

## 5200 ATTENDANCE (M)

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In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, every parent, guardian, or other person having control and custody of a child between the ages of six and sixteen shall cause the child to regularly attend school. The Board of Education requires students enrolled in the school district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State.

Notwithstanding the requirement of reporting student absences in the school register for State and Federal reporting purposes, “excused” and “unexcused” student absences, for the purpose of expectations and consequences regarding truancy, student conduct, promotion, and the award of course credit is a local Board decision outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6 and Policy and Regulation 5200. In accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6 and for the purposes of Policy and Regulation 5200, a student’s absence from school will either be excused or unexcused. Unexcused absences will counts toward truancy.

A parent or adult student shall provide advance notice to the school prior to the student being absent from school. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-25.6, if a student is determined to be absent from school without valid excuse, and if the reason for the student’s absence is unknown to school personnel, the Principal or designee shall immediately attempt to contact the student’s parent to notify the parent of the absence and determine the reason for the absence.

Students that are absent from school for any reason are responsible for the completion of assignments missed because of their absence. All pupils absent, regardless of the reason, must complete assignments which, in the opinion of the teacher, are necessary to assure continuity of the instructional program.

In general, pupils will be allowed one day to make up missed work for each one day of absence. Teachers shall make reasonable accommodations to extend time for pupils.

Prolonged or repeated absences, excused or unexcused, from school or from class, deprive students of the educational and classroom experiences deemed essential to learning and may result in retention at grade level.

#### Excused Absences

Excused absences are when a pupil is absent from school for a full day or a portion of a day for one or more of the following reasons:



- a. The pupil's illness (must be verified by medical doctor's note after four consecutive days).
- b. A death or critical illness in the pupil's immediate family.
- c. Family illness.
- d. Educational opportunities.
- e. Take Your Child to Work Day.
- f. Excused religious observances, pursuant to N..S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16.
- g. When appropriate, when consistent with Individual Education Programs, the Individuals with Disability Act, accommodation plans under Plan U.S.C. SS 794 and 705 (20), and individualized health care plans pursuant to N.J.A.C 6A:16-2.3.

In general, pupils will be allowed one day to make up missed work for each one day of absence.

Any transcript or form on which information concerning a pupil's attendance record is requested shall show only absences other than those excused because of religious observance (18A:36-15).

Any pupil absent from school because of a religious observance may not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence (18A:36-14).

On days when it is anticipated that students (or families) will wish to be absent due to the religious observances, every effort should be made to avoid scheduling activities such as tests, field trips, school plays, special meetings or programs including evening activities, meetings and programs.

However, if for some reason a test or examination was given on a religious observance, pupils who miss such test or examination because of absence on this religious observance must be given the right to take an alternate test or examination (18A:36-14).



To be entitled to the privileges regarding religious observances set forth in this policy, the pupil must present a written excuse signed by a parent or person standing in place of a parent (18A:36-14).

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14, a student who is absent from school for observing a religious holiday shall not be deprived of any award, eligibility, or opportunity to compete for any award, or deprived of the right to take an alternate test or examination that was missed because of the absence provided there is a written excuse of such absence signed by the parent.

## Truancy

Truancy is defined by Regulation 5200 as a pupil's absence from all or a part of the school day without the knowledge of the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Students shall be subjected to the school district's response for unexcused absences that count toward truancy during the school year as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4 and Regulation 5200.

Unexcused absences from school or from classes within the school day may subject a student to consequences that may include the denial of a student's participation in co-curricular activities and/or athletic competition. Repeated absences from school interfere with efforts of the Board and its staff in the maintenance of good order and the continuity of classroom instruction and such absences may result in the removal of the student from a class or course of study.

The principal of each school shall work in concert with the special services department to identify the habitual truant, investigate the causes of his/her behavior, and implement actions designed to correct the situation. These actions may include detentions, suspensions, referrals, filing of complaints and retentions.

The Superintendent shall calculate and monitor the average daily attendance rate for the district and for each school in the district. Whenever the average daily attendance rate does not meet the New Jersey Department of Education requirements the Superintendent or designee shall develop a district improvement plan to improve student attendance pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:30-5.2.

## Potentially Missing Children



Parents/guardians shall notify the school when a student will be absent. In the event this procedure is not followed by the parent/guardian, the assigned school personnel shall make all reasonable attempts to contact the parent/guardian by telephone.

If no telephone contact can be made and, if deemed necessary, the principal shall investigate.

When and if it is discovered that a child is "missing" and this is corroborated with the parents or guardians, the police shall be notified immediately.

If a student is present in the morning when attendance is taken but absent from school later in the school day, without explanation, the same procedures shall be followed.

## Family Travel

The Board of Education requires that pupils enrolled in the schools of this district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. Pupil participation in all daily scheduled classroom activities is essential in order to achieve continuity of instruction and learning experiences. To this end, attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the schools during the days and hours that the school is in session. Although the Board recognizes the benefits to students of time spent with families, the Board encourages families to take trips and/or to travel when school is not in session. If a family trip or family travel should last more than 15 school days, students will need to be withdrawn by a parent or guardian and re-enrolled by a parent or guardian upon their return. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide schooling during such an extended absence. All absences due to family trips or travel should be reported to the school 10 days prior to travel for absences greater than three school days.

## Late Arrival and Early Dismissal

The Board recognizes that from time-to-time compelling circumstances will require that a pupil be late to school or dismissed before the end of the school day.

As agent responsible for the education of the children of this district, the Board shall require that the school be notified in advance of such absences by the pupil's parent/guardian, which shall state the reason for the tardiness or early dismissal.

Justifiable reasons may include those as defined by excused absences.

All other tardiness and early dismissals will be recorded as unexcused.



An unexcused absence is a pupil's absence for all or part of a school day for any reason other than those listed above as excused.

A. Absence is expressly not excused for any of the following purposes (this list is intended to be illustrative and not inclusive):

1. Travel.
2. Performance of household or babysitting duties.

Tardiness and early dismissals results in the loss of instructional time. Excessive unexcused tardiness and/or early dismissals may cause students to be subject to disciplinary procedures and/or meetings involving the parents or guardians with an administrator and/or school counselor. Three early dismissals and/or tardiness will be counted as one full day absent (Refer to policy 5410: Promotion and Retention).

No pupil shall be permitted to leave the school before the close of the school day unless he/she is met in the school office by his/her parent/guardian to act in his/her behalf.

#### Legal Custody

Students can be released only to the custodial parent. Exceptions can be made upon the custodial parent's written request to the principal.

Parents who have been awarded joint custody of a child must provide the school with specifics relevant to the joint custody arrangements.

When changes occur in the custodial arrangements, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to notify the school. In the absence of such information, the school will comply with the most recent legal documentation, which is available

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14; 18A:36-25.6; 18A:38-25

N.J.S.A. 34:2-21.1 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6; 6A:30-5.2; 6A:32-8.3



# POLICY

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## CLINTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

Students  
5200/Page 6 of 6  
ATTENDANCE (M)

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