

**ATTENDANCE, ABSENTEEISM, AND TRUANCY •**

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of each student enrolled in the Lafayette Regional School District and is required by law (as defined in RSA 193:1). Attendance is essential to a student's success in school as most subjects are taught in sequential order requiring the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation. Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the District during the days and hours that school is in session. Persistent absenteeism and/or tardiness are considered very serious problems as they can create a genuine hardship for the student.

The Principal is responsible for student attendance and truancy issues and shall ensure that:

- Attendance is accurately checked and reported daily for each class.
- Follow-up information is gathered on all absences.
- Written excuses are submitted for all absences.

On the morning of an absence, a parent/legal guardian shall contact the school between 7:30 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. and state the reason for the absence. A message may also be left on the school's voice mail before that time. If a parent/legal guardian has not contacted the school by 8:30 a.m., the school nurse will call the student's home or the parent's workplace.

In the case of frequent absenteeism and/or tardiness, a parent/legal guardian may be asked to meet with the Principal, teacher, nurse and/or counselor. If absenteeism continues to be a problem, the Principal (or designee) will call the home on each morning of non-attendance. At the discretion of the Principal, a truant officer may be contacted. A physical examination administered by the school doctor may be recommended for a student who is a chronic absentee.

Student absences are recorded and maintained as part of each student's permanent record.

Students who are not in attendance by 11:30 a.m. are not allowed to participate in after-school activities unless prior arrangements have been made with the Principal.

**Excused Absences**

Approved absences are:

- Personal illness.

- Death of a relative: This absence is limited to a period of three (3) days except in the case of extenuating circumstances.
- Observation of religious holidays: Upon written request from a parent/legal guardian, a student of any religious faith will be excused if his/her absence is for the purpose of observing a religious holiday consistent with his/her creed or belief.
- An emergency or other circumstance: A parent/legal guardian may inform the Principal of an emergency or other circumstance that caused his/her child to be absent from school. The Principal shall decide if the absence will be considered excused or unexcused.
- Medical or dental appointments.

In the event of an illness, a parent/legal guardian must call and inform the school of the student's illness and absence. For other absences, parents must provide written notice or a written excuse that states one of the aforementioned reasons for non-attendance. The Principal may require a parent/legal guardian to provide additional documentation in support of their written notice, including but not limited to a doctor's note, court documents, or obituaries.

### **Unexcused Absences**

An unexcused absence is one that results from a reason other than those listed in the Excused Absences section above. If a student's absence is considered unexcused, a parent/legal guardian must provide a written explanation for the absence.

Teachers are not responsible for providing work in advance of any unexcused absence.

### **Truancy**

Truancy is defined as any unexcused absence from school.

#### **Half-day absence**

- Ten (10) half-days of unexcused absence during a school year constitutes habitual truancy.
- A half-day unexcused absence is defined as a student missing between three (3) and three and a half (3 ½) hours of school.

#### **Full-day absence**

- Five (5) full-days of unexcused absence during a school year constitutes habitual truancy.
- A full-day unexcused absence is defined as a student missing more than three and a half (3 ½) hours of school.

### **Intervention Process to Address Truancy**

When the Principal identifies a student who is habitually truant or who is in danger of becoming habitually truant, he/she shall initiate an intervention with the student, the

parent/legal guardian of the student, and other staff members as deemed necessary. The intervention shall include:

- An investigation into the cause of the student's truant behavior.
- Modification, as appropriate, of the student's educational program to meet particular needs that may be causing the truancy.
- Involvement of the parent/legal guardian in the development of a plan designed to reduce truancy.

### **Parental Involvement in Truancy Intervention**

When a student reaches habitual truancy status or is in danger of reaching habitual truancy status, the Principal will send a letter to the parent/legal guardian that includes:

- A statement that the student has become or is in danger of becoming habitually truant
- A statement of the parent/legal guardian's responsibility to ensure the student attends school.
- A request for a meeting between the Principal and the parent/legal guardian to discuss the truancy and to develop a plan for reducing the student's truancy.

This information shall be published in the Parent-Student Handbook.

### **Legal References:**

RSA 189:34, Appointment

RSA 189:35-a, Truancy Defined

RSA 193:1, Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Pupil

RSA 193:7, Penalty

RSA 193:8, Notice Requirements

RSA 193:16 Bylaws as to Nonattendance

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.04 (a)(1), Attendance and Absenteeism

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.04 (c), Policy Relative to Attendance and Absenteeism

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