

Policy Code: 4400 Attendance

School attendance and class participation are an integral part of academic achievement and the teaching-learning process. Regular attendance develops patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory: the State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of seven (or younger if enrolled) and 16 years attend school.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily. School administrators shall communicate attendance expectations to parents and guardians and work with students and their families to overcome barriers to attendance.

A. Attendance Records

School officials will keep an accurate record of attendance, including accurate attendance records in each class. Students will be considered in attendance if present at least half of the instructional day on-site in the school or at a place other than the school attending an authorized school-related activity.

To be in attendance during remote instruction days, (with the exception of the initial enrollment day), students must: (1) complete their daily assignments, either online or offline; and/or (2) have a daily check-in through two-way communication with (a) the homeroom teacher for grades K-5 or (b) for all other grade levels, each course teacher as scheduled. School officials shall communicate the attendance procedures to students and their families before the first day of remote instruction begins.

B. Late Arrivals and Early Departures

Students are expected to be at school on time and to remain at school until dismissed. During the school day, students are expected to be present at the scheduled starting time for each class and to remain until the class ends.

When a student must be late to school or leave school early, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian should be presented upon the student's arrival at school. Tardies or early departures may be excused for any of the reasons listed below in Section C.

Any disciplinary consequences for unexcused tardiness or unexcused early departures from school or class will be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for such offenses. Consequences may not exceed a short-term suspension of two days.

C. Excused Absences

The superintendent or principal has the right to excuse a student temporarily from attendance on account of sickness or other unavoidable cause.

When a student must miss school, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be presented to the office within five school days of the student returning to school in order for the absence to be excused. After five school days, the absence will be considered unexcused and a written excuse will no longer be accepted. Notes from a medical or mental health provider are acceptable in lieu of the parent note.

No more than ten school days per semester will be excused based on parent notes. Future

absences due to personal illness, injury, or medical/dental appointments, will require a healthcare practitioner's statement to be excused.

1. Illness or Injury: When the absence results from illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
 2. Quarantine: When isolation of the student is ordered by the local health officer or by the State Board of Health, or when isolation or quarantine is a required state or local control measure.
 3. Death in the Immediate Family: When the absence results from the death of a member of the immediate family of the student. For the purpose of this regulation, the immediate family of a student includes, but is not necessarily limited to, grandparents, parents, brothers, and sisters.
 4. Medical or Dental Appointments: When the absence results from a medical or dental appointment of a student.
 5. Court or Administrative Proceedings: When the absence results from the attendance of a student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness. The Local Board of Education can be considered an administrative tribunal.
 6. Religious Observance: School principals are required to authorize a minimum of two excused absences each academic year for religious observances required by faith of a student or a student's parents. The student shall be given the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed due to this excused absence. ([S.L. 2010-112](#))
 7. Educational Opportunity: Requests for absences for an educational opportunity should be submitted, in writing, to the principal at least five days in advance of the anticipated absence. The request should include the learning objective of the opportunity and how the objective links to educational standards.
- These absences are excused but still count in the maximum number of days allowed. School work missed during approved educational leave, as well as the grade specific travel assignment, are due to the teacher within one week of return. If work is not submitted, the absences may be coded as unexcused. For high school students, both excused and unexcused absences count towards the limit for CMA exemption.
8. Local School Board Policy: Brunswick County Schools may excuse temporary or occasional absences for other reasons in accordance with local school board policies, provided that the student has been in attendance for at least one-half of a school day during the current school year.
 9. Absence related to deployment activities: A minimum of two days each academic year for visitation with the student's parent or legal guardian if the student is not identified as at risk of academic failure because of unexcused absences and the student's parent or legal guardian is (a) an active duty or inactive member of the uniformed services as defined by policy 4050, Children of Military Families and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting.
 10. Child Care: Absences due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent are to be coded as excused (lawful).

[\(G.S. 115C-375.5\)](#)

11. Any other reason as approved by the board in a board resolution.

D. School-Related Activities

While recognizing the importance of classroom learning, the board also acknowledges that out-of-classroom, school-related activities can provide students with valuable experiences not available in the classroom setting. The following school-related activities will not be counted as absences from either class or school:

1. Field trips sponsored by the school;
2. Job shadows and other work-based learning opportunities as described in [G.S. 115C-47\(34a\)](#);
3. School-initiated and scheduled activities;
4. Athletic events that require early dismissal from school; and
5. Career and Technical Education student organization activities approved in advance by the principal.
6. In addition, students participating in disciplinary techniques categorized as in-school suspensions will not be counted as absent.

