

**1. NEW YORK STATE ATTENDANCE LAW**

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**New York State Mandatory Attendance Requirement**

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Law 3205, each minor shall regularly attend school on a full time basis from the age of six years to the last day of the school year in which they turn sixteen years of age, unless she/he has successfully completed a four year high school course of study. Additionally, each District has the authority to require minor students to attend through the school year they turn seventeen years of age if they are not employed full-time.

**A. School Entrance Age**

A minor who becomes six years of age on or before the first of December in any school year shall be required to attend school for full time instruction from the first day that the appropriate public school is in session starting in September of such school year. A minor who becomes six years of age after the first of December in any school year shall be required to attend school for full time instruction starting on the first day of session in the following September

**B. Greene County Compulsory Attendance Age**

In accordance with its authority under Education Law Section 3205, the Board of Education of Cairo-Durham Central school hereby establishes the ending compulsory attendance age for minors to be seventeen (17) years of age such that minors from the ages of sixteen (16) to seventeen (17) years of age, who are not employed full-time, shall attend upon full time instruction until the last day of session in the school year in which the student becomes seventeen years of age.

**B. Drop from Enrollment Over Compulsory Age**

*Section 3202.1a* - No pupil over the compulsory attendance age in his or her school district shall be dropped from enrollment unless he or she has been absent twenty consecutive school days and the following procedure is compiled with: The principal or superintendent shall schedule and notify, in writing and at the last known address, both the student and the person in parental relation to the student of an informal conference. At the conference the principal or superintendent shall determine both the reasons for the pupil's absence and whether reasonable changes in the pupil's educational program would encourage and facilitate his or her re-entry or continuance of study. The pupil and the person in parental relation shall be informed orally and in writing of the pupil's right to re-enroll at any time in the public school maintained in the district where he or she resides, if otherwise qualified under this section. If the pupil and the person in parental relationship fail,

after reasonable notice, to attend the informal conference, the pupil may be dropped from enrollment provided that he or she and the person in parental relation are notified in writing of the right to re-enter at any time, if otherwise qualified under this section.

## **2. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

School attendance is both a right and a responsibility. Because the District recognizes that there is a strong correlation between a student's class attendance, their academic success and their opportunity for post-high school success, the Board of Education in conjunction with the County Truancy Task Force, have established the following as its Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy developed to meet the following objectives:

- Set the expectation that students are expected to attend school every day for the full day
- Instill cooperation among all members of the education community, inclusive of parents, students, teachers, administrators and support staff to uphold the expectation of regular school attendance
- Recognize that regular class participation and contact between students and teachers is an essential part of the educational process.
- Provide for the early identification of attendance problems and the implementation of effective methods of intervention to address issues in order to reduce dropout rates and increase graduation rates
- Identify the daily whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons
- Verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance
- Calculate the District's average daily attendance for state aid and school improvement purposes

## **3. NOTIFICATIONS**

Effective implementation of an attendance policy requires all participants to be informed and to understand fully its purpose, procedures, and the consequences of non-compliance. To ensure that students, parents, teachers and administrators are notified of and understand this policy, the following notification shall take place.

- A. At the start of each school year, each student and their family shall be provided a copy of the attendance policy and an explanation thereof. In the event that the policy is changed by Board action, each teacher and administrator shall receive a copy of the policy incorporating those changes.
- B. The attendance policy shall also be included in materials describing the District's student conduct and discipline policy.
- D. Each teacher and administrator shall receive a copy of the attendance policy upon its adoption by the Board and at the start of each school year. In the event that the policy is changed by Board action, each teacher and administrator shall receive a copy of the policy incorporating those changes.
- E. A student whose instances of tardiness in a class have accumulated to constitute an instance of class absence shall promptly be so notified by her/his teacher.
- F. Notification of unexcused absences shall be sent to the parent or guardian of a student;  
All absences are indicated on interim/grading reports.
- G. Other notification procedures shall be implemented as required by the Board or the Superintendent of School.

