

4400-R Attendance

I. Notifications

- A. The principal or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of the child's excessive absences after he/she has accumulated three unexcused absences in a school year. After six unexcused absences, the principal shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian by mail that they may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policy of the board of education.
- B. Once the parents are notified, the school attendance counselor shall work with the child and family to analyze the causes of the absences and determine steps, including adjustment of the school program or obtaining supplemental services, to eliminate the problem.
- C. After 10 accumulated unexcused absences in a school year, the principal shall notify the district attorney and parent in writing of the Attendance Law violation. Evidence showing that the parent, guardian, or custodian were notified and that the child has accumulated 10 absences which cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the local board shall establish a prima facie case that the child's parent, guardian, or custodian is responsible for the absences.

II. Class Credit (High Schools)

- A. When students transfer into Haywood County Schools from high schools recognized by national, regional or state accrediting agencies, credit will be accepted without further validation.
- B. A student will not be counted absent for the following reasons:
 - a. Late bus
 - b. In-school suspension
 - c. Administrative proceedings
 - d. Participation in approved school-sponsored activities
- C. For purposes of course credit, attendance will be counted in each class.
- D. The principal shall appoint a committee each semester to review the records of students with more than ten (10) absences. The committee shall take into consideration verified absences due to health. It is the teacher's responsibility to notify the student when his/her credit is in jeopardy due to attendance. Teachers will assist students in notifying parents.
- E. Students may attend make-up sessions for time missed due to absences seven (7), eight (8), and nine (9) in each semester. Make-up sessions shall be scheduled before school, after school and/or Saturday. Make-up time for these three days or less shall match missed time hour-for-hour. The principal/designee may set a new guideline if extenuating circumstances can be proven.
- F. Any out-of-school suspension absence for a period of 10 days or less will not count against course credit. The suspended student shall be provided an opportunity to take textbooks home, to request to makeup daily classroom work, and to take any quarterly, semester or grading period exams missed during the suspension period. See policy 4351- Short Term Suspension.
- G. Students who receive a school imposed out-of-school suspension sanction may request to makeup daily classroom work. Make-up work is due according to the make-up guidelines in Section VI of this policy, and scores on quarterly, semester or grading period exams will count as full value. See policy

4351- Short Term Suspension.

III. Absences

A. Daily Absences (Grades K-12)

A student must be in attendance for at least one-half day in order to be counted present. Individual schools will communicate a procedure for notifying parents regarding student absences.

There are three (3) types of absence:

1. Excused absence (lawful)
 - a. Illness or injury
 - b. Death in the immediate family
 - c. Medical or dental appointments
 - d. Religious observances (prior notice required)
 - e. Court or administrative proceedings
 - f. Activities in which the educational and instructional value gained outweighs the value of missed instructional time (subject to prior approval by the school principal)
2. Unexcused absence (unlawful)

Any absence not included in (1) above will constitute an unexcused absence.

B. Tardies and Early Checkouts

1. Grades 6 – 8 - Five (5) tardies and/or early checkouts will equal one (1) unexcused absence regardless of the reason. For the tardy or early checkout to count toward the absence, scheduled instructional time must be missed.
2. Grades 9 – 12 - Three (3) tardies and/or early checkouts will equal one (1) unexcused absence regardless of the reason. For the tardy or early checkout to count toward the absence, scheduled instructional time must be missed. A school may establish a detention-based program instead of charging absences due to tardies.

C. Excessive Absences - Grades K - 8

Students exceeding fifteen (15) absences, or who are absent more than 8 percent ($180 \text{ days} \times 8.4 \% = 15 \text{ days}$) of the days enrolled in a school year shall not be promoted to the next grade except by a determination of the principal/designee upon review of the student's record. Non-promotion may be required when excessive absences interfere with the student's educational progress. After school remediation and/or summer school may be required for a student with more than the maximum number of absences per year to be promoted. Each school may design its own plan for making up time; programs may include opportunities for making up time before school, after school, on Saturdays or during the summer, and parents will provide transportation. If an exceptional student exceeds fifteen (15) absences, promotion and/or summer school attendance shall be determined by the School IEP Team.

D. Appeals Process - K - 8

A school level promotion committee shall be established in each school. The committee shall be comprised of the principal/designee who will act as chairperson, a guidance counselor, the student's teacher and two additional certified staff members. A parent/guardian of the student who is in violation of the absence policy may seek review through the appeals process.

IV. Make Up Work (K - 12)

Students shall have two (2) school days to complete assignments missed from the first absence, four (4) school days to complete assignments missed from two consecutive absences, and one (1) calendar week to complete assignments missed during three (3) to five (5) consecutive days or class periods. A student absent from six (6) to ten (10) consecutive days or class periods shall have two (2) calendar weeks to complete assignments. A maximum of ten (10) school days will be allowed for students to complete all missed work. All make-up work must be completed by the end of the semester unless extenuating circumstances are approved by the principal. Long-term assignments are exempt from make-up consideration and are due as assigned.

The following regulations apply to work missed by pupils as a result of absence:

- A. Work missed because of an absence may be requested and completed with full credit according to the guidelines listed above.
- B. Work missed because of an educational absence shall have prior approval through the principal's office and must be completed within the guideline previously stated.
- C. Students who receive a school imposed out-of-school suspension sanction may request to make up daily classroom work, and to take textbooks home. (See policy 4351 Short Term Suspension).

VI. Students Leaving School During the Day

- A. A student who must leave school during the day, except for school-sponsored activities, shall not be signed out without parent or guardian permission.
- B. A student leaving for a school-sponsored activity is responsible for notifying his/her teacher(s). See policy 4210 Release of Students

VII. Pregnant Students

Attendance for pregnant students shall be governed by School Board Policy: 4023 Education for Pregnant and parenting Students

XIII. Medically Fragile Students

Attendance for medically fragile students shall be governed by *Exceptional Children's Program* guidelines.

IX. Chronic Illness or Disability

Students with documented disabilities or chronic health problems under IDEIA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 will be exempt from this policy, if the absences are excused and are related to the student's disabilities, or chronic health problems. It is the responsibility of the student's parents or guardians to provide adequate documentation from a licensed medical doctor of the student's condition. Students granted exempt absences are responsible for making up work missed during their absences.

Legal References: