

REGULATION

Rochester Community Schools
Rochester, Michigan 48307

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STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The purpose of the Rochester Community Schools is to help develop students to be academically, emotionally, and socially prepared to be responsible, contributing adults. Regular school attendance is basic to much of the success students attain from their school programs. For each student, daily teaching, interactions of students with teachers and with other students, discussions, lectures, clarifications, explanation, audio-visuals, reports, etc., cannot be duplicated and constitute valid and crucial parts of school work.

An important part of the student's preparation for adult life is to develop a positive intrinsic attitude toward attendance through a responsible attendance pattern in school. A primary concern of many employers when evaluating prospective employees is their attendance record in school. In most employment situations, employers do differentiate between excused and unexcused absences, with unexcused absences being handled with greater severity. Employers also require timely notification regarding employee absence.

The underlying premise of this regulation is that all absences result in the loss of valuable instructional time; thus, this regulation includes excused and unexcused absences. Another premise of this regulation is the belief that the vast majority of parents exercise good judgment when making decisions about school attendance. Consistent with this belief, parent notification within reasonable time lines will result in the absence(s) being excused.

Parental notification regarding absences and tardies is an essential element of this regulation. Parents and school personnel must work together to offer appropriate intervention to students with attendance problems. Reasonable effort will be made to notify parents of absences and tardies so they may initiate corrective measures in the home.

Each teacher, for all assigned classes, must maintain an accurate accounting of each student's attendance, including dates and the number of days a student is absent during each semester. Teacher classroom attendance records must be maintained according to established school district policies and State of Michigan child accounting procedures. This

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regulation is for all Rochester Community School students in keeping with the General School Law of Michigan which requires that, with few exceptions, every child between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) shall attend school every day.

Regular school attendance is imperative for the educational achievement of students. Students are expected to be in attendance each day school is in session except for personal illness, religious observance, or emergencies in the family.

It is the parents' responsibility to notify the school in accordance with school attendance procedures if the student is absent for the above stated reasons. Excessive absences without a reasonable excuse will constitute truancy. Repeated absences jeopardize the student's continued progress in school.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

When a student is absent for one of the reasons mentioned above, the student will be given assignments to be made up. These assignments will receive full credit if completed within a reasonable length of time.

When an absence is due to other reasons, such as family vacation which does not coincide with the scheduled school calendar, the student will be informed of assignments but will not be required to make up work missed. The assignments missed will not count toward a grade. The grade will only reflect other assignments in the unit. Any test associated with the assignment will have to be taken within a reasonable time limit (one day for each day absent), and that test score will count toward a grade.

Absences shall be reported to the school office for purposes of conducting a daily safety check.

Teachers should report unusual patterns of absence or tardiness to the principal.

In case of unusual attendance patterns, the principal/designee will initiate a conference with the parents and/or legal guardians of the child. If a conference cannot be arranged, the principal will notify parents in writing of his/her concerns and the action to be taken.

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Appropriate support personnel will be assigned to work with the student and the parents in continued efforts to correct circumstances or conditions which have contributed to the attendance problem. In certain cases, agencies such as the public health department or family services may be called upon to assist the family in cooperation with the school.

If the problem is not solved as a result of the work of the school district, support personnel or external support agencies, the principal/designee will then refer the case to juvenile authorities.

Excessive absences as well as tardiness have a negative impact on a child's learning. Truancy and tardy procedures will include a notification and intervention process for the elementary principal to implement.

The elementary building principal will act as the attendance officer in the building to which he/she is assigned.

Student's absences will be categorized as follows:

1. Excused Absence

A student's absence from school for personal illness, medical appointments, other prearranged absences, or emergencies in the family may be considered an excused absence. Parents are to notify the school office according to established procedures regarding all such absences.

2. Exempted Absence

Students' absences when they participate or observe religious holiday(s) may be considered exempted absences. Absences for religious observances should be pre-arranged and approved by the principal/designee.

3. Unexcused Absence

Any absence not covered under the excused or exempted absence guidelines will be considered unexcused.

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MIDDLE SCHOOLS

A master absence list will be compiled daily and used to check student attendance each class period. Names of students absent from class not appearing on the master absence list shall be sent to the office.

Parents whose children are absent frequently will be contacted.

Excessive absences will result in a letter sent from the principal/designee to the parents and/or legal guardians expressing concern for poor attendance. If excessive absences continue, the school principal/designee will request a joint conference with the student and parent.

The middle school building principal/designee shall act as the attendance officer in the building to which he/she is assigned.

Students' absences will be categorized as follows:

1. Excused Absence

A student's absence from school for personal illness, medical appointments, other pre-arranged absences, or emergencies in the family may be considered an excused absence. Parents are to notify the school office according to established procedures regarding all such absences.

2. Exempted Absence

a. School Approved Activity

Any school activity which has been pre-arranged and approved by the building principal/designee is considered a "Student Activity Absence" and is exempt.

b. Students' absences when they participate or observe religious holiday(s) may be considered exempted absences. Absences for religious observances should be pre-arranged and approved by the Principal/designee.