E. Makeup Work

In the case of excused absences, short-term out-of-school suspensions, and absences under [G.S. 130A-440](#) (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school), the student will be permitted to make up his or her missed work. (See also policies 4110, Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission, and 4351, Short-Term Suspension.) Assignments missed due to participation in school-related activities also are eligible for makeup by the student. The teacher shall determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

F. Athletic Attendance Eligibility

1. A player must have been in attendance for at least 85 percent of the previous semester at an approved high school. For a regular 90-day semester, a student may not miss more than 13 days and be in compliance with the 85 percent rule. At the end of each semester, any participant who has failed to comply with the athletic eligibility & attendance policy is immediately ineligible.
2. Appeals to the athletic eligibility & attendance policy are managed by the school's athletic director.

G. Unexcused Absences

Class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process and may be taken into account in assessing academic achievement.

The principal shall notify parents and take all steps required by [G.S. 115C-378](#) for excessive unexcused absences.

Any school disciplinary consequences for unexcused absences will be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for such offenses. Consequences may not exceed a short-term suspension of two days.

H. Chronic Absenteeism

Because class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process, any absences, whether excused or unexcused, can have a negative impact on a student's academic achievement. Regular attendance must be prioritized within each school and encouraged throughout the community. School administrators shall monitor and analyze attendance data to develop and implement strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism. (Chronic absenteeism is being absent for at least 10 percent of the days enrolled. See [16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0106](#)). Such strategies should involve engaging students and parents, recognizing good and improved attendance, providing early outreach to families of students missing school, and identifying and addressing barriers to attendance.

1. Grades K-8

Students who are chronically absent (excused, unexcused or suspended for more than 10% of the days enrolled) are at risk of not mastering the content standards. Students may be referred for academic and/or attendance interventions within a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS). Grade retention will be considered due to a lack of mastery as a result of chronic absenteeism.

2. Grades 9-12

High school students who are chronically absent (excused, unexcused or suspended for more than 10% of the days enrolled) are at risk of not mastering the content standards. Students may be referred for academic and/or attendance Interventions within a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS).

Students who miss more than ten days (unexcused) per course will be subject to an attendance-based failure (FF). Teachers do not assign a grade of FF. They report the grade earned, even if the student has exceeded 10 days, and the administration will determine if an FF is warranted. An attendance-based failure may be waived in extreme circumstances with an appeal submitted to the principal.

Students who miss more than ten days (unexcused) per course during a semester will not receive credit toward graduation. However, credit may be obtained through one of the following conditions:

- a. The principal grants a waiver. Students whose academic standing is adversely affected by this standard have the right to appeal for a waiver. The appeal must be submitted to the principal or designee in writing along with any appropriate and/or required documentation. Waivers of absences may be granted by the principal or designee only when extenuating circumstances exist.
- b. Students participate in the credit recovery process to address credits lost. Credit recovery courses will be designated based on a pre-assessment of the student's mastery of the course material, targeting areas of deficiency. The length of a credit recovery course will depend on the specific skills and knowledge the student needs to recover, not on a predetermined number of hours.

Students with excused absences due to documented chronic health problems are exempt from this policy. In addition, for students experiencing homelessness (see board policy 4125, Homeless Students), school officials must consider issues related to the student's homelessness, such as a change of caregivers or nighttime residence, before taking disciplinary action or imposing other barriers to school attendance based on excessive absences or tardies.

I. Special Circumstances

1. Students with Chronic Health Problems

No penalties will be imposed for absences due to documented chronic health problems

2. Students Experiencing Homelessness

For students experiencing homelessness (see board policy 4125, Homeless Students), school officials must consider issues related to the student's homelessness, such as a change of caregivers or nighttime residence, before taking disciplinary action or imposing other barriers to school attendance based on excessive absences or tardies

3. Attendance Requirements for Extracurricular Activities

Absences may impact eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities. Principals shall inform students and parents of the applicable attendance standards for the various types of extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. See also policy 3620, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations.

J. Perfect Attendance

In an effort to recognize perfect attendance, a certificate shall be awarded to any student who has been present for all student days during an academic year with no late arrivals and no early departures.

Legal References: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, [42 U.S.C. 11431](#), *et seq*; [G.S. 115C-47](#), [-84.2](#), [-288\(a\)](#), [-375.5](#), [-378 to -383](#), [-390.2\(d\)](#), [-390.2\(1\)](#), [-407.5](#), [-407.12](#); [130A-440](#); [16 NCAC. 6E.0102 - .0103](#), [.0106](#); State Board of Education Policies [ATND-000](#), [-003](#)

Cross References: Education for Pregnant and Parenting Students (policy 4023), Children of Military Families (policy 4050), Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission (policy 4110), Homeless Students (policy 4125), Student Behavior Policies (policy 4300), Short-Term Suspension (policy 4351)

Other Resources: NC DPI Multi-Tiered System of Support Implementation Guide, available at <https://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=2957986#anchor>

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