

Attendance/ Truancy/Excessive Absenteeism/Missed Class Assignments Due to Absences**Attendance/Absentees:**

Students' ages 6 through 18 years who reside within the three towns that comprise the Inter-Lakes Cooperative School District shall attend the public school to which the student is assigned unless otherwise enrolled in another school as stipulated in RSA 193:1. It is the legal responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that their child is in attendance during the days and hours that school is in session, except that the principal may excuse a student for temporary absences when receiving satisfactory evidence of conditions or reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence.

Parents/guardians are expected to notify the school when their child is going to be absent. When students are absent, parents are requested to call and notify the school of the absence. If notice has not been provided, the school will make a reasonable effort to contact parents/guardians when their child is absent.

Parents are required to submit written documentation explaining the reasons for the absence. The principal may require parents to provide additional documentation in support of their written notice, including, but not limited to, doctor's notes, court documents, or other documents supporting the reason for the absence.

The principal or his/her designee has sole authority to designate an absence as excused or unexcused. An absence for one of the following reasons shall be considered excused:

- Illness
- Recovery from an injury or accident
- Required court attendance
- Medical and/or dental appointments
- Death in the family
- Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
- Participation in a school-related activity
- Such other good cause as may be acceptable to the principal or permitted by law

An absence that has not been excused for any of these reasons will be considered an unexcused absence.

If parents wish for their child to be absent for a reason not listed above, the parent must provide a written explanation to the Principal of the reason for such absence, including why and for how long the student will be absent. The Principal or his/her designee will make a determination as to whether the stated reason for the student's absence constitutes good cause and will notify the parents of the decision. If the Principal or his/her designee determines that good cause does not exist, the parent/guardian may request a conference with the Principal or his/her designee. The Principal or his/her designee may then reconsider the initial determination; however, at this juncture, the principal's or his/her designee's decision shall be final.

Truancy/Excessive Absenteeism:

Truancy is defined as any unexcused absence from class or school. Any absence that has not been excused will be considered an unexcused absence. Ten half days of unexcused absences during the school year constitutes habitual truancy. A half-day absence is defined as a student missing more two

hours of instructional time and less than three and one-half hours of instructional time. Any absence of more than three and one-half hours of instructional time shall be considered a full-day absence.

The Principal or Truant Officer, at the discretion of the Principal, is the Inter-Lakes School District representative responsible for overseeing truancy issues.

In some cases, although a student has been excused from school, excessive absenteeism may impact the student's learning.

School district personnel will monitor student absenteeism. When it is determined that a student's absences are impacting the student's learning or if the student is in danger of becoming habitually truant, school personnel will initiate a process to identify the reasons for the absences and develop a plan to remedy the situation.

Intervention Process:

This process will ordinarily consist of:

1. An investigation of the cause(s) of the student's absences.
2. Written notification to the student's parents/guardians to inform them of the attendance concerns including truancy, if appropriate, as well as their legal responsibility to have their child in regular attendance.
3. A meeting with appropriate staff to discuss possible interventions.
4. A meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss the situation and develop an intervention plan to correct the attendance concerns.

Intervention Options:

School district personnel are expected to work to develop and implement strategies focusing on the prevention and/or reduction of excessive absences including truancy. Although not limited to, examples of such strategies shall include:

- Changes in the student's classroom assignments;
- Modifications of the student's class and/or daily schedule;
- Personalization of the student's program of study;
- Involvement of the School District truant officer;
- Involvement of the court system when it is deemed necessary;
- Attendance in extended day or extended year programming; or
- Contact with the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF).

Missed Class Assignments Due to Absences:

Students are responsible for the missed learning opportunities that occur in their absence, no matter the reason for the absences, except for reasonable modifications as required in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. School Principals will develop guidelines for missed work and will communicate these guidelines to students and families through student/parent handbooks. Additionally, classroom teachers will reinforce these guidelines within their classrooms.

Notification of Policy:

The School Board will place the item on the agenda of a public school board meeting between the first and second final reading. Any public input shall be advisory only and final adoption as to the policy's provisions will remain solely with the School Board.

Additionally, the Superintendent shall also ensure that this policy is included in or referenced in the student/parent handbook provided to parents annually at the beginning of each school year.

Legal References:

RSA 189:34, Appointment

RSA 189:35-a, Truancy Defined

RSA 193:1, Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Pupil

RSA 193:7 Penalty

RSA 193:8, Notice Requirements

RSA 193:16 Bylaws as to Nonattendance

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04 (a)(1), Attendance and Absenteeism

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04 (c), Policy Relative to Attendance and Absenteeism

Adopted: 06/23/11

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