



Book	Policy
Section	J. STUDENTS
Title	Attendance Monitoring/Accounting
Code	JHBB-R (Regulation)
Status	Active
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The North Carolina compulsory attendance statute requires that every child in the state between the ages of seven (or younger, if enrolled) and 16 attend school every day school is in session. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory. Parents, custodians and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily. Principals will ensure that parents and students are notified of the school's attendance plan at the opening of school.

## **I. General Procedures**

The school staff will implement the following attendance procedures:

### **A. Designated Attendance Official**

The principal of each school shall designate a staff person responsible for attendance.

### **B. Attendance Plan**

Each school shall have an "attendance plan" that includes procedures for identifying high-risk students, mobilizing all support resources, monitoring students, and keeping accurate attendance records.

### **C. Recording Attendance**

1. In elementary and middle school, absences are to be recorded daily. Teachers are responsible for daily attendance and classroom teachers are to maintain an accurate attendance record for each student.
2. In high school, each teacher is responsible for taking attendance and must maintain an accurate attendance record for each student. Absences are to be recorded for each class. A student must be in attendance for at least one half of a class period to be counted present for the class.

### **D. Being Counted as Present at School**

1. A student must be in attendance for at least one-half of the instructional day in order to be counted present for the day.
2. Students are also counted as present for the school day if they are at a place other than the school with the approval of the appropriate school official for the purpose of attending an authorized school activity. Such activities may include field trips, athletic contests, student conventions, musical festivals, college visits or any similar approved activity.

## **E. Excused and Unexcused Absences**

### **1. Excused Absences**

Absences for reasons listed below are considered excused and are to be coded as an excused absence from school:

- a. Illness or injury of the student
- b. Death in the immediate family
- c. Quarantine
- d. Medical/Dental appointments
- e. Religious observances
- f. Educational opportunity
- g. Local school board policy
- h. Child care (for student's child)
- i. Absence related to deployment activities
- j. Court or administrative proceeding

### **2. Unexcused Absences**

Absences for reasons listed below and for any other absences not listed above are unexcused and are to be coded as an unexcused absence from school:

- a. Bad weather
- b. Missing the bus
- c. Car trouble
- d. Oversleeping
- e. Lack of heat, water or electricity
- f. Shopping
- g. Baby sitting
- h. Lack of clothing or shoes

## **F. Reporting and Verifying Reasons for Absences**

1. It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school when their child is absent from school and to inform the principal or other designated staff person of the reason for the absence.
2. Principals have authority to establish the methods by which parents may provide this information to the school (i.e. by written note to the school, by email, or by telephone). The methods should be included in each school's attendance plan.
3. Principals shall also establish procedures for documenting and maintaining notifications of absences provided by parents.
4. Principals have authority to require additional verification of the reasons for absences if they have reason to question the veracity of the information provided by the parent.

## **G. Late Arrivals and Early Dismissals**

1. For a late arrival or early dismissal, parents must provide an explanation to the school according to the procedures established by the principal and included in the school attendance plan.
2. These explanations shall be maintained by the school according to the procedures established by the principal.

## **H. Making-Up Missed Work**

As provided in Regulation [IKB-R](#), "Homework," a student who misses homework assignments or other assignments or due dates because of absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be allowed to make up the work. Arrangements for completing the work should be made within five school days of the student's return to school. Arrangements should include a schedule for completion of the work.

1. For elementary students, the teacher must initiate the contact with the student regarding such work.
2. For middle and high school students, the student must initiate the contact with the teacher.

## **I. High School Class Attendance Rules -**

*(This provision is suspended for the 2021-2022 school year effective Aug. 23, 2021)  
(This provision was suspended for the 2020-2021 school year on Nov. 2, 2021)*

1. High school students absent from eleven class periods will receive a grade of F for that particular course. This rule applies to all absences, whether excused or unexcused.
2. Each school shall develop procedures for students to make up excessive class absences. Students may appeal the decision in this regard according to procedures established by the principal. The principal's decision on the appeal is final.

