

Administrative Regulation - 5113**I. Absence**

For the purpose of monitoring and notification of attendance, the following guidelines will be used.

Daily Absence

A daily absence is defined as a day where a student is not in school for the required amount of time to count as a day in attendance.

Period Absence

A period absence is defined by a student not attending a class when assigned, but has been marked in attendance for the day.

II. Excused and Unexcused absences

For the purposes of school attendance and class participation, there is no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. You must be present to participate in learning. For state reporting of absent rates, and truancy; the definitions of Excused and Unexcused absences existing within this policy will be referenced.

III. Parent Notifications**Attendance Concern Notification**

When a student misses class there is a significant impact to their learning. Although missed work is given, discussions and classroom experiences cannot be replicated. Notices of student attendance concerns resulting in interventions may be sent at any time during the year for and when the student has;

- o Accumulated four (4) total daily/period absences for a class prior to September 30th
- o Accumulated five (5)) total daily/period absences for a class prior to October 31st
- o Accumulated six (6)) total daily/period absences for a class prior to November 30th
- o Accumulated seven (7)) total daily/period absences for a class prior to December 31st
- o Accumulated nine (9)) total daily/period absences for a class prior to January 31st
- o Accumulated ten (10)) total daily/period absences for a class prior to February 28th
- o Accumulated twelve (12)) total daily/period absences for a class prior to March 31st
- o Accumulated fourteen (14)) total daily/period absences for a class by April, May, or June

Loss of Credit (High School)

Students will lose credit when daily absences or period absences for a class tally:

- Twenty (20) absences, daily and/or period, for a full-year course
- Ten (10) absences, daily and/or period, for a half-year course

The school will make every effort to notify parents and students of the potential loss of credit when 25%, 50% and 75% of allowable absences have been accumulated in a class. Students will lose a portion of *or* all credit in a course, based on the following guidelines:

Prior to a loss of credit, the following notification and processes have been established for a full year course:

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- o 25% threshold (5) absences
 - Parent notification letter
 - Parent phone call from Guidance to set up meeting regarding absences
 - Attendance plan with scheduled follow-up and progress monitoring.
- o 50% threshold (10) absences
 - Parent notification letter
 - Parent phone call from Guidance to set up meeting regarding absences; review first attendance plan; discuss additional interventions
- o 75% threshold (15) absences
 - Parent notification letter
 - Parent phone call from Guidance to set up meeting regarding additional absences; review changes or additions made to first attendance plan; discussion of tier 3 interventions or interventions from Attendance Review Committee; review any credit recovery options or possible withdrawal from the class or classes
- o 100% threshold (upon the 20th absence)
 - Loss of credit letter
 - Parent phone call from Guidance to arrange meeting regarding next steps after loss of credit

Prior to a loss of credit, the following notification and processes have been established for a semester long course:

- o 25% threshold (3) absences
 - Parent notification letter
 - Parent phone call from Guidance to set up meeting regarding unexcused absences
 - Attendance plan with scheduled follow-up and progress monitoring.
- o 50% threshold (5) absences
 - Parent notification letter
 - Parent phone call from Guidance to set up meeting regarding unexcused absences; review first attendance plan; discuss additional interventions
- o 75% threshold (7) absences
 - Parent notification letter
 - Parent phone call from Guidance to set up meeting regarding additional absences; review changes or additions made to first attendance plan; discussion of tier 3 interventions or interventions from Attendance Review Committee; review any credit recovery options or possible withdrawal from the class or classes

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- o 100% threshold (upon the 10th unexcused absence)
 - Loss of credit letter
 - Parent phone call from Guidance to arrange meeting regarding next steps after loss of credit; performance review

In the event that a student completes the course despite a loss of credit and passes the course; the following will apply:

- The student may progress to the next course in the sequence (with the exception of Algebra, Civics and American History); and
- The course will not be counted towards any required credit totals for graduation
- The course grade will not be factored into the GPA of the student

School Approved Absences, 504 plans and health plans

School approved absences do not count against students for the purposes of accumulation; however, makeup work is expected to be completed as per the attendance policy. School approved absences consist of:

- School sponsored field trips; with documentation from school staff
- Nurse/Medical dismissal
- Guidance Meeting (noted in PowerSchool)
- Court appearance with corresponding documentation
- College visits (one for junior year, one for senior year) with documentation
- Special permission for “Exceptional Education Experience” for example; meeting with the president or Olympic competition

Parents with children that have a need for special accommodations due to health related issues, chronic illness, or circumstances that will directly impact attendance are expected to contact their guidance counselor or school nurse to discuss the viability of a 504 plan or a health plan.