#### 4. ACCOUNTING FOR ABSENCES

A. Attendance is to be taken daily in each class at the start of the day or during each class period at the start of the period.

B. Where consistent with other school practices, teachers and staff shall redirect students in the hallways who are absent from a class period without excuse, and shall take the student back to class. If more than 15 minutes of the class period has expired, then the student shall be taken to the principal's office or that of her/his designee. Periodic "hall sweeps" shall be conducted by school staff to identify students who are out of class.

C. Student absence data shall be made available by the building principal or her/his designees as soon as practical, but no later than the following school day, and should be reviewed by administrators, teachers, counselors, attendance officers, or other appropriate school personnel.

D. The student's parent or guardian or the student who is otherwise legally emancipated, shall be responsible for notifying the school of the student's absence on any day on which the student is absent. Such notification shall be made to the building principal or her/his designee by not later than 10:00 a.m. each day the student is absent.

E. A written excuse, signed by a parent/person in parental relation or guardian needs to be presented by the student when returning to school following each absence. A student who is legally emancipated and who also does not live with her/his parent or guardian shall provide her/his own written explanation for being absent following each absence.

F. Any excuse submitted for a student's absence for part of a school day or a whole school day shall give (a) the reason for the absence and (b) shall be signed by the student's parent/ guardian or themselves if she/he is legally emancipated.

G. All documentation must state the reason for the child's absence and the specified date(s) of absence. A new note is required for each absence period.

H. Consecutive absences in excessive of five days due to illness shall require a medical note upon return to school.

## **5. INTERVENTIONS**

Cairo-Durham will develop a checklist of school level interventions to address students with attendance concerns aligned to the guidelines below. Whenever a student exhibits the pattern of unexcused absence, tardiness or early departure, notice will be given to the parents in writing and/or by telephone and email communication in an attempt to in an effort to remediate the underlying problem.

(Note: Cumulative absence totals will follow the student throughout the county.)

### **5 Absences**

The school principal or his/her designee will review the student's attendance. Contact may be made to the parent/guardian at this time if deemed necessary.

### **10+ Absences**

These steps and this documentation format are recommended for district attendance alignment across the county. Districts may add steps to this document for specific needs, but these steps are those that are required to ensure consistent expectations county-wide.

## **6. DETERMINATION OF EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Based upon the District's educational and community needs, values and priorities, it has been determined that absences, tardinesses and early departures will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following standards. Excused absences still count toward the the cumulative total of student absences.

### **A. Excused Absences**

1. An absence, tardiness, or early departure may be excused if due to:
  - a. Student illness
  - b. Illness, or death in the student's family
  - c. Religious observance
  - d. Student appointment with physician or other health care provider (Documentation Required)
  - e. Medical quarantine of the student (Documentation Required)
  - f. Required appearance by the student in court (Documentation Required)
  - g. College visit by the student that has been approved by the building principal or guidance counselor (Documentation Required)
  - h. Student's participation in an approved cooperative work program (Documentation Required)

- i. Military obligations (Documentation Required)
- j. Such reasons as may be approved by the School Principal, Superintendent and/or the Board of Education (Documentation Required)

2. Students are allowed parent-written legal absence notes for personal absences **up to 6**

**days.** This includes, but is not limited to parent-written notes for illness, medical appointments, and acts of nature.

3. **Beyond 6 days,** the absence will exceed the parent limit for notes and will be considered as

an Unexcused Absence pending receipt of necessary legal or medical documentation or validation for any additional excused absences.

4. **Absences of More Than Five (5) Consecutive Days**

A student who is absent for more than five consecutive school days due to illness shall, upon returning to school, present a signed written explanation from her/his parent and, at the request of the principal or the Superintendent of Schools, her/his physician, and also shall present a note from her/his parent or guardian, as required by the Board of Education's Attendance Policy. In the event that such a student fails to present one or both written notices upon returning to school, the building principal or her/his designee shall contact the parent or guardian and request an explanation for the student's absence. If the principal believes that the explanation she/he receives is inadequate, or if she/he does not receive an explanation from the student's parent or guardian within five working days of making the request, then the principal shall refer the matter to the Superintendent of Schools, who shall review the matter and take such action as she/he deems appropriate.

