

NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

SERIES 1000: STUDENTS

P1020

ATTENDANCE

The North Branford Board of Education recognizes that regular attendance in school is fundamental to a child's achievement. Instructional experiences that occur in school are meaningful and essential components of the learning process. It shall be the policy of the North Branford Public Schools to encourage regular attendance by all students. Therefore, the Board of Education maintains an attendance requirement for all courses offered. There are three assumptions or philosophical points upon which this Attendance Policy is based:

1. Time lost from class is irretrievable in terms of opportunity for instructional interaction.
2. Not all classroom learning experiences can be measured by written tests.
3. For a student to receive a passing grade and subsequent credit, the student has an obligation to give as well as receive in the context of the classroom setting.

It is the responsibility of parents or guardians of all children over five (5) years of age and, and under 18 years of age, to cause their children to attend school regularly, subject to the option to delay public schooling until age seven, and further subject to the option of the parent or guardian to consent to the withdrawal from school of a student who is age 16 or 17. The schools will make all reasonable efforts to keep parents and students informed as to attendance problems and will make all reasonable efforts to help students improve their attendance when such improvement is warranted.

This policy shall not apply to any child residing within the school district who is not enrolled in the North Branford public schools and who is receiving equivalent instruction (either in private school or otherwise) in accordance with Connecticut General Statute §10-184. Transfer students will have attendance prorated.

DEFINITION

1. **“Absence”** means when a student is not in attendance at school for an entire day, with or without parent permission.

2. **“Excused Absence”** means a student’s absence from school due to:

- Student illness or injury
- Serious illness or death in the immediate family
- Religious observance
- Mandatory court appearance of the student
- Suspension or expulsion from school
- Other exceptional circumstances approved by building administrator or his/her designee

The administration reserves the right to request and require documentation as may be appropriate in order to determine whether an absence is excused in accordance with the above, including without limitation a physician’s verification with respect to student illness or injury. The building administration shall define other school absences (such as field trips) which will not count towards the maximum allowable absences

3. **“Interrupted school day”** means any of the following:

- **“Tardy”** means arrival at school or class later than the official start of the school day.
- **“Early dismissal”** means a departure from school prior to the official closing of the school day.
- **“Early dismissal with return”** means a departure from school and a return prior to the official closing of the school day.

4. **“Unexcused Absence”** means those days when a student’s absence from school is not excused in accordance with paragraph 2 above, including without limitation, family vacations. In addition, any three of tardy, early dismissal and/or early dismissal with return shall be deemed to be one unexcused absence at the elementary and middle schools. At the high school, however, only tardies consisting of arrival at school or class more than 10 minutes after the official start of the school day or class shall be counted for the purposes of determining an unexcused absence, and shall be considered a class cut.

5. **“Truant”** means students, ages 5 through 16 inclusive, enrolled in school who have four unexcused absences in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school year. Any student age 5 through 16 inclusive, who has accumulated twenty (20) unexcused absences from school shall be determined to be a habitual truant.

6. **“Maximum absences”** means 20 (either excused or unexcused) absences per

year. For high school students, “maximum absences” means 12 (either excused or unexcused) absences per year, 6 (either excused or unexcused absences) per half year courses, and 4 (either excused or unexcused) absences for quarter courses.

WITHHOLDING OF CREDIT

Students who exceed the maximum absences may be retained. In addition, high school students who have exceeded the maximum number of absences in a course (whether excused or unexcused) will receive the academic grade earned in that course, but shall receive no credit. A course for which a student receives no credit will not count toward the total credits required for graduation, nor will it count toward a specific number of credits needed in an individual subject area. Students denied credit in a course will be allowed to use the course as a prerequisite to other courses in the subject area, assuming the required academic grade has been earned.

RESTORATION OF CREDIT/APPEALS

Restoration of credits, and appeals of loss of credit, shall be determined by the building administrators in accordance with regulations developed pursuant to this policy.

TRUANCY

Any student age five (5) to sixteen (16) inclusive, who has accumulated four (4) unexcused absences from school in any one month, or ten (10) unexcused absences from school in any school year shall be determined to be a truant. Any student age five (5) to sixteen (16) inclusive, who has accumulated twenty (20) unexcused absences from school shall be determined to be a habitual truant.

Each building principal shall develop procedures to monitor student attendance which, as a minimum, shall include the following:

1. At the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment of a student during the school year, notification of parents or guardians of each child enrolled in school of their obligations under the attendance policy and of their obligations to cause their children to attend school pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 10-184. Specifically, parents or guardians shall (1) notify the school by telephone on the date of the child’s absence, and (2) write an excuse note to be delivered to the school upon the child’s return to school.
2. Holding a meeting with the parents or guardians of truants to review and evaluate the reasons for the child being truant. This meeting shall be held not later than ten (10) school days after the child’s fourth (4th) unexcused

absence in a month or tenth (10th) unexcused absence in a school year.

3. Coordination of services with referrals of children to appropriate agencies.
4. Obtaining from each parent or guardian of an enrolled student, a telephone number or other means of contacting such parent or guardian during the school day.
5. Make a reasonable effort to notify, by telephone, the parent or guardian whenever a child fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and the school has not been notified by the parent or guardian of the student's absence.

If a student is truant, and the parent or guardian of such student fails to attend the meeting described at paragraph 2 above, the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, shall file a written complaint with the Superior Court for each such truant alleging that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his/her family is a family with service needs.

The Superintendent of Schools shall:

1. Provide an annual report to the State Department of Education on a school-by-school basis listing the number of children enrolled who are habitual truants.
2. Assure that this policy is implemented equitably in each of the schools of the district through administrative regulations.

Policy Adopted: 12/21/06