

Policy Code: 4400 Attendance

Attendance in school and participation in class are an integral part of academic achievement and the teaching-learning process. Through regular attendance, students develop 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 7 (or younger if enrolled) and 16 years attend school. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily.

A. ATTENDANCE RECORDS

School officials will keep accurate record of attendance, including accurate attendance records in each class. Attendance records will be used to enforce the Compulsory Attendance Law of North Carolina.

B. EXCUSED ABSENCES

When a student must miss school, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be presented to the student's teacher on the day the student returns after an absence. An absence may be excused for any of the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school;
2. Isolation ordered by the State Board of Health;
3. Death in the immediate family;
4. Medical or dental appointment;
5. Participation under subpoena as a witness in a court proceeding;
6. A minimum of two days each academic year for observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent. The student will have the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed due to the excused absence for a religious observance;
7. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a legislative or Governor's page, with prior approval by the principal;
8. Pregnancy and related conditions or parenting, when medically necessary;
9. Visitation with student's parent or legal guardian, at the discretion of the superintendent or designee, if the parent or legal guardian (a) is an active duty 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 has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting

In the case of excused absences, and short-term out-of-school suspensions, and absences under [G.S. 130A-440](#) (for failure to submit a school health assessment from within 30 days of entering school) the student will be permitted to make up his or her work. (See also policies 4110, Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission, and 4302, Short-Term Suspension). The teacher will 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.

C. SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES

All classroom activities are important and difficult, if not impossible, to replace if missed. Principals shall ensure that classes missed by students due to school-related activities are kept to an absolute minimum. 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;
5. Career and Technical Education student organization activities approved in advance by the principal; and
6. in-school suspension;

Assignments missed for these reasons are eligible for makeup by the student. The teacher will 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 (see AR 4400).

D. EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process and may be taken into account in assessing academic achievement. Students are expected to be at school on time and to be present at the scheduled starting time for each class. Students who are excessively tardy to school or class may be suspended for up to two days for such offenses.

The principal shall notify parents and take all other steps required by [G.S. 115C-378](#) for excessive absences. Students may be suspended for up to two days for truancy. (see AR 4400).

If a student is absent from school for five or more days in a semester, the principal or a committee established by the principal shall consider whether the student's grades should be reduced because of the absences. The principal or committee shall review other measures of academic achievement, the circumstances of the absences, the number of absences, and the extent to which the student completed missed work. A committee may recommend to the principal and the principal may make any of the following determinations.

1. the student will not receive a passing grade for the semester;
2. the student's grade will be reduced;
3. the student will receive the grade otherwise earned; or
4. the student will be given additional time to complete the missed work before a determination of the appropriate grade is made.

Students having excused absences due to documented chronic health problems will be exempt from this policy.

Excessive absences may impact eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics. See policy 3620, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations.

Legal References: [G.S. 115C-47](#), [-84.2](#), [-288\(a\)](#), [-375.5](#), [-378 to -383](#); [-390.2\(d\)](#), [-390.2\(1\)](#), [-390.5](#), [-407.5](#); [16 N.C.A.C. 6E.0102](#), [.0103](#); State Board of Education Policies [ATND-000](#), [-003](#)

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