

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (EXCEPT FOR TRUANT, SUSPENDED AND/OR EXPELLED STUDENTS)

GENERAL

One criterion of a student's success in school is regular and punctual attendance. Frequent absences may lead to poor academic work, lack of social development and possible academic failure. Regular attendance is of utmost importance for school interest, social adjustment and scholastic achievement. No single factor may interfere with a student's progress more quickly than frequent tardiness or absence. Continuity in the learning process and social adaptation is seriously disrupted by excessive absences. In most situations, the work missed cannot be made up adequately. Students who have good attendance generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more and are more employable after leaving school. For at least these reasons, the Board believes that a student must exhibit good attendance habits as stated in this policy.

According to state law, it is the obligation of every parent/guardian to ensure that every child under his or her care and supervision receives adequate education and training and, if of compulsory attendance age, attends school. It is the obligation of every parent/guardian to notify school officials of changes in phone numbers, addresses and contact information as soon as possible.

Parents/guardians should limit appointments and other non-school related activities to outside school hours. When appointments must be made during school hours, or whenever a student must be absent from school for any portion of the school day, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify school officials in writing or by telephone stating the reason for their child's absence. When a parent/guardian fails to notify the school of their child's absence, the absence may be recorded as unexcused.

ABSENCES: DESCRIPTIONS AND PROCEDURES

Daily attendance for each student shall be kept in accordance with instructions and procedures meeting the requirements of Policy JHB, state law, and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

Each year the Board establishes the school attendance period by adopting a school calendar. Secondary students are required to be in attendance 1,056 hours and elementary students 968 hours during each school year.

The following shall be considered excused absences:

1. A student who is temporarily ill or injured or whose absence is approved by the Administrator/Principal of the school of attendance.
2. A student who is absent for an extended period due to physical, mental, or emotional disability.
3. A student to whom a current age and school certificate or work permit has been issued pursuant to the Colorado Youth Employment Opportunity Act of 1971, Article 12 of Title 8 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.

4. A student who is in the custody of a court or law enforcement authorities.
5. A student who is pursuing a work-study program under the supervision of a public school.
6. Any other absence that is considered to be excused pursuant to law.

Absences related to school activities (including, but not limited to, field trips, and athletic and musical events in which the student is required to participate) may be classified as excused on a case by case basis, at the Administrator/Principal's discretion. Such absences will not count against a student for purposes of attaining a perfect attendance record or for purposes of initiating judicial proceedings to enforce compulsory attendance.

Absences due to severe weather conditions may be considered excused. Parents/guardians exercising their best judgment may keep their child home from school because of severe weather conditions. These absences may be classified as excused on a case by case basis, at the Administrator/Principal's discretion, provided that the student's parent/guardian has contacted the school regarding the absence within 48 hours from the start of the absence. Such absences will not count against a student for purposes of attaining a perfect attendance record or for purposes of initiating judicial proceedings to enforce compulsory attendance.

In cooperation with the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, principals are encouraged to allow up to at least ten school days of excused absences for students visiting with a parent/guardian on leave from military deployment.

In an unavoidable situation, a student detained by another teacher or administrator shall not be considered tardy provided that the teacher or administrator gives the student a pass to enter his next class. Teachers shall honor passes presented in accordance with this policy.

The District may require suitable proof regarding the above exceptions, including written statements from medical sources. Each absence shall be entered on the student's record.

A student's absence will be considered unexcused when the student is absent from school without the prearranged permission of the parent/ guardian or documented permission is not received from the parent/ guardian within 48 hours from the start of the absence. The parent/guardian of the student receiving an unexcused absence shall be notified within 24 hours from the start of the absence, orally or in writing by the school. An absence of more than 50% of any attendance reporting period shall be counted toward "habitual truancy" if unexcused, in accordance with the procedures outlined in Policy JHB.

Make-up work assignments shall be provided for any class in which a student has an absence. For all absences, whether excused or unexcused, it is the responsibility of the student to pick up any make-up assignments on the day the student returns to class (or sooner if possible). A student will be allowed full credit for making up missed assignments for absences. There shall be one day allowed for make-up work for each day of absence. However, the Administrator/ principal (or designee) may allow additional make-up time in special situations.

The school may require a conference with the student and/or the student's parent/guardian or may otherwise attempt to address problem attendance, regardless of whether the student's absences are excused or unexcused, and may impose disciplinary actions pursuant to Policy:

JK for any unexcused absence. For special rules that apply to truant, suspended, and/or expelled students refer to Policies JHB and JKD/JKE.

Students and parents/guardians may petition the Superintendent or designee for exceptions to this policy provided that no exception shall be sustained if the student fails to abide by all requirements imposed by the Superintendent as conditions for granting any such exception.

APPEAL PROCESS

Each school will establish a hearing committee to review situations in which promotion is denied, or when a grade is affected because of an attendance-related matter. The committee will convene at the request of the student, the student's parents/guardian, the teacher or the Administrator/Principal.

The building principal will chair the hearing committee and will be responsible for all communications regarding decisions of the committee. In addition to the Administrator/Principal, the committee will be composed of at least two staff members. All appeals to the committee should follow the procedures outlined below.

Whenever promotion is denied or a grade affected as a result of an attendance related matter, the student may appeal the decision within five days from the date of issuance. During the appeal process, the student will not be penalized until the appeal process has been terminated.

The following steps must be taken in the appeal procedure:

Level 1: The written appeal will be presented to the building Administrator/Principal. Within three school days, a meeting will be arranged with all parties (teacher, student, parent/guardian) concerned and the hearing committee to discuss the appeal. The hearing committee will give a written decision within three school days following the meeting. If any party is not satisfied with the decision rendered at Level 1, the party may carry the appeal to Level 2.

Level 2: A written request to consider the appeal will be given to the appropriate executive director of school management within three days after the hearing committee has issued its decision. The executive director will schedule a meeting within five school days. All parties to the appeal (teacher, student, parent/guardian) must be present at the meeting. The executive director will consider all data presented and within three school days after the meeting is concluded issue a written decision. If either party to the appeal is not satisfied with the decision rendered, the party may carry the appeal to Level 3.

Level 3: A written request to consider the appeal will be forwarded to the Superintendent, or his/her designee within three days after the executive director has issued a decision. The Superintendent, or designee will schedule a meeting within five school days. All parties to the appeal (teachers, student, parent) must be present at the meeting. The Superintendent will consider all data presented and within three school days after the meeting is concluded issue a written decision. The decision of the Superintendent or his/her designee, is a final decision.

Adopted: July 12 1978

Revised: March 10 1982

Revised: August 8 1984

Revised: May 22 1985
Revised: July 23 1986
Revised: June 1988
Revised: December 1994
Revised: September 1996
Revised: October 1996
Revised: February 22, 2012

LEGAL REFS.: C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1)(n)
C.R.S. 22-33-101 et seq. (School Attendance Law of 1963)
1 CCR 301-78 – Standardized Calculation for Counting Student
Attendance and Truancy
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

CROSS REFS.: IC/ICA, School Year/School Calendar
JEA, Compulsory Attendance Ages
JHB, Truancy
JK, Student Discipline
JKD/JKE, Student Suspension/Expulsion Denial of Admissions
JLIB, Closed Campus/Student Dismissal Precautions

Policy Owner: Director of Student Discipline Services