

## R 5200 ATTENDANCE (M)

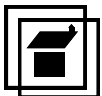
### M

#### A. Definitions

1. For the purposes of school attendance, a “day in session” shall be a day on which the school is open and students are under the guidance and direction of a teacher or teachers engaged in the teaching process. Days on which school is closed for such reasons as holidays, teachers’ institutes, and inclement weather shall not be considered as days in session.
2. A “school day” shall consist of not less than four hours, except that one continuous session of two and one-half hours may be considered a full day of Kindergarten.
3. “A day of attendance” shall be one in which the student is present for a full day under the guidance and direction of a teacher while school is in session.
  - a. Whenever over-crowded conditions make it necessary to hold two separate sessions with a different group of students in each session, a student attending for all of either session shall be regarded as having attended for the full day. An excused absence for any reason shall not be counted as a day of attendance in the school register.
4. A “half-day class” shall be considered the equivalent of a full day’s attendance only if in session for four hours or more, exclusive of recess periods or lunch periods.

#### B. Attendance Recording

1. A record of the attendance of all students on roll in a school register shall be kept each day that school is in session by a teacher or other authorized person. It shall be the duty of this person to keep the attendance records according to these rules and the specific instructions issued by the Commissioner of Education.



2. No student shall be recorded as present unless the school is in session and the student so recorded is under the guidance and direction of a teacher in the teaching process.
  3. A student shall be recorded as absent in the school register when not in attendance at a session of the school while a member of the school, except students excused due to religious holidays who shall be recorded as excused.
  4. A student shall be recorded as either present, absent, or excused for religious observance, every day the school is in session after the student enters until the date the student is transferred to another school, transferred to an individual home instruction record, or officially leaves the school system.
  5. The Commissioner shall annually prescribe a list of religious holidays on which it shall be mandatory to excuse students for religious observance upon the written request signed by the parent or person standing in loco parentis.
  6. The mere presence of a student at roll call shall not be regarded as sufficient attendance for compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3. In a school which is in session during both the forenoon and the afternoon, a student shall be present at least one hour during both the forenoon and the afternoon in order to be recorded as present for the full day. In a school which is in session during either the forenoon or the afternoon, a student shall be present at least two hours in the session in order to be recorded as present for the full day.
  7. A student not present in school because of his/her participation in an approved school activity, such as a field trip, meeting, cooperative education assignment, or athletic competition will be considered to be in attendance.
- C. Unexcused Absences That Count Toward Truancy/Excused Absences
1. “An unexcused absence that counts toward truancy” is a student’s absence from school for a full or a portion of a day for any reason that is not an “excused absence” as defined below.



2. “An excused absence” is a student’s absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for the observance of a religious holiday pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16, or any absence for the reasons listed below:

A pupil who is absent due to an illness he/she must provide medical documentation to the Attendance Department upon return to school within two school days;

Bedside Instructions;

Court appearance with written documentation from the court;

Classified pupils are expected to adhere to the same attendance regulations as general education pupils, unless otherwise noted in the pupil’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§ 794 and 705(20), and individualized health care plans. Any additional exception(s) would be determined by the Child Study Team (CST) in consultation with the school administration;

The student’s suspension from school;

Family illness or death in the immediate family which includes a parent(s) or legal guardian(s), sibling, grandparent, and others at the discretion of the administration; supported by a written letter from the parent upon the student’s return to school;

Visits to post-secondary educational institutions. Juniors will be allowed two visits for the year and seniors will be allowed four for the year;

Meeting with admissions officer of an institution of higher education;

Interviews with a prospective employer set up by the school;

Driver’s license test with appointment card presented to the administration;



Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day;

Take Our Children to Work Day;

An absence considered excused by a New Jersey Department of Education rule;

An absence for a reason not listed above, but deemed excused by the Principal upon a written request by the student's parent stating the reason for the absence and requesting permission for the absence to be an excused absence;

3. "Truancy" means ten or more cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy of a student between the ages of six and sixteen as determined by the Board's Attendance Policy and Regulation pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.iii. and the definition of school day pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3. Any absence not listed in C.2. above shall be an unexcused absence counted toward truancy.

