

Regulation

HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Statement of Purpose

Students enrolled at Bordentown Regional High School are expected to maintain regular attendance throughout the school year. Attendance records are frequently requested by colleges, prospective employers and schools to which students transfer. An irregular attendance pattern does not promote good academic achievement and student progress.

To maximize the benefits of the educational experiences offered at Bordentown Regional High School, it is essential for students to attend school on a daily basis. Interactions between students and teachers, as well as insights to be gained from group discussions, are lost to the student when he or she is not present in class.

The Bordentown Regional School District Board of Education and the High School staff believe strongly that all students should be on time and present for class every day. It is recognized, however, that there are some occasions when a student cannot be present. The attendance regulations given below have been developed to strongly discourage unnecessary absences and prevent truancy.

Class Absences, Tardiness and Course Credit

Any time a student is not present in class, he or she will be considered absent. If the absence is not verified, the student will be considered truant. The only absences that will not place a student at risk for loss of credit are observance of religious holidays recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education, school sponsored activities, school suspensions imposed by the administration and administrative removal from class.

When absences occur, the high school teachers and staff will work with the student and his/her parents or guardians to identify the problems causing the absences and resolve them. In addition to notifying the student of any absences that may affect the student's grades, parents or guardians will be notified immediately when a student's attendance pattern creates the risk of the student losing credit for a course.

A student risks losing credit for a course when his or her verified absences, that is, legitimate absences for which a note is received from a parent or guardian, exceed 3 classes for a half semester course, 6 classes for a semester course or 12 classes for a full year course. When a student is truant, he or she will lose credit for a course on a second truancy of a half semester or full semester course, or, the third truancy for a full year course.

Students, who are late to class and arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time of the class with an unexcused pass from an assistant principal, will be considered tardy. Students with an excused pass from the Assistant principal will not be considered tardy. A student reporting to class 15 minutes after the start of the class and without an excused pass will be considered truant. Excused passes will only be given for administrative removal from class, guidance appointments initiated by the guidance counselor (not the student), emergencies that require the school nurse's attention and situations requiring administrative attention as determined by an administrator (for example, a bus being late due to inclement weather).

A student, who is late to school and therefore tardy for his or her first class, must report to the assistant principal's office for a late-to-school pass. At that time, the Assistant principal will determine whether the lateness is excusable or not. In either case, a pass will be issued admitting the student to his or her first class. If the student disagrees with the determination made by the Assistant principal, he or she may appeal to the principal, whose decision is final. Three unexcused tardies will count as one unexcused absence.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (regulation continued)

Students who lose credit for a course due to absences will be placed on non-credit status and, if they exhaust the appeal process, will not be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics or extracurricular activities. They may continue to participate in the class to prepare for summer school or retaking the class at a later date only if they cause no disruption in the class and continue to make a conscientious effort to meet all the obligations of the class. A student remaining in a class on non-credit status will receive a grade but no credit. If a student is removed from class while on non-credit status, the student will not be able to receive credit in that course in summer school.

Students who lose credit due to truancy are not permitted to appeal the loss of credit and will be placed on non-credit status. They will not be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics or extracurricular activities but may also continue to participate in the class providing that they cause no disruption in the class and continue to make a conscientious effort to meet all the obligations of the class. A student remaining in a class on non-credit status will receive a grade but no credit. If a student is removed from class while on non-credit status, the student will not be able to receive credit in that course in summer school.

These procedures are intended to strongly encourage timely attendance in all classes. It is not intended to prevent students with a chronic and/or serious health problem from receiving credit. For such students, we request that parents or guardians contact the student's guidance counselor prior to the beginning of the school year or as soon as possible after being made aware of such a health problem so that appropriate arrangements can be made to provide maximum assistance for these students.

Types of Absences

Each absence will be classified as either "verified" or "truant". For an absence to be verified, a note from a parent, guardian or doctor must be presented to the assistant principal's office by 8:00 a.m. on the day they return. All assigned work missed during verified absences may be made up for full credit; however, a verified absence counts toward possible loss of credit for a course.

A. Verified Absences

Verified absences from school include, but are not limited to:

1. Illness or injury;
2. Personal and family vacations and trips;
3. Family emergencies;
4. College visits and interviews;
5. The student's required attendance in court;
6. Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day;
7. Observance of the student's religion on a day approved for that purpose by the State Board of Education;

Students and parents are expected to ensure that such absences are not for a full day unless required by the doctor or dentist. Personal and family needs, including the student's driving test.

B. Truant

A student is truant when absent from a class without specific permission from a teacher, administrator, or parent or guardian to be absent. This is often termed as "cutting class". Work missed due to truancy may not be made up for credit. Loss of credit due to truancy may not be appealed.

Loss of Credit

A. Loss of Credit Due to Absences

A student risks loss of credit whenever the following limits are exceeded:

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (regulation continued)

Length of Course	Number of Absences
Half Semester	3
Semester	6
Full Year	12

B. Loss of Credit Due to Truancy

A student risks loss of credit whenever the following limits are exceeded:

Length of Course	Number of Absences
Half Semester	1
Semester	1
Full Year	2

Notification to Parents and Guardians

Length of Course	Absence Number	Student Conference	Phone Call	Certified letter	Conference Requested	Notification Loss of Credit
Half Semester	2	X	X	X		
	3	X	X	X	X	
	4	X				X
Semester	3	X	X	X		
	5	X	X	X		
	6	X	X	X	X	
	7	X				X
Full Year	6	X	X	X		
	10	X	X	X		
	12	X	X	X	X	
	13	X				X

Note: Loss of credit due to excessive absences may be appealed if special circumstances exist. The appeal must be made to the Assistant Principal within 5 school days of notification of loss of credit.