**B. Unexcused Absences**

1. A student's absence from school for any reason other than those in this policy enumerated above shall be considered unexcused.

2. Any question of whether an absence shall be deemed excused or unexcused shall be

decided by the student's building principal based on the aforementioned policy.

3. A student who is absent from school for other than an excused reason shall not be

permitted to participate in extracurricular activities on the day she/he is absent.

**C. Class Absence**

1. An instance of “class absence” shall be a student’s failure to be in class within 15 minutes after the start of class
2. An instance of “tardiness” shall be a student’s arrival in class after class has started but less than 15 minutes after the start of class.
3. Four instances of tardiness shall count as an instance of “class absence.”
4. Instances of early departure or excessive departures may result in a class absence.

**D. Class Tardiness**

1. A student’s arrival in class after class has started, but less than 15 minutes after the start of class is considered tardiness.
2. Four instances of tardiness shall count as an instance of “class absence” for purposes of this policy

**7. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY AND COURSE CREDIT RELATED TO ATTENDANCE**

The success of the District’s educational program is based upon the principle that regular class participation and contact between students and teachers is an essential part of the education process. As would be expected, the Board is concerned about student work that is missed due to absences. Therefore, in the interest of student achievement, there must be a concerted effort by both the students and their teachers to ensure students are able to complete their missed work and maintain high academic standing due to absenteeism

- A. Upon return from any absence, the student must be afforded the opportunity to make-up work that was missed. This work must be turned in to the teacher in the specified amount of time not to exceed 2 weeks.

B. When a student is absent for a third consecutive day, or when a student is diagnosed as having a potential long-term illness, the student or her/his parent or guardian should contact the building principal or her/his designee to discuss meeting the education needs of the student.

C. A student who is excused from attendance for a full school day for a reason other than illness shall hand in all assignments for a particular class at the next scheduled meeting of that class after the absence, except where special arrangements have been made in advance by the student with the teacher.

D. If a student knows in advance of an excused absence that she/he will be absent for an excusable reason for an extended period of time, then the student shall be responsible for completing all assignments missed while she/he is absent. It shall be the student's responsibility to collect all class assignments from her/his teachers. If the assignments are not completed by the deadline that each teacher has specified for their completion, then the student's failure to meet any such deadline may result in her/his assignment to the next scheduled detention regardless of whether the work is handed in before the detention period.

E. Denial of course credit may occur for a student who has exceeded the allowable number of absences but taken all tests, completed missed class work, and secured a passing grade.

F. The District believes that classroom attendance is related to and affects a student's performance and grasp of the subject matter and, as such, students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Consistent with the importance of classroom participation, unexcused student absences, tardiness, and early departures will affect a student's grade, including credit for classroom participation, for the marking period.

G. Consequently, for each marking period a certain percentage of a student's final grade may be based on classroom participation (class attendance, preparedness and contribution) as well as the student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects, etc. as determined by the building administrator and/or classroom teacher.

## **8. DATA COLLECTION and CORRECTION**

The Board of Education supports the process of collecting data not only for state aid purposes, but also for data analysis purposes in support of improving the overall attendance rate for the school district.

When doing so, the following should be taking place for reasons reporting accuracy and school improvement:

- A. The nature of each absence (full day, half day, tardy, early release, etc) shall be coded on individual student records. Attendance shall be calculated in conformance with the Commissioner's regulations relating to length of daily sessions for purposes of apportionment of state aid (8NYCRR 175.1)
- B. Where additional information is received from a student during a student-staff conference that requires corrections to be made to a student's attendance records, such correction shall be made immediately. Notice of such change shall be sent to the student's homeroom teacher, attendance officers and other staff designated by the building principal or the Superintendent.
- C. Attendance data shall be analyzed regularly by the building principal or her/his designee to identify patterns or trends in student absences.