

## HUDSON SCHOOL DISTRICT

<b>POLICY CODE:</b> JH Attendance, Tardiness, and Truancy	<b>FIRST ADOPTION:</b> 08/16/2010
<b>RELATED POLICIES:</b> IKE	<b>LATEST REVISION:</b> 01/06/2020 Page 1 of 2

*Category: Priority*

### **Purpose and Intent**

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that students are in school and learning. School attendance is critical to successful academic performance and to ensure we meet the goals of the district mission and vision. Class discussions, student collaborative work, and teacher guidance and directives all offer learning opportunities that are hard to make up outside the classroom. Therefore, in order to be successful, students must attend school and be on time for classes and other scheduled activities. Tardiness is a disruption to the educational process. It sets a tone that de-values education, detracts from the lesson, is discourteous to the teacher and other students and results in a loss of instructional time.

### **Parent/Guardian, Student, and School Responsibilities**

Under New Hampshire law, specifically RSA 193:1, parents/guardians have a legal obligation to make sure that their children who are at least 6 years of age and under 18 years of age attend school for the entire school year and during all the time that public schools are in session. Parents/Guardians should, therefore, plan activities and appointments for their children at times when school is not in session. Parents/Guardians must contact the school to inform the school of their child's absence.

Parents/Guardians, students, school administrators, and teachers all have important roles in ensuring that students attend school and are on time.

Students have an obligation to attend school and to be on time for class and scheduled activities.

School officials determine whether students' absences are excused or unexcused. The school must also maintain accurate attendance records for each student. Each teacher must accurately report daily attendance and punctuality. The building principal is designated as the person responsible for truancy issues. The building principal must submit attendance information to the Superintendent's office and must communicate with parents when a student's attendance becomes a concern and as required by this Policy. School officials and parents/guardians must then work together to come up with a plan to address the child's absences.

### **Policy Development**

It is the intent of the Hudson School Board to involve parents/guardians in the development of its Attendance, Tardiness and Truancy Policy and any amendments to the Policy. The School Board will notify parents about the proposed Policy or amendments through appropriate communication channels. The School Board will also invite them to attend the School Board meeting at which the proposed Policy or amendments will be discussed.

### **Excused and Unexcused Absences Defined**

The School Board recognizes that absences from school may be necessary under certain circumstances. The School District recognizes two kinds of absences from school: excused and unexcused absences.

Excused absences may include the following situations:

1. School sponsored events such as field trips or athletic events.
2. Absences due to chronic health conditions or illness or mental health or physical health appointments. (The principal may require parents to produce additional documentation.)
3. Death of an immediate family member.
4. Religious holidays or attendance at religious ceremonies.
5. Absences approved by the Superintendent under RSA 193:1, I(c).
6. College visits.
7. Mandated court appearances.

Students will have five (5) school days from the date of absence to present documentation of absence. Unexcused absences and all other absences will include but are not limited to family vacations, other vacations, absences for other personal reasons, tardiness, cutting classes, dismissals, truancy, absence from any study hall or activity for which the student is scheduled.

### **Limitations on Unexcused Absences**

A half-day absence is defined as missing up to half of the total minutes in a school day. Missing more than half the total minutes in a school day is two half-day absences.

Unexcused absences from school are considered truancy. A student who skips class or scheduled activity, arrives late for class or a scheduled activity, or leaves a class or scheduled activity without permission of school personnel is considered truant and will be deemed to have missed the entire class or scheduled activity.

Under New Hampshire law, ten half days of unexcused absence during a school year shall constitute habitual truancy. The District has created a procedure and put in place a series of interventions to assist the student with reintegrating back into school. Interventions will occur at eight (8) days and fifteen (15) days absent. A student with fifteen (15) days absent will be considered truant. Contact with DCYF, school administration, and the Hudson Police Department will occur when a student has missed 15 consecutive days or when the threshold of days absent exceeds 25% for the year. A student that has been absent fifteen (15) or more days may be subject to retention according to policy IKE Promotion and Retention of Students.

### **Appeal**

A parent/guardian or student seeking an exception for an absence that is not otherwise excused may file a request with the School Board. A parent/guardian or student may also appeal to the School Board the following:

1. A determination that a specific absence/tardy, etc. was unexcused;
2. A determination that an absence occurred at all; or
3. Whether exceptional circumstances exist which make strict application of this Policy inappropriate with respect to one or more absences.

*Legal reference: RSA 193:1, I (c,h)*

*Reviewed by Policy Committee 07/16/2020, 09/28/2020*