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Schoolwork will be able to be completed for credit for excused and exempt absences. Class assignments and tests will need to be completed within a reasonable amount of time (one day for each day absent).

3. Unexcused Absence

Any absence not covered under the excused or exempted absence guidelines above will be considered unexcused.

HIGH SCHOOL

Absences and tardies are recorded and dealt with on a class by class basis.

Absences and Tardies are defined as follows:

1. Excused Absence

An absence is excused if a parent or legal guardian calls the twenty-four (24) hour attendance number no later than 12:00 noon the school day following the absence. Any student who leaves the school building for any reason without properly signing in/out, will not receive an excused absence.

2. Exempted Absence

In order for an absence to be exempted by an administrator, it must meet one of the following criteria:

a. School Approved Activity

Any school activity which has been pre-arranged and approved by the building principal/designee is considered a "Student Activity Absence" and is exempt.

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b. Medical Exemptions

- i. A student who has a chronic illness may qualify for an exemption if he/she submits a chronic illness statement signed by a physician.**
- ii. A student who is absent for five (5) or more days due to a serious medical condition may qualify for an exemption if he/she submits a statement signed by a physician, which indicates that the absences are related to the same episode.**
- iii. When exemptions are granted for medical reasons, the principal /designee may establish conditions for completion of the class(es). School work may be completed for credit for excused and exempt absences. Class assignments and tests will need to be completed within a reasonable time (One (1) day for each day absent). In the event of an absence exceeding three consecutive days, the student and teacher should work together for the completion of school work and test/ quizzes. The principal/designee will ensure that the process is fair and reasonable based upon the student's circumstances.**

c. Suspensions

An absence that occurs because a student is suspended will be noted as such. Students suspended for up to ten (10) days may complete assignments for credit. Administration should inform the student it is his/her responsibility to approach teachers regarding making up assignments.

School personnel will not provide assignments for the student suspended for eleven (11) days or more (long-term suspension). Refer to Student Code for exceptions dealing with special education students.

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d. Religious Observance

Students' absences when they participate or observe religious holiday(s) may be considered exempted absences. Absences for religious observances should be pre-arranged and approved by the principal/designee.

3. Unexcused Absence

Any absence not covered under the excused or exempted guidelines will be considered unexcused. If a student leaves the building for any reason without properly signing in/out, it is considered an unexcused absence. A student who arrives ten or more minutes after the start of the class without an excused pass will receive an unexcused absence for that class. School work cannot be completed for credit for unexcused absences.

Tardies

A student will be considered tardy if he/she is not physically present in the room at the end of the tone signaling the beginning of class. A student who arrives ten or more minutes after the start of class without an excused pass will receive an unexcused absence for that class. Under the law, chronic tardiness is considered truancy. For this reason, and the fact that tardiness disrupts the class, two (2) tardies will equate to one (1) unexcused absence and will be counted as such under the guidelines for excessive excused and unexcused absences (See attachment A). Additionally, excessive tardiness will be considered a Code of Conduct violation.

Consequences for excessive excused and unexcused absences

Rochester Community Schools has established guidelines to address the consequences for excessive excused and unexcused absences. (See attachment A). These guidelines will take effect when a student accumulates 10 absences in one or more classes. Administrative action may include but is not limited to the following:

- Parent contact by mail or phone
- Student/Administrator Conference

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- Parent /administrator conference
- Loss of parking permit
- Loss of off-campus lunch for seniors
- Grade reduction at end of the semester
- Youth assistance referral
- Oakland County Truancy Program referral

See attachment B for Alternative Center for Education (ACE) guidelines.

Appeal of grade reduction and privilege loss

The grade reduction portion of the guidelines for excessive excused and unexcused absences may be appealed at the end of the semester to the building principal/designee. The appeal needs to be submitted by the parent within 10 days of the report card being distributed. A parent may appeal a loss of student's privilege to the principal/designee at the time of the privilege loss.

ADULT EDUCATION

Attendance Requirement

Attendance of 80% of scheduled class time is mandatory for credit. No grade or credit will be issued for students who have missed in excess of 80% of class time except for student/teacher/counselor arranged home study program for serious illness or accident which occurred during the enrolled marking period and approved by the supervisor.

Students who call in an absence with a justifiable reason will be allowed to make up missed assignments but are liable for missed time as above.

Adult Education makes no provisions for appeal or make-up time.

Tardies, Early Departures or Late Registrations

Instances of late registration, tardies or early departures from class are included in accumulated absences. Four tardies or early departures of 15 minutes or more equal one complete class absence.

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SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM

Students enrolled in Summer Learning Program courses for high school credit are expected to be in attendance for each day the summer learning program is in session. No grade or credit will be issued to students who have been absent more than once in a three-week course where high school credit is earned.

Student tardiness may affect a student's ability to earn credit in the Summer Learning Program. Every three (3) tardies equal one absence in a three-week high school course.

The Summer Learning Program makes no provisions for appeal or make-up time.

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