

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES

North Dakota law contains compulsory attendance requirements for students ages seven through sixteen. The District believes there is an intangible benefit associated with being present in the classroom. Students are required to attend school 90% of the academic school year. In order to comply with and enforce these requirements the District establishes the following attendance policy.

Definitions

For purposes of compulsory attendance reporting under [NDCC 15.1-20-02.1 \(1-2\)](#):

- *Excused absence*: Any absence may be excused if it is supported by either a verbal or written excuse supplied by the student's parent/guardian, teacher, or school administrator and the student is not or will not be in violation of compulsory attendance.

Examples of an excused absence may include illness, injury, family emergency, religious observance or instruction, vacations/extended trips, suspension, participation in a school-related activity, court appearances when subpoenaed, or other reasons deemed necessary and justifiable by the building principal or designee appointed by the Superintendent.

- *Unexcused absence* is any absence not supported by the verbal or written excuse required for an excused absence and shall count in determining when a compulsory attendance violation occurred. If a student is absent for an unexcused reason, the parent/guardian is responsible for promptly calling the principal's office to explain the absence, and the student shall be subject to the consequences contained in the Absences section of this policy.

Examples of an unexcused absence may include, but are not limited to, truancy, oversleeping, routine errands, car trouble, haircuts/spa appointments, car maintenance and repair, senior picture appointments, and any undeclared absences, etc.

Documentation Requirements

School administration may require documentation to verify an excused absence when a student has reached Tier III, including, but not limited to:

1. Medical documentation from an appropriate licensed healthcare provider;
2. A copy of a court summons or subpoena;
3. An obituary for funeral leave;
4. A request for an absence due to a curricular or extracurricular event submitted by the student's teacher, coach, or extracurricular advisor.

For more information on documentation requirements, see SARB Tier III Document (FFB-AR).

Compulsory Attendance Violations

North Dakota law defines what constitutes a compulsory attendance violation. Suspected violations of the compulsory attendance law shall be reported to school administration

and investigated in accordance with law. When a compulsory attendance violation is substantiated, the District shall comply with law enforcement reporting requirements under law.

Absences

The District recognizes that prompt, regular attendance is extremely important. Absenteeism not only adversely affects the learning process of a student but also may impede their normal progression through the grades. The Board expects each student to attend all scheduled classes and daily activities except when a school administrator has excused a student.

Accumulated absences in excess of 10% may result in sanctions for students or parents/guardians following the West Fargo Public Schools SARB protocol and [NDCC 15.1-20](#).

High School – Semester Credit

High school students must not be absent for more than a total of ten times (excused or unexcused) from each semester course in which they are enrolled if they are to receive credit. If the course is in block format, students are only allowed five absences per quarter. Exceptions that may be approved include illness substantiated by a statement from a doctor, supporting a family, or other special circumstances approved by the principal.

Dissemination

This policy shall be published in all student handbooks.

Adopted: 09/03/19

Reviewed:

Revised: