.

All other absences and tardies, even with the permission of a parent/guardian, are considered unexcused absences.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides guidance as to excused/unexcused absences and tardies.

Excused absences, tardies and early dismissals:

- illness or injury
- death in family; funeral
- medical appointments
- family court appearance

- take your child to work (with completed essay)
- religious observance
- internal restriction
- suspension (attends arranged tutoring)
- military obligations
- school-sponsored or school-authorized activities

Unexcused Absences and Tardies:

- overslept; tired
- car accident; car related problems
- bad roads; weather
- missed bus or ride
- vacations
- personal; needed at home
- loss of power
- visiting another school or college
- went with parent on a business or personal trip
- road test
- take your child to work (no completed essay)
- court appearance for other than school related charges, i.e. traffic ticket
- truant
- suspension (student does not attend tutoring)

4. **CODING SYSTEM:**

An entry must be made in the register of attendance (computer system) identifying the reason for each absence, tardy or early dismissal. The coding system will accommodate the following categories:

- excused absence - full day
- excused absences - ½ day, AM/PM (elementary only)
- unexcused absences - full day
- unexcused absences - ½ day, AM/PM (elementary only)
- excused tardy
- unexcused tardy
- excused early dismissal
- unexcused early dismissal
- internal restriction
- external suspension
- school business
- religious observance
- truant

5. **REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSES RECEIVING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT:**

1. Regular School Year:

The awarding of academic credit will be based, in part, on class attendance. Students who do not attend a minimum of 80% of the classes offered in a given subject, regardless of the

reasons, will not be allowed to take any further examinations in that subject and will be denied academic credit. A notation of “NC” (no credit) will be recorded as the final mark for the course.

Teachers will take attendance each period and inform the Hall Principal according to the reporting schedule. All absences from class must be recorded; however, absences due to school sponsored or school authorized activities will be excluded from counting toward denial of course credit provided the student performs any assigned make-up work. In addition, absences for students whose physical and/or psychological condition necessitates absence from school for more than ten days (**consecutive or cumulative**) may be excluded from counting toward denial of course credit provided the student performs any assigned make up work. All other absences, whether excused or unexcused, are countable to determine eligibility for course credit.

The Hall and Building Principal will contact parents by mail at prescribed intervals prior to denial of course credit.

Note: A complete description of this attendance policy is contained in Board Regulation #5100-R (“Promotion and Retention of Students”).

## 2. Summer School:

The awarding of academic credit will be based, in part, on class attendance. Students receive one participation point for each day of active class participation, up to 30 points. In addition to the prescribed academic expectations and course requirements, students are required to have a minimum of 27 participation points in order to receive a grade in a summer school course. Students failing to attend class for any reason, including suspension, will not receive a participation point for that class period. Students missing a portion of an instructional period will lose half a participation point for up to 15 minutes of absence and a full participation point for absences of 15 minutes or more.

Note: A complete description of this attendance policy is contained in Board Regulation #5100-R (“Promotion and Retention of Students”).

## 6. INCENTIVES/DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS:

Incentives employed to encourage pupil attendance should be developed by each school. Incentives include, but are not limited to, perfect or outstanding attendance letters, student recognition receptions/assemblies or special privileges as determined by each school.

Disciplinary sanctions for unexcused pupil absences, tardies and early dismissals may include, but are not limited to, parent conference, during or after school detention, Saturday detention, internal restriction, denial of special privileges (dances, receptions, (field) trips, mid-morning, preparation period, etc.).

## 7. INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR SERIOUS ATTENDANCE PROBLEMS:

Regulation #5100-R outlines procedures for dealing with serious attendance problems. The regulation specifies the process and intervention strategies to be employed by teachers and other school employees to address identified patterns of unexcused pupil absence, tardiness or early departure.

**8. PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

The principal of each school must review the pupil attendance records to identify problems and trends in unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures. Principals and administrators will then be required to take corrective action consistent with the School District's comprehensive pupil attendance policy.

**9. ANNUAL REVIEW BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION:**

The Board of Education shall review annually building and district level student attendance records. The Board, in cooperation with the Superintendent, Building Principals and administrators, shall make revisions to the comprehensive pupil attendance policy and plan deemed necessary to improve pupil attendance.

**10. COMMUNITY AWARENESS:**

The Board of Education shall promote necessary community awareness of the District's Comprehensive Attendance Policy by:

1. Providing a plain language summary of the policy to parents or persons in parental relation to students at the beginning of each school year and promoting the understanding of such a policy to students and their parents/persons in parental relation;
2. Providing each teacher, at the beginning of the school year or upon employment, with a copy of the policy; and
3. Providing copies of the policy to any other member of the community upon request.

**Cross-Ref:** 1741, Relations with "Home Schools"  
4321, Programs for Students with Disabilities  
4327, Homebound Instruction  
5160, Student Absences and Excuses

**Ref:** Education Law §§ 1711; 3201; 3202(1-a); 3205; 3206; 3208; 3225  
8 NYCRR §§101; 175.6  
Family Court Act §§711 et seq.

**Note:** Prior policy, Compulsory School Attendance, 5112

**Policy Adopted:** May 13, 1974  
**Amended:** June 23, 1997  
**Amended:** June 17, 2002

**Note:** Prior policy, Student Attendance 5100