

CHICHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: ATTENDANCE

ADOPTED:

REVISED: October 18, 1994

204. ATTENDANCE	
1. Purpose	<p>Any child who has attained the age of eight years prior to February 1 of any year or who has entered school at an earlier age and who has not yet attained the age of seventeen years shall be required to attend school regularly during the entire school year except as amended by Section 1330 of the Pennsylvania School Code of 1949.</p> <p>Regular attendance shall be defined as attending school for the full day on each day during which school is in session. Students are expected to attend all sessions unless properly excused by school authorities.</p>
2. Exceptions	<p>All pupils between the ages of eight and seventeen pursuant to the compulsory education laws of Pennsylvania, shall attend school regularly except those excused for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homebound instruction students receiving homebound instruction are considered present. Homebound tutors shall be provided for any student who shall be absent from school for an extended period provided there is a written recommendation for such instruction, the diagnosis and prognosis by the family physician. The prognosis shall be stated in terms of the maximum length of time. A notation of such instruction shall be placed in the cumulative folder. 2. Mental or physical disability. 3. Attendance at a non-public school approved by the State Department of Education. 4. Regular employment of children in compliance with child labor laws. <p>The Department of Public Instruction has established rules concerning religious holidays. In respect to such absences, the following should be noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For the full or part-time excusal of a pupil from school or a session of school to observe a religious holiday with his/her family, it is necessary that the pupil present a written request by the parent or guardian to the school official.

2. A pupil's absence from school for major religious holidays should be recorded as an excused absence. There shall be no penalty attached to such an absence, except that as for all absences, work missed must be completed before credit can be given.
3. No pupil who is excused from school because of major religious holidays shall be deprived of an award, or eligibility, or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence for a major religious holiday.
4. If a pupil misses a test to observe a major religious holiday with his/her family, s/he must be given the right to take an alternate test or examination, etc.

Since the School District recognizes that education can, in fact, take place outside the confines of the classroom, family trips of an educational nature, although considered unexcused for the purpose of attendance, may receive a waiver to the 15-day policy.

Pupil attendance is administered through a central attendance system under the supervision of the Assistant Business Administrator.

Because the Board feels that prompt and sustained attendance is important for each pupil, and because the Board desires to assist parents and guardians as they fulfill their obligations to the School Codes of the State of Pennsylvania, the following regulations shall be applicable:

Lateness to School

The orderly conduct and overall climate of school, classrooms, and school activities require the prompt beginning of the school program. The school will assist in the educational process of teaching responsibility by having pupils avoid unexcused tardiness. Tardiness to school and/or class is disruptive to both teachers and students and results in loss of valuable instruction time.

A. Excused Tardiness:

When a student is tardy to class and this tardiness is excused his/her teacher may provide an opportunity to make up lost work or time. Correspondingly, each student is also responsible for making up time or work resulting from his/her tardiness. If, however, the student does not assume this obligation, s/he fails by choice, i.e., s/he makes up lost work or fails the choice is his/hers.

Time and work may be made up after school, at home or during school hours. The teacher can assign library work related to the lesson missed.

B. Unexcused Tardiness:

When a student's unexcused tardiness to class has exceeded one class period the student is to be charged with a cut. Also, if the student is habitually tardy to class, this need not be accumulative. The teacher should warn the student about tardiness; if this tardiness continues, the student should be referred to the office, at which time a warning will be given that the next tardy will count as a cut. Continued lateness to class or a class cut will result in disciplinary action according to school policy. Administration may also use detention to deal with frequent offenders.

When it is necessary to leave school, student must present a written request, signed by his/her parent, to the office in the morning of the day on which s/he wishes to be excused.

If s/he wishes an early dismissal for a medical appointment, the request should include the physician's name, address, phone number, and time of appointment. This can best be accomplished by providing the appointment card given by the physician or dentist.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, s/he should request a student pass from the teacher under whose supervision s/he is at the time. The s/he should go to the health suite to see the nurse. After an examination by the nurse, s/he will decide whether or not the student is to be excused to go home and will make the proper arrangements which include contacting his/her parents.

STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO LEAVE THE SCHOOL PREMISES DURING SCHOOL HOURS UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE PRINCIPAL OR ONE OF THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS.

School Attendance

For the educational process to be successful, continuity of instruction, regular class participation, appropriate learning experiences, and individual pupil study are essential to meet maximum educational goals and realize individual potential for each student. Frequent absences from school and classroom disrupt and hinder this process. To insure the continuity of program, a pupil in the Chichester Schools must attend school a minimum of 165 days during a regular school year.

3. Guidelines

Notification

In keeping parents and guardians informed of possible noncompliance with the attendance policy, letters will be sent from all schools according to the following schedule when applicable at the secondary level.

Less than five (5) periods per week elective/semester fourth (4th) absence. Full year seventh (7th and thirteenth(13th) absence

In addition, school personnel, i.e. guidance counselors, school administrators, attendance secretary, etc. will attempt to work in a cooperative spirit with parents and guardians in implementing this policy. Parent/school contact should include telephone calls, correspondence to home, attendance information on regular report card, individual parent conferences. Students beyond the compulsory age for attending school who continue to have excessive absenteeism after corrective measures have been taken may be dropped from the school roles.

Absenteeism

A. Justification

The Board of Education states that "prompt and sustained attendance is important for each student" attending the Chichester schools. In meeting the obligations of the School Code of the State of Pennsylvania, the Board has adopted an attendance policy. This policy states "for the educational process to be successful, continuity of instruction, regular class participation, appropriate learning experiences, and individual pupil study are essential." Frequent absences from school and/or class are disruptive to both teachers and other students and hinder the educational process and inhibit the attainment of individual educational goals and potential. To insure the continuity of the program, a student must attend school a minimum of 165 days during the regular school year. This policy is written in the best interest and welfare of our students. It is firm yet fair in that a student will not automatically fail. Course credit may not be granted until a student satisfactorily completes course requirements.

The curriculum of Chichester Schools is designed to achieve maximum educational benefit within the mandated 180 day school year. Therefore, absences make it impossible for a pupil to satisfactorily obtain all benefits from prescribed course of study. Also, in keeping with provisions of the Pennsylvania School Codes the following procedures and guidelines will be adhered to:

1. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires children to attend school regularly until they are seventeen.

2. Examples of excused absences are: illness, quarantine, death in the immediate family, exceptionally urgent reasons, impassable roads, and inclement weather. The last two reasons for absence are determined by the school buses' inability to operate.
3. Examples of illegal/unexcused absences and tardiness are: illegal employment, truancy, parental neglect, oversleeping, missing the bus, shopping, babysitting, visiting relatives, hunting, fishing, working at home and remaining home to do school work.

B. Written Justification

When pupils have been absent from school, have an excused tardiness, or wish to request an early release prior to the regular scheduled dismissal time, a written note signed by the parent or appropriate professional person must be submitted to the attendance office at the beginning of the school day. Additional verification or justification may result in the attendance office at the beginning of the school day. Additional verification or justification may result in the attendance secretary or the school administration calling home. Any students participating in school sponsored activities or sporting events shall be considered excused if school time is missed.

C. Loss of Credit

When applicable at the secondary level, pupils with absences in excess of fifteen (15) school days for a year long course, or seven (7) days for a semester course or elective course meeting less than five times per week all year; will not qualify to receive assigned course credit for the subject until missed days in excess of aforementioned time has been successfully made up. This policy is not designed to be permissive or to set a limit of allowable days to be missed from school without penalty. Instead, it assumes absences will occur during the school year for reasons of personal illness, serious personal or family problems, professional appointments, etc.

In making up missed time, sessions equal in time to the missed class periods will be scheduled. At student will not automatically fail! Instead, an incomplete will be recorded until that school time is made up. In extenuating circumstances, as determined by the building principal on an individual basis, absences in excess of fifteen (15) may be reviewed. Excessive, unexcused absences shall also be dealt with by appropriate disciplinary procedures, including suspension from school.

The Board of Education, in the best interest and welfare of who have not complied with compulsory and minimum attendance requirements.