D. Notice to School of a Student's Absence

1. The parent or adult student is requested to call the school office before the start of the student's school day.
2. The parent of the student or an adult student who will attend the morning session, but will not attend the afternoon session should call or provide notice to the school office before the start of the afternoon session.
3. The parent or adult student who anticipates a future absence or anticipates that an absence will be prolonged should notify the school office to arrange make-up work, if absence is deemed excusable.

E. Readmission to School After an Absence

1. A student returning from an absence of any length of time must provide a written statement that is dated and signed by the parent or adult student listing the reason for the absence.



2. A note explaining a student's absence for a noncommunicable illness for a period of more than 3 school days must be accompanied by a physician's statement of the student's illness with medical clearance to return to school.
  3. A student who has been absent by reason of having or being suspected of having a communicable disease must present to the school nurse written evidence of being free of communicable disease, in accordance with Policy 8451.
- F. Instruction
1. Teachers shall cooperate in the preparation of home assignments for students who anticipate an excused absence of 3 school days duration. The parent or student must request such home assignments.
  2. A student who anticipates an absence due to a temporary or chronic health condition may be eligible for home instruction in accordance with Policy 2412. The parent must request home instruction.
  3. Students absent for any reason are expected to make up the work missed. The parent or student is responsible for requesting missed assignments and any assistance required. Teachers will provide make-up assignments as necessary.
  4. In general, students will be allowed a reasonable amount of time as determined by the teacher to make up missed work.
  5. A student who missed a test or an exam shall be offered an opportunity to take the test, exam, or an appropriate alternate test.
- G. Denial of Course Credit
1. The teacher will determine the credit to be awarded a student for make-up work. The teacher may record an incomplete grade for a student who has not had a full opportunity to make up missed work.
  2. A secondary student may be dropped from a course or denied course credit when he/she has been absent 18 days or 10% of 180 days or more of the class sessions, whatever the reason for the absence, except that absences



for the observance of a religious holiday or absences caused by a student's suspension will not count toward the total.

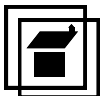
Exceptions to this rule may be made for students who have demonstrated to the teacher through completion of make-up assignments that they have mastered the proficiencies established for the course of study.

3. An elementary student may be retained at grade level, in accordance with Policy 5410, when he/she has been absent 18 or more school days, whatever the reason for the absence, except that absences for the observance of a religious holiday and absences due to student's suspension will not count toward the total.

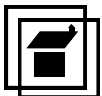
Exceptions to this rule may be made for students who have demonstrated through completion of home assignments and/or home instruction that they have mastered the proficiencies established for the assigned courses of study.

## H. School District Response To Unexcused Absences During the School Year That Count Toward Truancy

1. Teacher Responsibilities
  - a. Teachers should record attendance in the designated data system by the end of each period;
  - b. Teachers must make contact with a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) when a pupil has been absent three times consecutively or five times within a two week period;
  - c. If a pupil has been absent five times within that marking period the teacher must notify the Attendance office as well as their guidance counselor via email; and
  - d. All medical documentation received should be given to the Health office, which will in turn enter the absences into the designated data system as excused.



2. For up to four cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, the Principal or the Attendance Officer shall:
  - a. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day;
  - b. Make a reasonable attempt to determine the cause of the unexcused absence, including through contact with the student's parent;
  - c. Identify, in consultation with the student's parents, needed action designed to address patterns of unexcused absences, if any, and to have the child return to school and maintain regular attendance;
  - d. Proceed in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 9:6-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10, if a potentially missing or abused child situation is detected; and
  - e. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.
  
