

## ATTENDANCE POLICY (REGULATION)

The board of education believes that attendance in regularly scheduled classes is a key factor in student achievement. However, it is important for those students who are ill to stay home when sick. Students who have a fever or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100 degrees Fahrenheit should not be at school or school activities. The board recognizes, however, that the co-curricular program of the school also has educational benefit. Therefore, it shall be the policy of this board to minimize absenteeism from regular classes while providing students the opportunity to participate in co-curricular activities.

### Absences

#### 1. General

All absences, whether excused or unexcused, are counted in computing minimum attendance. When students are absent, the parent or guardian should contact the school attendance office as soon as possible on the day of the absence. The school will attempt to contact parents who fail to call. Should there be no contact from the parent within two (2) school days, the absence will be unexcused. The school administration makes the final determination of whether an absence is excused. For any reference regarding medical absences, please see SPS Policy FFAA and FFAA-E1.

For elementary schools, the State Board of Education regulations require that students be in attendance at least two (2) hours in the morning and two (2) hours in the afternoon to be recorded present for the full day. Therefore, one-half (1/2) day attendance is based upon students being present at least two (2) hours either in the morning or afternoon session of the school day as determined by the school district. Students leaving school before 1:30 p.m. will be counted absent for one-half (1/2) day. In regards to secondary students, daily attendance is tabulated by class period basis.

#### 2. Absences and Course Credit

All work or tests missed during an excused absence may be made up. Students have the same number of days to make up the work or tests as the number of days missed, unless the teacher grants additional time. No penalty shall be assessed against work made up for excused absences. The school administration makes the final determination of whether an absence is excused. It is the responsibility of students to initiate make up work and tests. Students absent at the time the test is announced shall have the same number of days to make up the test(s) as the number of days missed unless additional time is granted by the teacher. Students who are in attendance when the test is announced will be responsible for taking the test when returning, unless the teacher grants additional time.

Any exceptions to this procedure shall be limited to those exceptions made by the classroom teacher and the building principal.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont.)**

In order to receive credit for a course in grades nine through twelve or to be promoted to the next grade level in grades kindergarten through eight, a student must be in attendance at school a minimum of 90% of the time each semester. Exceptions to the attendance policy must be requested by the parent or guardian and shall be considered only with appropriate verification. Participation in school-sponsored activities during the regular school day will not be calculated as an absence for the purpose of this policy. Any student who misses ten (10) consecutive days will be placed "off roll" beginning the 11th day. Upon returning to school, the pupil will be returned to "on roll" status. (See Oklahoma State Department of Education, Standards for Accreditation, p. 116.)

Exceptions to the attendance policy must be requested by the parent or guardian and shall be considered only with medical or other related verification. State law requires that a school district excuse a student from attending school for the purpose of observing religious holy days if, before the absence, the parent, guardian, or person having legal custody or control of the student submits a written request for the excused absence. The school is to excuse the student for the days on which the religious holy days are observed and for the days on which the student must travel to and from the site where the student will observe the holy days.

### 3. Excused Absences

Excused absences include but are not limited to:

- A. Personal or family illnesses, substantiated by a doctor's statement or a parent's telephone call
- B. In-school appointments, i.e., with a counselor or nurse
- C. Medical or dental appointments with verification from the medical professional indicating the date and time of appointment.
- D. Legal matters, i.e., subpoenaed court appearances, service on a jury
- E. Extenuating circumstances determined by the principal to be an excused absence, i.e., funerals
- F. Observance of holidays required by student's religious affiliation
- G. Family business trips and educational trips prearranged by the parent
- H. Seniors will be allowed two (2) "college" days.
- I. Documented 4-H activities verified by a 4-H educator or service provider
- J. Documented speech therapy, occupational therapy, or any other service related to the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

The district will not require medical documentation to support personal or family illness that results in an excused absence. However, students will be required to make up any work that has been missed. Student absences due to a severe, chronic, or life-threatening physical or mental illness, injury, or trauma will be exempted from inclusion in the calculation of the chronic absenteeism indicator of the applicable school site so long as the determination of eligibility is made by the district's medical exemption review committee. The district's medical exemption review committee will be designated by the superintendent on a yearly basis and shall report student absences that are medically exempt to the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) Office of Accountability.

Items I and J are statutorily excused absences which will require notification to the school district prior to the absence and documented from the 4-H educator or service provider after the absence as excused.

Students will be given the opportunity to make up any schoolwork missed while they are participating in activities or programs sponsored by 4-H. Grades cannot be adversely affected for lack of attendance or participation due to the participation in activities or programs sponsored by 4-H so long as the district was

notified prior to the absence and the appropriate documentation was provided by the 4-H educator after the absence which substantiates the student's attendance at the 4-H event or activity.

Students will not be provided an excuse 4-H absence if the 4-H activity or even occurs during the scheduled statewide student assessment window set by the State Board of Education or if the student has been disciplined or suspended by the school district and a condition of the punishment would preclude the student from participating in any school field trips or extracurricular activities.

