

Attendance - Absences and Tardies

School Attendance Philosophy

Students, parents, and educators recognize the importance of attendance and punctuality at school. Key reasons for regular and punctual attendance are educational benefits, safety of students, success that builds self-esteem and employability.

Educational Benefits - Regular attendance assures that students stay current in academic skills, personal management skills, and teamwork skills.

Safety of Students - Parents and educators are concerned about the safety of their students. The intent of this policy is to have both parents and District officials aware of where students are during school hours.

Success That Builds Self-Esteem - Students must be present in order to experience success and to build self-esteem. Further, each student's presence enhances the success of the entire class.

Employability - Punctuality and attendance are listed among the five most important skills for employment by employers. Developing these skills is critical whether students plan to work during the school year, immediately after graduation, or after college.

Excused Absences

Absences from school with the knowledge and approval of a student's parent/guardian are excused absences, but such absences are counted toward the maximum of nine (9) absences allowed per semester. In order for an absence to be excused, oral or written communication from the student's parent/guardian should be received within 48 hours of the last day of the absence, except for school approved activity absences.

Activity Absences

An activity absence is an absence for school approved programs in which classes will be missed and is considered to be an excused absence. No more than five (5) activity absences per semester will be allowed unless exceptions are made by the principal or designee. School approved activity absences are not counted toward the maximum of nine (9) absences.

Make-up work

Make-up work is allowed for students with any type of an absence. However, unexcused absences/truancies are subject to a reduction on any grades earned. The classroom teacher will provide the student or the parent/guardian who requests make-up work with the information necessary to complete the make-up work, which may include:

- a. a list of pages covered during the absence;
- b. information about assignments or special projects; and
- c. a copy of all handout materials given during the absence.

In 7th - 12th grade, the principal or designee may require that the student be absent up to three (3) days before make-up work is sent home.

A student will be allowed two (2) days for each day of absence to make up new material - not to exceed six (6) school days from the date of the absence unless exceptions are made by the principal/designee.

Except in extenuating circumstances, assignments, tests, term papers and long range projects which were announced prior to the students' absence are due on the day that the student returns to school. The Board grants authority to teachers to make exceptions to this policy particularly in cases of term papers or long range projects as long as students are informed of the different requirements at the beginning of the assignment.

Except in extenuating circumstances, the Board does not allow students to take final exams early.

Unexcused Absences/Truancies

Absences without the consent of the student's parent/guardian or District officials are unexcused absences/truancies. Such unexcused absences include departure from school or class during the school day without the permission of District officials. Unexcused absences are counted toward the maximum of nine (9) absences and may be applied to a Board determination of habitual truancy.

Any absence from one or more class periods without an oral or written excuse from the student's parent/guardian within 48 hours may be considered an unexcused absence/truancy.

Discipline for a student who consistently has unexcused absences/truancies may involve actions up to and including suspension, expulsion or disenrollment.

A student in seventh (7th) – twelfth (12th) grade with unexcused absences/truancies may also lose credit. Unexcused absences/truancies may also affect a student's appeal rights for loss of credit regarding extraordinary circumstances under the 90% attendance policy.

Saturday and Afternoon School

Saturday/Afternoon School can be required by a principal or designee as a disciplinary measure.

A student can be required to attend school on Saturday or Afternoon School, during particular hours, and will be required to work on class assignments. If a student is required to attend Saturday/Afternoon School and fails to go, the student may be suspended by the principal or designee and/or may lose class credit.

Tardies

A student is tardy if he or she is not in the assigned classroom when the bell rings. Tardies which are caused by a late bus, either District or city bus, shall not be counted on the student's record. The principal or designee may also excuse student tardies because of inclement weather or other extenuating circumstances.

Grades 7 – 12 students who are more than twenty (20) minutes late are considered absent instead of tardy. However, if a District official determines that a student is willfully more than 20 minutes late for class to prevent another tardy or for other reasons, the absence may be considered an unexcused absence/truancy.

Grades 7 - 12. The student's parent/guardian will be notified, in writing, of the 4th, 5th and 6th tardies during each semester. The notice of the 6th tardy will inform the parent/guardian:

1. the student is assigned to Saturday School or a similar consequence;
2. the result of a student's failure to complete the consequences set forth in the notice;
3. loss of credit will occur if the student is tardy a seventh time. A 7th tardy will result in loss of class credit unless it is successfully appealed.

Grades Kindergarten-6. Tardiness at the elementary level (K-6) will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Attendance Requirements

All students are required to be in attendance at school at least ninety (90) percent of the time school is in session during each school semester. Students may be denied promotion to the next grade or denied credit for a class if they are not in school at least ninety (90) percent of the days that school is in session. Absence from class for any reason, including family convenience, shall be counted when the percentage of attendance and consequent eligibility for promotion or credit is being considered. Except in extraordinary cases, students are expected to be present at school and in their assigned grade or subject.

Excessive absences between the ages of 7-16 may result in the initiation of an Attendance Court hearing and/or filing, pursuant to Idaho Code 33-207, for a hearing regarding the student's habitual truancy status.

Notification of Absences and Discipline

Grades 7-12. When a student, in grades 7 through 12, exceeds nine (9) absences in any class during a semester, excluding approved activity absences, credit may be denied for that particular class. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the 5th, 8th, and 10th absences from class during a semester. The notice of the 10th absence will inform the parent/guardian of the loss of credit, and include the appeal rights to challenge the loss of credit.

Grades Kindergarten-6. Students in grades K - 6 who exceed nine (9) absences in a semester will be dealt with on an individual basis and may be denied promotion to the next grade level. A parent/guardian will receive notification prior to his/her student exceeding the limit.

Grounds for an Appeal

Those students, who have valid reasons to believe that all or part of their absences is the result of extraordinary circumstances, may request a review of their case following the attendance appeal process set forth below. Extraordinary circumstances may include, but are not limited to, verified illness or medical treatment, death in the family or death of close friends, and medical or dental professional appointments.

Attendance Appeal Process

If a parent/guardian wishes to appeal: 1) loss of credit or 2) a denial of promotion to the next grade due to the 90% attendance requirement, truancies, or the number of tardies, the following policy applies:

1. A student in grades 7-12 may remain in class until the appeal process is completed.
2. The parent/guardian has five (5) school days from the date the notification violating the 90% attendance requirement is mailed to appeal the loss of credit or denial of promotion.
3. The appeal process starts with an informal hearing with the principal or designee. An adverse decision may be appealed to the following persons in this order: appropriate Area Director, then the Council of Directors. In each instance, the parent/guardian and student has the right to explain and provide evidence that the absences were reasonable and that credit should not be denied or that a student should not be determined to be a habitual truant. The parent/guardian and student do not have the right to be represented by an attorney.

The Council of Directors' decision is final.

DEFINITIONS:

Director: an individual who is responsible to the Superintendent for the character and quality of the total educational program in his/her assigned area of the District.

Council of Directors: refers to a body that is composed of the District's directors acting in their capacity as an appeal panel.

Habitual Truant: any child whose parent/guardian has failed or refused to cause such child to be instructed as provided in Idaho Code.

Adopted: <u>6/2/97</u>	Reviewed: <u>5/12/03 -- 5/10/04</u>	Revised: <u>7/14/00</u>
	5/8/06 -- 3/17/09	7/15/03 (5/12/03)
	2/17/10 -- 2/22/12	7/1/04 (5/10/04)
	3/12/15	7/1/06 (5/8/06)
		7/1/09 (6/8/09)
		7/1/10 (3/22/10)
		7/1/12 (4/9/12)
		7/1/15 (5/11/15)

Cross-Reference: Make-up Work #2621
Promotion, Advancement and Retention #2614
Attendance for Driving Privileges #3140
In-School Detention, Suspension, & Expulsion #3273

Legal Reference: IC 33-202
IC 33-506(1)
IC 33-512

Handbook Reference: Elementary Student Planner
Secondary Student Planner