When an elementary pupil has been absent seven (7) days, his/her parents will receive a letter informing them of his/her absence. Once an elementary pupil has exceeded fifteen (15) days of absence, his/her parents will receive a letter from the principal stating that any further absences must be substantiated by a doctor's note. Any absence not so substantiated will be considered an unexcused absence and will count toward a "First Notice" or the appropriate "Warrant." In the event that a pupil has accumulated a number of absences as the result of a childhood disease, administrative discretion may be used to excuse these absences.

D. School Activities

For the purpose of this policy, students participating in school related or school sponsored activities will not be considered absent.

E. Incomplete School Day

1. For the purpose of this policy, pupils who attend school at least one full period during the regular school day will not be absent for the entire school day.
2. Pupils leaving school prior to the completion of the regular school day must have reasons reviewed by the administration. Releases for work, auto repairs, hairdresser appointments, baby-sitting, etc. are not acceptable excuses.
3. Upon verification of three days of illegal absences the student's parents will receive a first offense letter. The first offense letter is initiated at the building level and issued over the Principal's signature. A fine may be imposed for any day over the three days of illegal absence.
4. Upon return to school, any student subsequently found to be illegally absent is said to have committed a second offense. When a second offense is verified, the Building Principal will forward all necessary information to the District Office. The Superintendent will prepare and sign official papers.
5. Definition of absences:
 - a. Excused: Meets conditions of Pennsylvania School Code and District Policy.
 - b. Illegal absence: Applies to those students of compulsory school age under 17 years of age. (See item #3 for examples.) An illegal absence is always an unexcused absence.

- c. Unexcused absence/tardiness: Applies to those students beyond 17 years of age. (See item #3 for examples.)
- d. Unexcused absence/tardiness without penalty: Applies to those absences or tardiness which do not meet the definition of a legal absence as designed by the State Code or District Policy but because of the circumstances any penalty attached to the absence would be deemed to be grossly unfair.
- e. All penalties referred to in this policy apply to both an illegal or unexcused absence or tardiness.

F. Consecutive Absences

Any student who misses fifteen (15) consecutive school days and does not appear on home assignment, homebound instruction, and/or is not medically verified as unable to attend school, will be issued written notification to return to school within five (5) school days. Failure to respond will result in the following:

1. Students of compulsory school age will be subject to the compulsory attendance laws.
2. Students above the compulsory attendance age not complying with the notice to return will be notified that within ten (10) school days s/he must provide written documentation or appear in person to the school principal with an explanation of their absences and justification for not being dropped from the school rolls. If dropped from the school rolls, the student and parents must present a written petition to the high school principal for readmittance. Each case will be reviewed upon the individual merits of the petitioner and of the case.

G. Excessive Absence

Pupils who during the school year miss over thirty (30) days of school in a nonconsecutive fashion will be notified and a parent/guardian conference will be required with the school principal within five (5) school days of official notification to discuss the student's noncredit status, and to determine reasons for excessive absence. Pupils above the compulsory school age who during the school year miss over 30 days of school in a nonconsecutive fashion will have notification mailed to them the parents/guardian that pending adequate explanations of absences in such conferences, such pupils may be brought to the Board of Education for a hearing to consider exclusion from school if such recommendation is made by the Superintendent of Schools. Placement in the Alternative School may also result from this conference.

H. Class Cuts

So as to impress upon the students that class attendance is vital to the learning process, class cuts will not be an acceptable behavior.

1. First class cut - The students will receive administrative action in the form of in-school suspension. A conference will take place with each student that cuts a class. The parents will be notified by certified mail that the student has cut a class and that the student will fail the marking period if a second cut occurs.
2. A Second class cut following official notification The student and parents will be notified that the student has failed for the marking period. A student/administrator conference will take place and parents will again be notified in writing.
3. Third Class Cut - The student will be suspended from school pending a parent conference. The purpose of this conference will be to inform both student and parents that on a fourth cut the student will be withdrawn from the class, forfeit credit for the course and be placed in in-school suspension for that period of the day for the remainder of the school year.
4. Fourth Class Cut - Parents will be informed that the student has been withdrawn from class, will receive a failure for the course, and be placed in in-school suspension for that period of the day for the remainder of the school year, and will receive no credit for the course.