3. For between five and nine cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, the Principal or the Attendance Officer shall:
  - a. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day;
  - b. Make a reasonable attempt to determine the cause of the unexcused absence, including through contact with the student's parent;
  - c. Pupils with five unexcused absences will receive a letter notifying parent(s) or legal guardian(s) that their child has exceeded the allowable number of absences.
  - d. Evaluate the appropriateness of action taken pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a) 4.i. (3) and H.1.c. above;
  - e. Develop an action plan to establish outcomes based upon the student's patterns of unexcused absences and to specify the interventions for supporting the student's return to school and regular attendance, which may include any or all of the following:

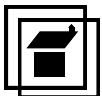


- (1) A parent conference will be scheduled with the attendance Officer, CST, Guidance Counselor and all other needed parties to discuss attendance concerns. Pupil and parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will sign an attendance contract and pupil will be given five days to improve attendance.
  - (2) Refer or consult with the building's Intervention and Referral Services Team (I&RS), pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8;
  - (2) Conduct testing, assessments, or evaluations of the student's academic, behavioral, and health needs;
  - (4) Make a referral to or coordinate with a community-based social and health provider agency or other community resource;
  - (5) Refer to a court or court program pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a) 4.iv. and H.4. below;
  - (6) Proceed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 9:6-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10, if a potential missing or abused child situation is detected; and
  - (7) Engage the student's family.
  - (8) If a pupil has not improved, then the Attendance office will generate a letter notifying the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) that truancy charges will be filed at the tenth day of absences.
- e. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.
4. For ten or more cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, a student between the ages of six and sixteen is truant, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, and the Principal or the Attendance Officer shall:





- a. Make a determination regarding the need for a court referral for the truancy, per N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a) 4.iv. and H.4. below;
  - b. Continue to consult with the parent and the involved agencies to support the student's return to school and regular attendance;
  - c. Consider an alternate educational placement (secondary student);
  - d. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate; and
  - e. Proceed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:38-28 through 31, Article 3B, Compelling Attendance at School, and other applicable State and Federal statutes, as required.
5. A court referral may be made as follows:
- a. When unexcused absences that count toward truancy are determined by school officials to be violations of the compulsory education law, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, and the Board of Education's policies, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a), the parent may be referred to Municipal Court.
    - (1) A written report of the actions the school has taken regarding the student's attendance shall be forwarded to the Municipal Court; or
  - b. When there is evidence of a juvenile-family crisis, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:4A-22.g, the student may be referred to Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part.
    - (1) A written report of the actions the school has taken regarding the student's attendance shall be forwarded to the Juvenile-Family Crisis Intervention Unit.
6. For a student with a disability, the attendance plan and its punitive and remedial procedures shall be applied, where applicable, in accordance with the student's IEP, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 et seq., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; the procedural protections set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:14; accommodation plan under 29 U.S.C. §§794 and



705(20); and individualized health care plan and individualized emergency healthcare plan pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.3(b) 5.xii.

7. All receiving schools pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-7.1(a), shall act in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a) 4.i. and H.1. above for each student with up to four cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy.
  - a. For each student attending a receiving school with five or more cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, the absences shall be reported to the sending school district.
    - (1) The sending school district shall proceed in accordance with the Board of Education's policies and procedures pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a) and H.5. above and the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a) 4.ii. through iv. and H.2. through H.5. above, as appropriate.

## I. Notification Process

1. Warning letter: The Office of Attendance will generate a form letter that is mailed to the home of the pupil informing the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of excessive absences. The office will keep a copy of the letter. This warning letter will state that because of excessive absences, the pupil is in danger of facing truancy charges. This letter is generated at the fifth unexcused absence in a full year course.
2. Phone call to parent(s) or legal guardian(s): An automated phone call will be made to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the pupil alerting them of their child's absences/tardies.
3. Filing letter: The Office of Attendance will generate a form letter informing the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) that truancy charges are filed in the Lakewood Municipal Court after ten unexcused absences.



## J. Discipline

No student who is absent from school for observance of a religious holiday may be deprived of any award or of eligibility for or opportunity to compete for any award because of the absence.

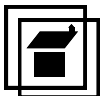
1. When a pupil has five unexcused absences, this is considered a Level I Violation as listed in the Student Code of Conduct. Administration should reference the code to determine the appropriate action.
2. When a pupil exceeds five unexcused absences in a marking period, this is considered a Level II Violation as listed in the Student Code of Conduct. Administration should reference the code to determine the appropriate action. When a pupil reaches Level II, the attendance officers are permitted to file truancy charges and loss of course credit.