## **J. Attendance Violation and Withdrawal Procedures**

After ten consecutive all day unexcused absences, the teacher will report the absences to the designated attendance official/principal. The student will be automatically placed in the category of "violation." The principal may choose to leave the student in the category of "violation" or, if the student is 16 years or older, may withdraw the student from membership as a student in CMS. Whenever a student is under suspension on the tenth consecutive day of absence, he/she is not automatically withdrawn from membership.

## **II. Truancy Intervention and Parent Notification Procedures**

In order to comply with the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law, the school staff shall implement the following procedures for students under age 16 who have excessive absences:

### **A. Teacher Contacts and Attendance Interventions**

1. When a student has a maximum of three unexcused absences in a school year, the teacher must make an initial contact with the parent to determine the cause of the absences. This contact may be made by telephone call, letter, or home visit.
2. All teacher contacts are to be documented, dated, and placed in the student's cumulative folder.
3. The teacher must also contact the designated attendance official at the school to ensure proper follow up occurs.
4. In attempting to alleviate the problems underlying non attendance, the following actions should be considered: counseling with the student, parent conferences, home visits, referral to the collaborative student services team, and involvement of community agencies.
5. In certain situations, a referral to the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Social Services may be considered. If a referral to this agency is being made for

attendance problems resulting from neglect, the principal must be informed of the referral.

### **B. Six-Day Notification Letter**

1. When a student has six unexcused absences, the principal will notify the parent in writing of the student's absences and of the Compulsory School Attendance Law and its implications. The letter must be mailed to the student's home and a copy maintained in the student's cumulative record.

2. A form letter for this purpose is available through the district's student information system.

### **C. Ten-Day Notification Letter**

1. When a student has ten unexcused absences, the principal/designee must send the parent a letter by certified mail or hand delivery, informing the parent of the number of excessive unexcused absences and the possibility of a criminal prosecution of the parent and/or the filing of an undisciplined complaint with the juvenile court for the child. A copy of this letter must be maintained in the student's cumulative record.

2. A form letter for this purpose is available through the district's student information system.

## **III. Criminal Prosecution of Parents or Juvenile Referral of Students**

**A.** If, after sending all required notices and implementing interventions with the student and his/her parent, the student continues to accrue unexcused absences, the principal/designee should contact the Student Services Department to determine if there is sufficient evidence to pursue criminal prosecution of the parent in district court and/or an undisciplined petition for the student in juvenile court for violation of the NC Compulsory Attendance Law.

**B.** The school must submit information to the Student Services Department on the "Compulsory Attendance Evidence Form" (CAV Form), as follows:

1. Name of child/school/date of birth;
2. Name, address, date of birth and phone number of parent, guardian or custodian;
3. Number of days absent without lawful excuses;
4. Attendance records or computer printout of attendance information;
5. History of attendance problems;
6. Interventions utilized and the parent and child's response to interventions;
7. Witness list, including the school social worker/attendance; official/custodian of records (If the custodian of records cannot identify the defendant as the parent, guardian or custodian of student, an additional witness who can do so must be present.);
8. Copies of all correspondence sent to parents; and
9. School's opinion as to whether good faith has been exercised by the parent, guardian or custodian.

**C.** The Student Services staff will evaluate the information submitted and work with the school to determine whether the parent, guardian or custodian has made a good faith effort to comply with the law. Based on that determination, the principal and Student Services staff will make a decision as to the appropriate actions to take to address the excessive absences.

1. If the determination is that the parent has not made a good faith effort to comply with the compulsory Attendance law, the Student Services staff will assist the school in filing a criminal complaint against the parent.

2. If the determination is that the parent has made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the Student Services staff may assist the school in requesting that an undisciplined petition be filed with the Mecklenburg County Juvenile Court.

Date of Adoption: 1/8/70

Revised: 12/10/84...9/14/92, 6/27/17, 11/2/20, 8/23/21

Legal Reference: [N.C.G.S. § 115C – 47\(9\), - 378](#); NC Board of Education Policies #EE0 – I - 000 – 003, Public Schools of NC School Attendance & Student Accounting Manual

Cross Reference: [ICA](#), [ICA-R](#)

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