Make-Up Work

- A. Pupils are provided an opportunity to complete assignments missed because of his/her absences. It cannot be assumed that the full benefit of missed work can be gained through merely make-up work, since it is clearly understood that the learning activity that takes place during the classroom period once missed can never be regained in its entirety. However, benefit can be received through assigned work. The guideline for missed work will be such that make-up work should be equal to the amount of time the student was absent. Arrangements for make-up is the primary responsibility of the student. Extended time or leeway may be granted by individual teachers. Time and work may be made up after school, at home, or during school hours. A student may be assigned by the teacher to do library work related to the work missed in class.
- B. Students who chose to cut class or were found to be illegally or unexcused absent from school may not make up work.

- C. Students may complete make-up work and are encouraged to do so for time missed because of administrative action such as suspension, etc.

Course Credit

The school maintains a consistent obligation in meeting the Board policy by requiring students to be present in school in order that they may gain full benefit from the educational process. The noncredit status is a disciplinary condition totally dependent upon the attendance performance of each individual student. The student may overcome this condition by making up school hours to the extent possible in a supplemental grade completion program offered through the Alternative School or during the summer through the Summer School program. Students missing more than twelve (12) school days in a school year will be registered through guidance to fulfill course requirements in a supplemental grade completion program. Pupils missing more than thirty (30) school days in the school year may need to complete a Summer School program and/or may make arrangements for tutorial instruction to qualify for course credit.

Appeals

The Board of Education and the school are cognizant of possible unforeseen conditions which may create hardships in implementing and enforcing the total attendance policy.

A. Petition for Hearing

A written petition for a hearing must be presented to the Principal of the school by the parent or guardian no later than five (5) school days after receipt of notification of noncredit status.

B. Attendance A

In keeping with the spirit and intention of this policy of working with parents in an atmosphere of fairness and cooperation as well as meeting student rights of due process, an appeal may be made to the School Principal by parents/guardians of affected pupils concerning noncredit status. The Principal will have the power to grant exception to the 165 day minimum for reasons of hardship, extenuating circumstances, etc. In all cases, the Principal shall consider the academic standing, course performance, and teacher recommendation in making his/her decision.

<p>4. Recordkeeping</p>	<p>C. Appeals Procedure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Appeals to the Superintendent of Schools relating to the decision of the Principal must be made in writing to the Superintendent within seven (7) school days of the receipt of the Principal's decision.2. Appeals to the Board of Education relating to the decision of the Superintendent of Schools must be made in writing within ten (10) days of the Superintendent of School's decision. <p>A. Reporting and recording of student absences is a primary responsibility of the school and will be accomplished in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Absence from school shall be recorded on the individual student report cards.2. Tardiness to school shall also be recorded on report cards.3. Letters of notification will be mailed to the parents or guardians alerting them to the possibility of noncompliance with the attendance requirements. These letters will be mailed according to the stipulations of the Board policy.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Full year courses letters will be mailed with the seventh (7th) and thirteenth (13th) absence.b. Semester course or elective course less than 5 times per week letters will be mailed upon the fourth (4th) absence.4. Notification will be mailed indicating pupils noncredit status. <p>B. Other Procedures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Total student absence information will be available in the school with each 20 day report.2. It is the responsibility of the attendance secretary to notify the central attendance office, the counselor, the school administration and the pupil's teachers of those students who are in a noncredit status. This notification must be provided at least one week prior to the completion of the marking period.
-------------------------	--

<p>School Code 510, 1318, 1327, 1329, 1330, 1332, 1333, 1339, 1354, 1546</p> <p>PA Code Title 22 Sec. 5.11 11.1, 11.3, 11.5, 11.22, 11.28, 11.32, 11.34</p>	<p>3. Pupils entering school after the month of September will be given absence days in relation to the days of school left.</p> <p><u>Inactive Roll</u>: All office personnel actively involved in pupil attendance must be alert to instances involving a child being placed on the Inactive Roll. The State identifies children as being eligible for the Inactive Roll as follows:</p> <p>"The Inactive Roll will include all persons of the school district whose ages are from five years and seven months before September first to seventeen years of age who are officially excused from school and apparently will not return to school during the year."</p>
---	---