

## **Attendance Policy**

Regular attendance supports student achievement. Families and students are encouraged to ensure absences are necessary and to collaborate with the school to promote consistent attendance.

### **Mandatory Attendance**

In accordance with Nebraska law (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-201), students who are six years old before January 1 of the current year and under eighteen years of age must attend school regularly. Students must attend a public, private, denominational, or parochial school for the full school term unless they have graduated, earned a GED, reached age 18, or have been legally withdrawn according to state statute.

Regular attendance is essential for academic success. Students are expected to attend school daily unless excused by the principal.

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### **Excused Absences**

Parents are responsible for their children before they actually come to school. Parental reasons for keeping a child home from school on a given day are presumed to be valid, and will be considered excused absences. However, parents are expected to provide an oral (call into the school office) or written excuse to the school office for their child's absence.

**Absences approved by the principal** are considered excused, for approval from the principal the parent must contact the principal prior to or immediately after the absence.

Excused absences count toward chronic absenteeism but may not count towards referral to the County Attorney. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Student illness or injury
- Medical, dental, or counseling appointments
- Family emergencies
- Bereavement or funeral attendance
- Religious observances
- School-sponsored activities

All other types of absences are simply absences, which may be excused by the principal provided prior notice is given.

Parents must notify the school office by 8:00 a.m. if a student will be absent. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must check in at the office before going to class.

For grades 6–12, parents should notify the school at least one day in advance for non-medical absences.

Students with excused absences are responsible for contacting teachers to make up missed work and will receive full credit if completed according to handbook guidelines.

To participate in school-sponsored activities, students must attend at least four periods on the day of (or preceding day of) the activity unless excused by the principal.

If your child will be absent, notify the school as soon as possible. Communication with the school is the most important step in ensuring an absence is properly documented and considered for excused status.

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## **Unexcused Absences**

**Unexcused Absence: An unexcused absence is any absence from school or class that has not been approved, verified, or properly communicated to the school by a parent/guardian according to district attendance procedures. Parents are expected to notify the school as soon as they know their child will be absent, and the principal may require verification of the reason for the absence.** Students who leave school or miss class without permission are also considered unexcused absent.

An absence may be considered unexcused when:

- A parent or guardian does not notify the school about the absence within the required timeframe.
- The reason for the absence does not meet district guidelines for an excused absence.
- Requested documentation or verification is not provided when required.
- A student leaves school, leaves campus, or misses class without parent authorization and school permission.
- A student skips school or is absent without the knowledge of a parent, guardian, or school official.

Consequences of an unexcused absence may include:

- A grade of zero for graded work missed.
  - No opportunity to make up quizzes or tests given on the day missed.
  - Possible classification as truant under state law.
  - Required to make up for missed class time.
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## **Excessive Absenteeism**

- Five (5) absences per quarter = excessive absenteeism.
  - Parents will receive a letter to notify them their child has missed 5 days.
- Ten (10) absences = parents notified and meeting scheduled to create a Collaborative Attendance Plan, possible loss of credits. (see Forfeiture of Credits )
- More than twenty (20) days per year (or hourly equivalent) may result in referral to the County Attorney or loss of credits.
  - The county attorney may file a complaint against a person violating section 79-201 before the judge of the county court of the county in which such person resides charging such person with violation of section 79-201 or may file a petition under the Nebraska Juvenile Code alleging the person violating section 79-201 is a juvenile described in subdivision (3)(a) or (3)(b) of section 43-247.
- Consequences of excessive absences may include but are not limited to:
  - Remaining after school to complete work or make up missed class time.
  - Reporting to school on during teacher workdays or non-attendance days to make up missed class time.
  - Possible forfeiture of credits (see Below)

The school will work with families to address barriers to attendance. Services may include:

- Meetings with school officials
- Educational counseling or evaluation
- Health-related support
- Referrals to community agencies
- Family or individual counseling

Illness that makes attendance impossible will not be the basis for referral to the County Attorney.

School-sponsored activities, verified medical absences, and funerals are not counted toward excessive absence limits that require referral to the County Attorney.

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## **Forfeiture of Credit**

Students exceeding ten (10) absences in any class per semester may lose credit for that class, regardless of their grade.

- Credit loss is determined per class.
- Students may appeal to the Principal or the Superintendent.
- If ten or more absences are verified as medical, funeral, or court-related, credit may be reinstated without a review.

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### **Leaving During the School Day**

Students may need to leave school during the day due to various appointments or other personal reasons or activities; students will be excused by the principal provided the following criteria are met:

- Parent/guardian has given permission and communicated with the office before leaving for approval by the principal.
- Students have notified teachers of classes they may be missing and have handed in any work due for the day and will complete work they may be missing that day.
- If they are leaving early for the rest of the day they must check out in the office
- If they are leaving for part of the day but will return they check out with the office and check in upon returning to school, before returning to class.