

Student Absences and Excuses**

All excuses are subject to administrative review.

Excused Absences

Districts may establish grading policies that permit teachers to consider a student's attendance in determining the student's grade or deciding whether the student should be granted or denied credit. Attendance shall not be the sole criterion for the reduction of a student's grade.

Policies must provide that, prior to reduction of grade or denial of credit:

1. The teacher identifies how the student's attendance and participation in class is related to the instructional goals of the particular subject or course and gives notice to the student and parents or guardian of the student. Notice shall be provided as follows: After five (5) unexcused absences, the teacher and/or building administrator will provide written notice of possible grade reduction or denial of credit to the student and the students' parents in writing either personally or via first class mail. After ten (10) unexcused absences the teacher and/or building administrator will request a Credit Denial Hearing with the parents in writing sent to the parents either personally or via first class mail. The parents and/or student will receive the letter no later than five (5) days before the requested Credit Denial Hearing. The hearing team shall consist of the following individuals: the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s), administrator or representative, counselor, and others as requested. After the team meets, the team shall notify the student and parents of the team's decisions in writing within five (5) days. Decisions may be appealed to the building administrator pursuant to board policy and must be received by the building administrator within five (5) days of notification from the hearing team.;
2. Procedures are in effect to ensure due process when the grade is reduced or credit denied for attendance rather than academic reasons;
3. Reasons for nonattendance are considered and the grade is not reduced or credit is not denied based on absences due to religion, disability or an excused absence as determined by district policy. The superintendent has the right to issue a citation that may result in a court-imposed fine to any parent/guardian of a student with irregular attendance or who has failed to enroll his/her student. Irregular attendance is defined as more than eight unexcused one-half day absences or the equivalent in any four week period in which school is in session.

An excused absence shall be for student illness, an illness of a member of the student's family, an emergency, a doctor or dentist appointment, a pre-excused absence or a school sponsored activity (ORS 339.065). Examples of absences which are not considered excused are as follows: oversleeping, car trouble, called into work, missing the bus, leaving school without signing out or failure to submit a signed pre-excuse form for a driver's test, hunting trip, family vacation, religious observance, etc.

1. Students shall have two days from the date of return from an unexcused absence to verify the reason(s) for an absence (i.e. if a student is absent on Monday and returns to school on Tuesday, he/she must have an excuse no later than 3:30 p.m. Wednesday afternoon). This is done either by a signed note or a phone call from a parent or guardian. After two days all absences shall be counted as unexcused and the student shall be subject to disciplinary action.
2. A student who has been absent with a verified excuse shall be given the number of days he/she has been absent to make up any missed work. For example, a student who is absent on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday would be given three school days to complete all missed assignments. In this case the student would be given Thursday, Friday and the following Monday to fulfill this obligation.

Pre-excused Absences

Pre-excused absences are those that are not unavoidable but are excused if requested in advance by the parent or student. Some examples of typical pre-excused absences are: (1) hunting trips; (2) funerals or marriages; (3) family holidays; (4) religious observances; and (5) driver license examinations. Appointments for haircuts, tanning, shopping and other noncritical personal business are not excused. In the case of pre-excused absences, the make-up work policy for excused absences applies. Since the absence is prearranged, however, it is assumed that the student will do most of the make-up work before the days absent or during the days absent.

The absences are excused provided the student follows the necessary steps stated below.

To pre-excuse an absence the following steps must be taken:

1. The parent must give permission by written note or telephone call at least three days prior to the absence;
2. The student will take a pre-excuse form to each of his/her teachers for a signature. When signing the pre-excuse form, teachers will indicate whether the student is passing or failing the class;
3. Students will turn the completed pre-excuse form into the attendance office at least two full school days prior to the absence(s) for administrative approval. If a student is failing a class, the assistant principal will call home to notify the parents;
4. High school students are subject to pre-excused absence guidelines.

Pre-excused Absence Guidelines

At parent request, the district may authorize prearranged absences.

Parents and students, however, need to understand that regular and consistent attendance is most conducive to success in class. It is not possible to replicate the quality of the activities in daily class meetings such as discussions, media presentations, oral readings and direct teacher instruction.

The student has the responsibility to ask his or her teachers far enough ahead of time about projected class plans. Teachers may be able to provide a general plan ahead of time, but they are not expected to have detailed materials or information days before class meeting times. Effective instruction takes both planning and an adjustment to the learning needs of students as they emerge in class meetings. Many activities and some materials may not be available to the absent student before the absence. Upon return, the student will need to request meeting time with each teacher for attempting to make up missed assignments.

Students may be able to do some of their work before their absence; however, since some of the assignments may not be available until the student's return, work may be completed afterwards.

The student has one school day of time to make up work, including tests, for each day of pre-excused absence(s).

Absent students risk falling behind in their classes. Teachers will assist the student to a reasonable extent, but responsibility for academic problems from prearranged absences rests with the student and his or her family.

Tardy and Unexcused Absences:

Each school will develop rules relating to consequences for unexcused absences and tardy violations. These rules shall be published in the student-parent handbooks.