Appeals Process

Absences that exceed the limits outlined, or are viewed to have a critical impact on student learning resulting in poor grades, or have resulted in a lack of make-up opportunity may be appealed on reasonable grounds. The appeal must be made within two weeks of receipt (10 school days) of notice. The Attendance Review Board (ARB) comprised of an administrator, a teacher and a representative from counseling services will hear the appeal. The role of the ARB is to determine if the absences by the student are excusable, and if credit should be reinstated. The parent/guardian and student must attend the hearing to resolve the issue. The decision of the hearing is final.

IV. Responsibilities**Student Responsibilities**

- Attend school every day.

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- Request missed work or exams from teacher on the first day back from absence(s) following the grading practice guideline in the student handbook.
- Provide office with an absence note within five (5) days.
- Complete and submit all make up work to teachers within five (5) days

Parent Responsibilities

- Emphasize the importance of regular school attendance with your child.
- Notify the School when your child will be absent and supply written documentation of absence.
- Notify the school about any extended illnesses that will result in multiple days out of school.
- Schedule appointments, vacations and other activities during non-school days and hours.
- Attend meetings scheduled to address their child's attendance and/or truancy issues and work cooperatively with school staff to resolve these issues.
- Parents should check student's attendance using the PowerSchool parent portal and clicking the Quick Reference tab to see attendance rates.

Secretary Responsibilities

- Create and maintain the attendance report; listing specific days of absence.
- Review the automated absence call report and/or other efforts to notify the parent/guardian of student absent by phone or electronic communication for accuracy or connectivity issues daily, and notify appropriate personnel of any abnormalities or issues with the report.
- Maintain all documentation related to the child's school attendance
- Notify Guidance Department/Social Worker/ Nurse in writing when a student has 4 unexcused absence days in any given month or 10 unexcused absence days in a school year.

Teacher Responsibilities

- Keep an accurate record of student attendance each day or each period.
- Provide student's an opportunity to engage in work missed
- Contact parents and guidance counselor when absences have interfered with a student's ability to perform up to the expectations of the class
- Generate class attendance concern and potential loss of credit letters for parents to be mailed out certified/return receipt after absence thresholds established in section "II. Parent Notification." Notify guidance counselor and notate student electronic record when such letters are created.

Guidance Counselor/Support Personnel Responsibilities

- Identify initial yearly "at risk list" of students who had 18 or more absences from the previous year.
- Track daily student attendance for students identified as "at risk" by having 18 or more absences from the previous year.
- Generate attendance concern letters and truancy letters for parents to be mailed out certified/return receipt after absence thresholds established in section "II. Parent Notification."

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- Notify administrator of any credit loss or attendance concern letters sent to students.
- Contact parents:
 - When attendance issues are surfaced; or when any daily or period attendance thresholds are reached to apprise the parents of the situation.
 - When a student is absent for consecutive days without school notification (2 days in a row and more).
 - To follow-up attendance concern letters, loss of credit concern letters, or truancy concern letters.
- Document conversations, plans developed, and record interventions in RTI Studio Portal and notify appropriate administrator.
- Begin and document Tier 2 interventions when thresholds are met *or* when attendance is identified as having an impact on the student's ability to meet expectations in a class.
- After four (4) unexcused absence days in a month from school or from a particular class or after ten (10) unexcused absence days in a year from school or a particular class, schedule a meeting with the student and the student's parents and appropriate school personnel to create an attendance plan. Document plans developed during such meetings detailing the reasons for absences and response to school and community interventions in PowerSchool or in RTI Studio Portal (will change based on which is available).
- Refer truancy cases to principal for review.
- Assist with the documentation required for a Family with Service Needs (FWSN), Youth in Crisis (YIC) petitions and when appropriate Department of Children and Families (DCF) referral.

Principal/Asst. Principal/Designee Responsibilities

- Establish an Attendance Review Team comprised of members of the school community and when available members of support personnel from outside agencies to review attendance procedures, interventions, documentation, students at risk, and progress regarding general school attendance.
- Implement appropriate recommendations and over-see procedures established by the Attendance Review Team.
- Review copies of attendance concern letters, truancy letter and, potential loss of credit letters.
- Confer with student, parent, and school personnel to evaluate school attendance and adherence to a multi-tiered approach to intervention.
- Serve as a liaison between teachers and central office administrators at the Truancy Board in an effort to make additional school and/or family resources available.
- Determine when a child's unexcused absences from school warrant a referral to the Central Office Truancy Team.
- If documented interventions fail to resolve truancy or attendance issues, or a student's parents fail to attend a statutorily mandated meeting scheduled to address their child's truancy or otherwise fail to cooperate with the school to resolve the issue, coordinate and submit a Family with Service Needs (FWSN), Youth in Crisis (YIC) referral pursuant to Connecticut statutes to the Central Truancy Team. The filing of these referrals does not preclude the Department of Children and Families (DCF) from also accepting a report of educational neglect.