A student will not be considered absent from school if:

1. They are not physically present at school but are completing work in a distance learning program or virtual online program approved by the school district and are meeting the following attendance requirements:
  - a. The student has completed instructional activities for no less than ninety percent (90%) of the time that services were provided in a virtual or distance learning format. Instructional activities may include online logins to curriculum or programs, offline activities, completed assignments, testing, face-to-face communications or meetings with school personnel via teleconference, videoconference, email, text, or phone.
  - b. The student is on pace for on-time completion of the course as required by the school district.
  - c. The student has completed instructional activities within the time that services were provided in a virtual or distance learning format during the academic year.
2. They have a medical condition that incapacitates the student and precludes them from participating in instruction in a traditional school setting and the student is able to progress in instruction via alternative education delivery methods approved by Stillwater Board of Education.
3. They are participating in a released time program held by an independent entity off school premises for no more than three class periods per week or a maximum of 125 class periods per school year provided that:
  - a. The student's parent or legal guardian provides written consent prior to the student's participation in the released time course;
  - b. No school funds other than de minimis administrative costs are expended and no school district personnel, equipment or resources are involved in providing the instruction;
  - c. The independent entity maintains attendance records and makes the records available to the school district and board of education;
  - d. Transportation is provided to and from the place of instruction by the independent entity, the student or the student's parent or legal guardian;
  - e. The independent entity or the student's parent or legal guardian indemnifies the school district and holds it harmless with regard to any liability arising from the conduct that does not occur on school property under the control or supervision of the school district and the independent entity maintains adequate insurance for that purpose;
  - f. The student assumes responsibility for any missed schoolwork; and
  - g. The student may not be excused to participate in a released time course during any class in which the subject matter being taught is subject to the assessment requirements of Section 1210.508 of Title 70.
4. School Activity Absences

Stillwater Public Schools' extracurricular activities attendance rules are guided by the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association and the Stillwater Board of Education. Therefore, students participating in a school activity on a school day must attend at least half a day in order to participate in the school activity.

The maximum number of absences for activities, whether sponsored by the school or outside agency/organization, which removes students from the classroom shall be ten (10) for any one class period each school year. Excluded from this number are state and national levels of school-sponsored contests. State and national contests are those for which students must earn the right to compete. For all additional absences, the following criteria must be met:

- A. Students must have an overall G.P.A. of 2.5 or greater with no less than a "C" in any class.
- B. Students will be responsible for all missed make-up work. Failure to turn in make-up work according to building regulations could result in a student not being allowed any further activity absences.
- C. Students who have unexcused absences in the current year will not be considered for exception to this policy.

In keeping with State Department of Education guidelines, school-sponsored activities shall not be counted in the five (5) day limitation.

#### 5. Unexcused Absence

Students who are absent with no legitimate reason will not be allowed to make up work for credit given in any class missed. A zero ("0") may be given in any class where grades are given during the unexcused absence. That grade will be reflected in the 9 weeks average for each occurrence (4 ½ weeks for high school).

#### Truancy

Leaving class without permission may be considered truancy. Students are truant when absent without the knowledge or approval of either the school or the parent, or if the parent does not compel the student to attend school.

Students who are truant shall not have the opportunity to make-up any of the work missed. If students are truant in one or more classes they will not receive credit for work given for the classes missed and will receive a zero ("0"). This procedure shall also be in effect on semester (term at the high school) and 9 weeks' (4 ½ weeks at the high school) test days.

If students are absent without a valid excuse four (4) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period or 10 days within a semester, they are truant. The attendance officer shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of the student and immediately report the absences to the county district attorney for juvenile proceedings pursuant to Title 10 of the Oklahoma Statutes. In the case of Stillwater Public Schools, the reporting agency is the city attorney.

Once a decision to refer a student to the city attorney has been made, a municipal citation will be issued to the student, parent, or guardian with a date for a court date. On this court date, an intake meeting will take place at the city attorney's office and a resolution form will be developed which will identify the problems and what the family will do to correct the attendance concern.

#### Tardies

The policy for the time out of class will apply any time a student arrives after the bell has rung or leaves before the class period is complete. Tardies will be recorded each nine weeks (four and a half weeks at the high school). Tardy regulations may vary from school site to school site. Student handbooks should be consulted for details for each school site.

Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absentee means a student who is absent 10 percent (10%) or more of the school days in the school year exclusive of a significant medical condition, when the total number of days the student is absent is divided by the total number of days the student is enrolled, and school was actually taught in the regular schools of the district, exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays. When a student is identified as a chronic absentee, the Superintendent or designee shall communicate with the student and his/her parents/guardians to determine the reason(s) for the excessive absences, ensure the student and parents are aware of the adverse consequences of poor attendance, and jointly develop a plan for improving the student's school attendance.

A significant medical condition means a severe, chronic, or life-threatening physical or mental illness, infection, injury, disease, or emotional trauma. Any COVID-19 related absences due to a child's medical needs will be considered a significant medical condition.

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