

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE REPORTING PROCEDURE
MILLINOCKET SCHOOL DEPARTMENT**

I. Rationale

The School Board, school administration and staff recognize our duty to provide a proper education for the children of the community. The term "education" encompasses more than performance on examinations and other written work. A proper education includes consistent attendance and participation in classes. Learning experiences which take place in the classroom are essential components of the educational process. Only by being present in the classroom can students take advantage of the intangible benefits of a public school education, such as group interaction with teachers and fellow students, participation in class discussion, instruction, and other related learning experiences. As class attendance is one of the important factors contributing to academic achievement, teachers take this into account when determining students' grades.

II. Attendance Rules and Procedures

A. Excused Absences and Tardies (K-12)

Student absence from school or tardiness to school and/or class will be excused for the following reasons allowed by state Law:

1. Personal illness.
2. An appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day. We ask that, whenever possible, health appointments be scheduled during non-school hours.
3. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day.
4. A family emergency (such as bereavement, medical, etc.).
5. A planned absence for a personal or educational purpose which has been approved in advance by a school administrator. Parents and students are encouraged to schedule vacations during periods when school is not in session whenever possible to avoid disruption of the student's education. In addition to the educational loss to students, extended student absence from class places a significant burden on classroom teachers.

In addition, classes missed for the following reasons will be treated as excused absences:

6. In the case of a disabled student, a reason which the student's PET determines is disability related.
7. Absence from class due to participation in a school-sponsored or approved trip or event.
8. Serving a school-imposed disciplinary suspension.
9. Absence due to a problem with school district transportation.

See Section III for rules concerning absence reporting and make-up work.

B. Excessive Absences/Tardies (K -12)

After seven absences/tardies in one school year, whether excused or unexcused, parents will be notified and asked to attend a conference that includes the student, a school administrator, teacher, and the guidance counselor to develop an attendance contract for the student tailored to his/her specific circumstances. The contract will specify the consequences for non-compliance.

C. Unexcused Absences/Tardies and Parent Notification (High School)

1. All absences not listed in Section IIA are considered unexcused.
2. After *five* unexcused absences and/or tardies in a one-semester course or *ten* unexcused absences and/or tardies in a year-long course, *the student will be denied credit in the course*. Loss of credit may be waived by the Attendance Review Committee pursuant to Section II.D.
3. Communication between the home and the school will occur anytime a student is absent or tardy. Additionally, parents will be notified in writing whenever the student has three (3) unexcused absence or tardies to school. After every three (3) unexcused absences and/or tardies in one school year, parents will be asked to attend a conference that includes the student, a school administrator, the guidance counselor and at least one of the student's teachers to develop an attendance contract for the student tailored to his/her specific circumstances. The contract will specify the consequences for noncompliance.
4. A student will be required to complete all required work in a timely manner as determined by the teacher.
5. A student with an unexcused absence will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity on that day.

D. Attendance Review Committee and Waiver of Loss of Credit (High School)

1. A student and his/her parent may appeal the loss of credit in writing to the Principal within ten days of notification of the loss of credit.
2. A meeting will be scheduled between the student, his/her parents and the Attendance Review Committee. The Committee consists of the Principal or Assistant Principal, the student's guidance counselor, and one or more teachers of the student.
3. At the meeting, the student and his/her parents may explain why they think the

credit loss should be waived and present any documentation they believe is relevant.

4. Waiver of the loss of credit is a matter of discretion for the Attendance Review Committee. Factors which the Committee may consider include, but are not limited to the student's academic effort and performance in the class or classes affected; the student's overall academic effort and performance; the explanation provided for the absences, if any; and any extenuating circumstances which call for special consideration.
5. The Attendance Review Committee has the discretion to impose conditions to restore lost credits, including but not limited to lengthened school days to complete class assignments, extra work and detention time equal to the lost class time.
6. If the student and his/her parents are not satisfied with the Committee's decision, they may appeal the decision in writing to the Superintendent within 10 days of notification. The Superintendent will review the matter and make a determination in writing to the student and his/her parents. The Superintendent's decision is final.

E .. Unexcused Absences/Tardies and Parent Notification (K-8)

1. All absences not listed in Section II.A are considered unexcused.
4. Parents will be called anytime a student is absent. Additionally, parents will be notified in writing whenever the student has three (3) unexcused absence or tardies to school. After every three (3) unexcused absences and/or tardies in one school year, parents will be asked to attend a conference that includes the student, a school administrator, the guidance counselor and at least one of the student's teachers to discuss the correlation between learning and school attendance and to develop an attendance contract for the student tailored to his/her specific circumstances. The contract will specify the consequences for noncompliance.

III. Absence Reporting and Make-Up Work for Excused Absences/Tardies (K-12)

- A. Parents are required to notify the school in writing in advance of planned absences from school. Students are responsible for obtaining assignments from their teachers for planned absences and completing assignments as required.
- B. The student's parent is expected to call the school office on the morning of an unplanned absence (i.e. illness, emergencies, etc.). Students have three days to bring a note from their parent after an absence. If an acceptable note is not received in that time, an unexcused absence will be recorded.
- C. A note/appointment card from the student's health care provider verifying the appointment must be provided for any medical/dental appointment scheduled during the school day.
- D. In cases of an illness lasting five or more days, or chronic irregular absences reportedly due to illness, a school administrator may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.

- E. If a student misses more than one day of school, he or she is expected to make up any missed assignments in accordance with their teachers' instructions.

IV. Early Release or Late Arrival for Seniors

Any senior with an average of 85 or higher may have an early release or late arrival schedule if they have a study hall during the first or last block of the day. Students must maintain the 85 average and they may not have any courses with a grade below a B. Students must be on track to graduate in regards to their required classes. The principal may revoke an individual student's privilege at any time.

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