

LADH 0200 COMPULSORY STUDENT ATTENDANCE

I. PURPOSE

To establish responsibility for recording and excusing student absences and to outline Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and for follow-up with students and parents in accordance with requirements set forth in 22-8-2 [NMSA 1978].

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Attendance means students who are in class or in a school-approved activity. If a student is in attendance up to one half the total instructional time the student will be counted as having attended for the full day (6-10-8-7 NMSA 1978).
- B. A student who is chronically tardy will be considered absent one full day for every three unexcused tardies.
- C. Hazardous weather conditions means weather conditions that would endanger the health or safety of the student when in transit to and from school as defined and/or approved by superintendent of schools or his/her designee.
- D. Immediate family members are the child's spouse, father, mother, stepfather, step-mother, siblings, step-siblings, half-siblings, grandparents, mother-in-law, father-in-law, foster parents, guardians, and others who reside in the same house hold with the student.
- E. Long term illnesses are acute or chronic health-related problems that require a student to be out of school more than three consecutive days as verified by a health-care professional's written note to a student's school.
- F. Recurring illnesses are any medical or mental conditions that require a student to see a health care professional on a recurring basis with standing appointments; and such appointments occur at least once per month.
- G. Short term illnesses include any medical or mental conditions that keep a student out of school for three or fewer consecutive days as verified by the parent.
- H. School sponsored activities are:
 - 1. Events or activities sponsored or held by school clubs athletics, extracurricular or curricular classes.
 - 2. Visits to college/university campuses on officially designed visitation days or on alternate visits when the student has applied for admission to that particular collage/university.

III. PROCEDURES: RECORDING ABSENCES

A. Responsibility

The classroom teacher shall be responsible for taking student attendance

1. Teachers record attendance directly into the web-based attendance system.
2. Attendance documentation will be retained for a period of three years.

IV. PROCESS AND CONTENT

1. Student absences shall be considered excused if they fall within the following reasons:
 1. Short and long – term mental illnesses
 2. Recurring illnesses
 3. Observance of religious holidays
 4. Bereavement
 5. As required by law, disciplinary actions or short-term suspensions
 6. Required court proceedings
 7. School – sponsored activities
 8. Hazardous weather conditions
 9. When a student is not physically in the classroom but remains under the direct supervision of the school, the absence(s) shall be documented as excused. Examples of school-approved activities include but are not limited to:
 - a. Standardizing testing
 - b. Sports participation
 - c. Field trips and academic competitions
 - d. Health center, nurse, guidance and administrative office visits
 - e. In-school suspension
- B.** All excused absences shall be reported by parent or other adult who is legally responsible for care of the student. Verification shall be provided to school within three school days of the absence. If verification of the absence is not presented within three days, the absence shall be coded as unexcused.
1. Long-term illness shall be verified in writing by community health-care professional (doctor, dentist, optometrist, mental health counselor, etc.) or school nurse.

2. Recurring illnesses shall be verified in writing by a community health care professional (doctor, dentist, optometrist, mental health counselor, etc.) that the absence is recurring and necessary.
 3. Short-term illnesses shall be verified in writing by a parent, community health-care professional (doctor, dentist, optometrist, mental health counselor, etc.) or school nurse .
- C. It shall be the responsibility of the student to make up any and all schoolwork he/she missed due to absences, regardless of reason for absences.
1. When an absence is excused, the teacher shall provide the student with resources in order to learn the material missed during the absence or an alternate assignment to cover the same material.
 2. It shall be student's responsibility to learn the missed material, including completing alternate assignments deemed appropriate by the teacher.
 3. A short-term suspension is considered to be an excused absence. From the day of the suspension, the student may request the schoolwork he/she will be missing due to the suspension.
 4. When the absence is unexcused, the student shall still be responsible for making up the work so that continuing effective course participation is possible. Students shall have three school days from date of their return to school to make up missed work.
- D. Any absences for any reasons other than specified above may be considered either excused or unexcused by the school principal or his/her designee.
1. Such absences shall be considered excused by the school principal only with his prior approval.
 2. Normally, requests for family travel are not considered as excused absences. However, in cases of unusual family circumstances, a student absence, may be deemed excused at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee based upon the following considerations:
 - i. Recommendations from the student teacher(s) concerning the possible effect of an anticipated absence on the student's academic progress and the options available for make-up work.
 - ii. Number of excused or unexcused absences the student has accumulated to date during that grading period
 - iii. Purpose, significance and duration of travel.
 3. Absences for participation in student related (but not school-sponsored) events and activities, including but not limited to 4H, rodeo, girl scouts and boy scouts, shall not be considered excused absences unless such absences have been pre-approved by the principal or his designee.

V. MONITORING ATTENDANCE

- A. Student absences shall be reported to the student's parents/guardians on the student's quarterly report card.
 - i. Students with excessive absence and/or tardies, both excused and unexcused, will be referred for appropriate intervention. At the discretion of the Chancellor/designee, students who have been absent 10 days by the end of the second quarter of a school year may be referred to appropriate staff and/or outside agencies for intensive interventions designed to increase regular attendance.
 - ii. An unexcused absence of three or more classes up to 50 percent of an instructional day shall be counted as one-half day absence, and the unexcused absence of more than 50 percent of an instructional day shall be counted as one full-day absence.
 - iii. If a student's attendance rate drops below 90 percent in any class during any grading period the students excused and unexcused absences shall be reviewed to determine if interventions are necessary.

VI. REPORTING (NMAC 6-10-8)

- A. The school shall maintain class attendance records by class period for every instruction day for each student in each school or school program in the school district or charter school in a manner variable by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED).
- B. The Chancellor shall report absences with excused or unexcused identifiers through the student teacher accountability reporting system and certify that the information is being reported consistently at intervals and in a manner as specified by NMPED.

VII. DATE OF ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

This policy was adopted by majority vote of the Governance Council in a meeting legally convened on _____ 2012; unless otherwise stipulated, is effective immediately upon approval.