Truancy Notification

Length of Course	Absence Number	Student Conference	Phone Call	Certified letter	Conference Requested	Notification Loss of Credit
Half Semester/ Semester	1	X	X	X	X	
	2	X				X
Full Year	1	X	X	X		
	2	X	X	X	X	
	3	X				X

Note: Loss of credit due to truancy may not be appealed.

Appeal Process for Credit Loss Due to Excessive Absences

A student who exceeds the allowable total of absences will lose credit for that course. The student has the option to appeal the loss of credit to the attendance committee, but will remain on non-credit status until a final decision is made. A student on non-credit status may continue to participate in interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities until he or she exhausts the appeal process.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (regulation continued)Attendance Committee Review and Determination

The attendance committee will be comprised of an assistant principal, the school nurse and the student's guidance counselor. The student and/or parents or guardians will meet with the attendance committee at the end of the marking period during which the student is placed on non-credit status. The attendance committee will review the student's attendance record and receive any additional information the student may wish to submit (for example, doctor's notes and descriptions of extenuating circumstances). The student and his/her parents or guardians will be notified of the determination of the committee within a reasonable time after the meeting.

Appeal of Attendance Committee Determination

The decision of the Attendance Committee may be appealed in writing to the Principal, within five (5) school days of notification of the decision. The Principal will respond within five (5) school days and his/her decision may be appealed in writing within five (5) school days to the Superintendent who will render a final decision within ten (10) school days.

Specific Procedures to be Followed by the Student when Absent and/or Tardy

A. When a Student is Tardy

1. When a student is tardy to class, he/she is to report to the assistant principal's office;
2. A pass will be issued indicating whether the tardy is excused or unexcused;
3. The only acceptable excuses for being tardy are administrative removal from class, guidance appointments initiated by the guidance counselor, emergencies that require the nurse's attention as determined by the school nurse, and situations requiring an administrative decision as determined by the assistant principal (for example, a bus being late due to inclement weather);
4. All other incidents of being tardy will count toward loss of credit. Three unexcused tardies will be counted as one truancy.
5. A student who disagrees with the determination of the assistant principal may appeal the decision to the principal whose decision will be final.

B. When a Student is Absent

1. When a student is absent from school, parents or guardians are to call the assistant principal's office at 298-0025 extension 1112, between 7:30 and 9:00 a.m. Parents or guardians of absent students who do not call will be called by the assistant principal's office;
2. Upon returning to school, students who are absent must present a note signed by a parent or guardian, giving the dates and reasons for the absence, before 8:00 a.m. on the date of return to school;
3. Failure to do so may result in the absence being counted as truancy;
4. Students who are absent for five (5) or more school days consecutively must present a doctor's note if the reason for the absence is health related;
5. A parent or guardian may also verify an absence by calling the assistant principal's office at 298-0025 extension 1112.

C. Leaving School Early

If it is necessary for a student to leave school early on a given day, a written request from a parent or guardian indicating the reason and leaving time must be received prior to 9:00 a.m. on the day the student is to leave early. If an emergency prevents submission of a written request, a verbal request may be made to the assistant principal. Failure to request and obtain permission in advance of leaving school will result in the absence being counted as truancy.

Eighteen year old students are not permitted to sign themselves out of school unless they have previously declared their legal and financial independence.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (regulation continued)

D. Make Up Work

All work missed due to a verified absence must be made up upon return to school within a period of two (2) school days for each day absent, or, if the absence is of a week's duration or longer, within a maximum of ten (10) school days. It is the student's responsibility to meet each teacher to make plans for this purpose. Grading of the assignments will be based on the quality of the work and/or incomplete work, not the absence per se.

E. After School Activities

Students who have been absent from school for a full day or who have been suspended may not participate in after school activities on the day of the absence or suspension. In order to participate in an after school activity, a student must be in attendance before 9:45 a.m. and in attendance continuously through the end of the school day unless special permission is granted by the assistant principal or principal.

Students on non-credit status who have exhausted the appeal process are academically ineligible and, therefore, may not participate in after school activities.

F. Making Up Lost Credit

A student placed on non-credit status and who exhausts the appeal process may gain credit by:

1. Attending an approved summer school, or
2. Retaking the course before graduation

The Bordentown Regional School District does not have and will not recognize any credit completion program.

Students Above the Compulsory Age of Attendance

Students who are above the age of compulsory education, i.e., seventeen (17) years of age or more, will be recommended by the superintendent to be dropped from the rolls by the board of education upon:

- A. Reaching non-credit status as detailed above; and
- B. Fifteen (15) consecutive non-excused absences.

This recommendation shall not be made until the school administrators have exhausted all means to continue the student to be actively in school and have notified the student or parent by certified mail of the intent to drop from the rolls and alternatives and remedies.

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