

ATTENDANCE: HIGH SCHOOL (BOE Policy 4-1c)

The Public School Laws of North Carolina require compulsory attendance for all children between the ages of seven and sixteen years (General Statute 115C-378). Every parent* or person having control of a child between these ages enrolled in the Union County Public Schools is responsible by law to make sure the child attends school on a regular basis during the time school is in session.

Class attendance is essential to high student achievement. With this in mind, all students are expected to be in attendance each day school is in session. Following any absence(s), a student is required to present a written document from the parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence. ALL ABSENCES WILL BE CODED UNLAWFUL IN THE COMPUTER UNTIL A WRITTEN NOTE IS RECEIVED FROM THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN. Written documentation must be presented within three school days after the student returns to school; otherwise, the absence(s) will be recorded as unlawful. Lawful absences are excused, but not automatically waived. (See Criteria To Waive Absences). Unlawful absences are unexcused. The absence will be coded and recorded accordingly:

* Guardians and custodians are also considered parents for purposes of this policy.

CODE 1-LAWFUL -- See listing below

The following are lawful reasons for school absences:

1. Illness or Injury
2. Death in the Immediate Family
3. Medical or Dental Appointments
4. Court, Administrative Proceedings, or Jury Duty
5. Religious Observances – a minimum of two days each academic year for observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent(s) with written prior approval from the principal.
6. Educational Opportunity - prior approval by principal
7. Quarantine
8. Military Deployment – for students attending ceremonies related to military deployment of family members.

CODE 2-UNLAWFUL -- All absences that are not classified as lawful.

CODE 3-SUSPENSION (OSS)

Students will not be counted absent from school when participating in school sponsored functions.

School sponsored functions include scholarship interviews for high school students. All scholarship interviews must have been established through appropriate scholarship agencies or committees and the student must have PRIOR approval by the guidance department before attending interviews. When students miss classes for scholarship interviews, written documentation from the agency or committee must be furnished to the guidance department the next school day after the interview to avoid having the day spent off campus count as an absence. Any classes missed for a scholarship interview will not count as an absence toward failure or exam exemption. Military induction interviews will be treated the same as scholarship interviews. Additionally, absences for job shadows and Career and Technical Education student organization activities are not counted as absences from class or school.

Upon returning from a lawful absence, the student is responsible for obtaining missed assignments. Students have two days to make up the work missed for each day absent. When arrangements are not made to complete the work the student will receive no credit.

Students who have an out-of-school suspension and students with unlawful absences and tardies are encouraged to make up all missed work, including daily work, major tests or projects (i.e. term papers) and take semester exams

Credit will not be granted for classes when absences for a student reach eight days for a semester long course and 15 days for a year long course. Absences include those that are lawful, unlawful, and due to suspension. When students accumulate eight or 15 (or more) absences and documentation is on file at the school which indicates circumstances beyond the control of the student and parents contributed to the accumulation of eight or 15 (or more) absences, an appeal may be made to the principal to waive absences and allow the student to pass. An appeal of the principal's decision may be made to the Superintendent.

Criteria To Waive Absences

Principals will use the following criteria to waive absences:

1. Doctor's letter describing an ongoing problem with a chronic illness, communicable disease or injury when the problem is in the beginning stages.
2. Usual and customary doctor and dental visits when documented with a note from the doctor or dentist within three days after returning to school.
3. Documented court appearances where the student specifically is required to appear in court.
4. Death in immediate family (mother, father, sibling, grandmother, grandfather, or legal guardian).
5. Parent's notes are helpful when documenting absences; however, these notes do not necessarily mean absences will be automatically waived.
6. The number of absences meeting the criteria in items #1 through 4 above will be subtracted from the total number of accumulated absences for the semester or year.
7. The school nurse may have input regarding medical conditions of students who do not have access to medical treatment or benefits. This will be done on an individual case basis.