Attendance Review Team

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- Meet monthly to review attendance data, students at risk, and the progress of students currently receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention.
- Address any difficulties regarding the implementation of the attendance policy; identify areas of needed supports for parents, teachers, students or administrators.
- Review attendance intervention plans for identified students.

Director of Pupil Personnel Responsibilities/Designee

- Serve as a liaison between teachers and building administrators and his/her designee at the Central Office Truancy Team in an effort to make additional district, school and/or family resources available.

Central Office Truancy Team

- Invite parent/guardian to Central Office Truancy Team meeting.
- Review and submit a Family with Service Needs (FWSN) petition and/or Youth in Crisis (YIC) pursuant to Connecticut statutes to the Superintendent of Schools for submission to the appropriate judicial agency.
- Coordination of referrals and services with the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
- Coordinate and communicate interventions with community agencies.

V. Procedure for Monitoring Attendance

1. Notices will be sent to all parents and guardians of students in the Milford Public Schools annually at the beginning of the school year (or upon registration), in plain language, regarding the attendance policy.
 - a. Letters directly mailed to addresses available through PowerSchool
 - b. Contained within the Student Handbook
 - c. Available on the Milford Public Schools website
2. Schools will make a reasonable effort to notify parents or guardians when a child does not arrive at school and there has been no previous approval or notification made to or by the school.
 - a. Daily attendance phone calls to the main contact number available through PowerSchool via School Messenger (recorded message);
 - b. Personal phone call when a student is absent two (2) or more days in a row by the Guidance Counselor or other designee; provided no previous notification regarding extended absence was made to the school
3. In order for an absence to be excused, a parent or guardian must send written documentation to the school's office that meets the requirements outlined under Section I Excused Absences. Notification must be received within five (5) days upon the return of the student to school. No notices will be accepted retroactively after the five (5) day period.
4. If a student's absences are determined to present challenges to the learning process, are contributing to poor performance, or a student meets an outlined threshold for accumulated absences, unexcused absences or truancy:
 - a. Staff members will recommend the student, through guidance or the Attendance Review Team for intervention;
 - b. Parents will be contacted by the guidance counselor or a support staff member appointed by the principal to establish a meeting to discuss the impact attendance is

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- having on the student's academic performance and develop an intervention plan to address any issues which will be documented and included in the students cumulative record;
- c. In the event that a student is enrolled in the school but is no longer attending and there is no response to meeting requests, the counselor and/or designee will make a home visit to determine if disenrollment is warranted.
5. If a student's absences continue after an initial plan
 - a. Parents will be notified by the assigned guidance counselor to attend a review meeting to hear recommendations to the current plan to address any new developments or issues with the implementation or follow-through of the plan; or
 - b. School counselor will refer student to Attendance Review Team for recommendations for additional Tier 2 or Tier 3 strategies; or
 - c. Student will be referred for outside assistance from a community partner; or
 - d. Referral to Pupil Personnel Services for review
 6. If parent or guardian of a student with attendance concerns does not respond to requests for appointments, a parent or guardian does not attend appointments, or a student continues not to respond to attempted Tier 2 interventions:
 - a. Guidance counselor will notify Attendance Review Team for Tier 3 recommendation; and/or
 - b. Student will be referred to outside community based organization capable of supporting any family needs that may be affecting student's attendance through case management, or for possible presentation to Juvenile Review Board; and/or
 - c. Frequently scheduled home visits by school personnel and School Based Resource Officer (SRO) for assessment of situation; and/or
 - d. Completion of a Family with Service Needs petition by the principal and guidance counselor; and/or
 - e. Referral to Pupil Personnel Services for review
 7. If, at any point, it is determined that a child is suffering from poor attendance that is impacting school performance, meets a threshold, or is truant, strategies will be developed specific to the circumstances of that student. All intervention attempts will be documented, and if needed, a HIPAA Compliant Authorization of Exchange of Health and Educational Information will be obtained and community services available to the family will be reviewed. Parents are required to attend this meeting.
 8. Parents failing to attend or otherwise cooperate to resolve any truancy issues will require that the school notify the Central Office Truancy Team and file a Family with Service Needs/Youth in Crisis referral which may include notifying the Department of Children and Families.
 9. The Central Office Truancy Team is comprised of School Officials and representatives from the Department of Children and Families, Milford Police Department, juvenile probation, and community mental health agencies. This team will discuss students identified as truant and/or with other attendance concerns when warranted, and review Families with Service Needs/Youth in Crisis referrals and provide interventions to families and schools.