## K. Discipline for Unexcused Tardiness and Cuts

1. When a pupil has five consecutive daily tardies or eight consecutive period tardies, this is considered a Level I Violation as listed in the Student Code of Conduct.
2. When a pupil exceeds five consecutive daily tardies or eight consecutive period tardies, this is considered a Level II Violation as listed in the Student Code of Conduct.
3. If it is determined that a pupil has cut a class, this is considered a Level I Violation as listed in the Student Code of Conduct.
4. If a pupil is found cutting more than five times in any class, they are considered truant and this is considered a Level II Violation.

## School Grading Policy

Grades awarded to the pupil at the end of each quarterly grading period reflect the teacher's assessment of a pupil's progress and achievement based on criteria established for that subject. Standards for establishing each quarterly grade are as follows:



## Lakewood High School Grading Policy

### Important Points:

- a. Pupils must obtain an average grade of 60% for four marking periods in order to pass the course.
- b. Pupils may not exceed eighteen unexcused absences per school year.
- c. Eighteen or more unexcused absences will result in a grade of "WC." However, the pupil will still receive a numerical grade. When appropriate a pupil may appeal his/her grade of "WC."
- d. Grading

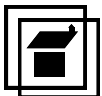
#### Grading Key

A	100 – 90
B	89 - 80
C	79 - 70
D	69 - 65
F	64 - 50
E	40 (attendance failure)

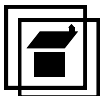
The lowest academic failing grade that can be issued is a "50," so that pupils have an opportunity to improve. The lowest attendance failing grade that can be issued is a "40."

### L. Recording Attendance

1. Teachers must accurately record the students present, tardy, or absent each day in each session or each class. Attendance records must also record students' attendance at out-of-school curricular events such as field trips.
2. A record shall be maintained of each excused absence and each unexcused absence that counts toward truancy as defined in Policy and Regulation 5200.
3. A report card will record the number of times the student was absent and tardy in each marking period.



4. A student's absence for observance of a religious holiday will not be recorded as such on any transcript or application or employment form.
- M. Appeal
1. Students may be subject to appropriate discipline for their school attendance record.
  2. A student who has been retained at grade level for excessive absences may appeal that action in accordance with Policy 5410.
  3. A student who has been dropped from a course and/or denied course credit for excessive absences may appeal that action in accordance with the following procedures:
    - a. The student shall file a written appeal to the Principal or designee within five school days of receiving notice of the action. The appeal should state the reasons for each absence, any documentation that may support reducing the number of absences for the purposes of course credit, and reasons why the student should either continue to be enrolled in the course or receive course credit for a class the student completed. Absences due to OSS, ISS or early dismissal because of Lakewood High School Athletic Department scheduling will not be considered as part of the eighteen absences.
    - b. The Principal or designee will respond in writing no later than seven school days after receiving the student's appeal.
    - c. If the student is not satisfied, he/she may submit a written request to the Principal for consideration by an Attendance Review Committee.
    - d. On a student's request for consideration by an Attendance Review Committee, the Principal shall convene an Attendance Review Committee. The committee will include an administrator, school nurse, school counselor and teacher. The Attendance Review Committee shall meet informally to hear the student's appeal. The student's parent and teacher(s) may attend the meeting.



- e. The Attendance Review Committee shall decide the appeal and inform the student in writing within seven school days of the meeting.
- f. The student may appeal an adverse decision of the Attendance Review Committee to the Superintendent, the Board of Education, and the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Policy 5710, Pupil Grievance and N.J.S.A. 18A. An appeal to the Attendance Review Committee shall be considered to have exhausted the first two steps of the grievance procedure outlined in Policy 5710.

N. Attendance Records

1. Attendance records for the school district and each school will be maintained and attendance rates will be calculated as required by the New Jersey Department of Education. The school district will comply with all attendance requirements and any improvement plans as required by the Department of Education.

Adopted: 17 October 2013  
Revised: 16 December 2015

