

RYE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
RYE, NEW YORK

5100

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

A. Objectives. Daily Attendance in all classes is essential to academic success and represents each student's most basic responsibility as a member of the Rye City School District. Therefore, every student is to attend all classes unless absent for one of the reasons listed below as an excused absence. The District will identify patterns of absence, tardiness and early departures from school and intervene, when necessary, to encourage student attendance and discourage unexcused absences.

B. Definitions. For purposes of this policy the term "absence" shall mean:

- failure to attend scheduled classes or supervised studies for their full duration;
- late arrival to scheduled classes or supervised studies during a school day; and/or
- departure from and failure to return to any scheduled classes or supervised studies prior to their official dismissal.

C. Classifying Absences.

1. Excused and Unexcused Absences. Student absences, late arrivals and early departures shall either be excused or unexcused. Families of students with serious or long-term medical conditions that require time out of school should contact their school principal or guidance counselor to handle the classifying of absences.

- a. Excused absences are those absences attributable to:
- Illness confirmed by a written note from parent or guardian within 48 hours of return to school
 - Medical appointment documented by physician via doctor's note or stamp on parent/guardian note
 - Serious illness or death in the family
 - Religious observance
 - Circumstances related to homelessness
 - Pre-Approved college visits
 - Educational activity related to classroom instruction, for example, school sponsored field trips or approved internships

All excused absences require a phone call by parent/guardian followed by a written note. For homeless students, the homeless liaison will assist the student in providing or obtaining documentation if needed.

- b. Unexcused absences shall be those attributable to:
- Any other reason not identified above, for example family vacations, undocumented medical appointments, camp attendance, oversleeping, etc.

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the office on the morning of the absence. It is essential that parents/guardians provide a written excuse for each absence containing the date and reason for the absence.

c. The building principal shall have the discretion to designate an absence, late arrival or early departure as "excused," if the cause of the absence is not among those enumerated in part (a) of this section, upon a determination that the absence was unavoidable and/or otherwise not the fault of the student or the student's parent(s)/legal guardian. In addition, students who are participating in approved meetings or services with Rye City School District teachers or administrators will not be considered absent from class attendance.

2. Attendance Register Codes. The District shall adopt codes to record student absences in the pupil attendance record. These codes are included in the accompanying regulation, 5100 R-1.

D. Strategies for Improving Student Attendance and Discouraging Unexcused Absences

1. Attendance Incentives. The District shall adopt strategies to improve attendance and discourage unexcused absences, including publishing handbooks on the District website, contacting parents, reviewing policies at parent and student meetings, recording attendance on reports to parent(s)/legal guardians, and applying discipline.

A high school student must have attended a minimum of six class periods in order to participate in any school-based extracurricular activity on the same day.

2. Absence Procedures. Parents shall notify the school of a student's absence by calling the attendance line and provide the reason for absence. The school shall provide makeup work and assistance for excused absences. The District may require a doctor's note in the event of an extended illness. Specific procedures are found in Regulation 5100 R-1.

Professional staff shall keep daily, accurate records of student attendance and shall report absences consistent with the procedures at each level. Specific procedures are found in Regulation 5100 R-1.

In the event of an unexplained absence by a student at the secondary level, parents will be informed via an automated telephone call with directions to clear the absence if it qualifies as an excused absence. If the absence is unexcused, the student will be required to serve a detention.

Parents are advised to review the record of student absences on the online student record system on a regular basis.

At the high school level, after a student has 14 unexcused absences from class, the principal, or his or her designee will request in writing a meeting with the student and his or her parents. The Student Support Team will convene to review student absences. Selected members of the Student Support Team will work with the student and parents for the purposes of creating an action plan to improve student attendance.

After a student has 23 unexcused absences from class, the principal, or his or her designee will in writing inform the student and his or her parents of the risk of loss of course credit after 28 absences and setting up a second meeting to revisit the action plan to address excessive absence. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Student Support Team for purposes of supporting the student in improving attendance.

3. Tardiness Procedures. Parents shall notify the school, when possible, that the student will be tardy. The student shall sign in at the security desk upon arrival.

The teacher shall admit the student and record lateness in his or her records. A student who is chronically tardy shall be referred to the counselor, principal or assistant principal, as appropriate to the school.

At the high school, for purposes of monitoring class attendance for course credit, five tardies will be counted as one unexcused absence.

4. Non-Disciplinary Intervention. The schools shall establish procedures for reviewing absences on an individual basis, contacting and involving parents, and addressing underlying issues through plans developed by building level teams, psychologists, counselors and/or administrators, in collaboration with the student and parents. Specific procedures are found in Regulation 5100 R-1.

5. Discipline. Unexcused absence may result in disciplinary action, determined on a case-by-case basis by school officials. Disciplinary action may include but is not limited to the following:

- A grade of zero for work not completed on the day of the absence
- Administrative and/or parent conference
- Loss of privileges
- Loss of eligibility for teams, clubs and school activities
- Detention
- Development of action plan
- In-school suspension
- Loss of course credit

Teachers, counselors or school officials shall notify parents or guardians by phone and/or writing, as appropriate. However, absences related to homelessness shall not result in negative consequences where the District determines that it would be in the best interests of the student in retaining the student in school.

A student shall not receive course credit after 28 unexcused absences from class.

Additional student rights and responsibilities are defined in the District's Code of Conduct.

6. In the event a student is determined to be ineligible for credit because of 28 or more absences from class, an appeal of the determination may be made to the Principal. Review of the appeal will be considered by the Principal or designee and will involve input from the student, parent, teacher, other relevant high school staff member (i.e., guidance or other counselor or psychologist).

E. Policy Distribution.

This policy is available for viewing on the District website. Copies retained at the main office in each school, and upon request shall be available for review by members of the community at that location.

Copies shall be distributed to teachers as soon as practicable following its adoption, and if applicable, amendment. New teachers shall be given a copy of this policy upon their employment.

A summary of this policy shall be included in parent and student handbooks, reviewed at parent meetings. Parents enrolling a child in the school district will be provided with a copy of this policy.

F. Annual Review. The principal or his or her designee will provide the superintendent of schools with an annual report of student attendance.

The Board of Education shall annually review the building level attendance records, and if such records show a decline in pupil attendance, shall review and, if appropriate, revise this policy to improve attendance.

Adoption Date: April 15, 1997

Revised Policy Adoption Date: July 29, 2014

Revised Policy Adoption Date: January 10, 2017