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| HENDERSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD POLICY | <u>STUDENTS</u> Attendance | 405 |
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ATTENDANCE

I. General

The Henderson County Board of Public Education believes that regular school attendance is of crucial importance for educational achievement; that learning experiences that occur in the classroom are essential components of the learning process; that time lost from class tends to be irretrievable in terms of opportunity for instructional interaction; therefore, each student should attend school every day. Further, the Board affirms that the primary responsibility for regular attendance resides with the parents/guardians and the individual student.

To be considered present for a day, a student must be in attendance one-half of the day. To be considered in attendance for a class period, a student must be present for at least two-thirds of the class period or at a place other than the school with the approval of the appropriate school official to attend an authorized school activity. These activities include:

1. Field trips sponsored by the school.
2. School-initiated and scheduled activities.
3. Athletic events requiring early dismissal from school.
4. Serving as a page for the governor or legislature.
5. In-school suspension and C-STOP.

The number of times that a student misses class for school-sponsored activities should be kept to an absolute minimum. The Principal shall closely scrutinize and monitor such absences. Any assignments missed by a student as a result of involvement in school-sponsored activities shall be completed by the student and are due on the day the student returns to class, unless additional time is granted by the classroom teacher.

No student will be dismissed from school prior to the end of the school day, with the exception of those students enrolled in an approved education program, except with prior approval from the Principal or designee.

Each school will decide if parent notes or phone verification, or a combination of these two methods, will be required for absences. If notes are not required, then the school shall contact by telephone, and speak personally with, the student's parent to verify the absence, and will maintain documentation to support the telephone conversation.

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II. Lawful Absences, Tardies, and Early Dismissals

Students are expected to be in attendance for each day of the regular school year, which normally consists of 180 school days. Basis for excusable absences permitted by the N. C. State Board of Education Attendance Regulations are:

1. Illness or injury prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
2. The local health officer or the State Board of Health orders the isolation of the student.
3. The student is absent due to the death of a member of the immediate family.
4. The student has an emergency medical or dental appointment or such an appointment, which has been approved in advance by the principal.
5. The student is a party to court or administrative proceedings or is under subpoena as a witness in the proceedings of a court or administrative tribunal.
6. The student has obtained prior approval by the principal to be absent due to the observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parents.
7. The student obtains prior approval from the principal to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a Legislative or Governor's Page.
8. The student is absent due to pregnancy, related conditions, or parenting, when medically necessary.

Unlawful Absences, Tardies and Early Dismissals:

Parents are required to ensure that their child attends school while school is in session. If a parent fails to assure the child's attendance at school, the parent may be prosecuted for violating the compulsory attendance law.

1. Unexcusable absences include all reasons not covered above. A report of unlawful absences may be filed if the child continues to accumulate unexcused absences.

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2. Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in school the full day. Tardies and early dismissals cause students to miss important information and are strongly discouraged. The school principal is expected to deal appropriately with those students who are chronically tardy or who leave early.

III. Attendance Requirements for Credit and Promotion

A. Elementary Schools

Students must be in attendance for a minimum of 164 days to be considered for promotion to the next grade.

B. Middle Schools

Students must be in attendance for a minimum of 166 days to be considered for promotion to the next grade.

C. High Schools

1. 4 x 4 Schedule

Students must be in attendance for a minimum of 85 days to obtain credit in each course.

2. Traditional Schedule

Students must be in attendance for a minimum of 170 days to obtain credit in each course.

Educational opportunities will be available for students who need to make up days because of excessive absences. These opportunities may include: (1) Remediation outside the normal school hours as approved by the Principal. For course credit at the high school level, these opportunities will be an hour-for-hour basis. (2) Saturday School. (3) Summer school. The principal may charge a registration fee to defray costs on days that fall outside the normal school year calendar for students.

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IV. Absences and Promotion/Course Credit

All absences, even if excused and lawful, are counted against the attendance requirements. Students must be in attendance the appropriate number of days to be considered for promotion or credit. While students may be absent for legitimate reasons, it is the expectation that the lost time will be made up at the school during provided make-up sessions.

- A. Any student in grades K-8 who exceeds the absence limit may not be promoted. Students who exceed the limit have an option to make up time and academic work through educational opportunities such as remediation outside the normal school hours as approved by the Principal including before and after school, Saturday School and Summer School.
- B. Any student in grades 9-12 who exceeds the absence limit may not receive credit for the course. Students who exceed the limit have an option to make up time and academic work for course credit on an hour-for-hour basis through educational opportunities outside the normal school hours as approved by the Principal including before and after school, Saturday School and Summer School.
- C. As soon as a parent anticipates a student's extended absence because of a severe, prolonged, or chronic illness under a physician's care, the parent shall notify the principal. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide appropriate documentation in order for the school to make appropriate arrangements for homebound/hospital-bound, or other appropriate instruction. If a student makes a good faith effort to complete the work under these conditions, days missed will not be counted against the policy. This arrangement shall be made only on the advice of the attending physician. Parents should address all questions regarding this type of instruction to the principal.
- D. The Superintendent or his designee, upon recommendation of the Principal, may waive this policy for cause.