



## Attendance and Truancy Updated 2017/18

Jeffco School District:

### STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

*JH-R — Regulations for District Policy JH*

Adopted: June 26, 1997 Revised: April 1, 2011

Attendance is the responsibility of the student, the parents, and the school. The importance of regular, daily attendance as a basis for academic achievement cannot be overemphasized. **Absences have a negative effect upon instructional continuity, regardless of attempts to make up the work. The district believes duplication of the classroom experience can never be accomplished with after-school assignments.** The school cannot teach students who are not present. The regular contact of students with one another in the classroom and their participation in a well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose. **Attendance is mandatory for student age six to age seventeen.**

#### I. ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

##### **Student Responsibilities for School Attendance**

1. To attend school for all days of the established school calendar
2. To appear in class on time, prepared for academic learning
3. To contact teachers on the day the student returns from any absence to arrange to complete all makeup work assigned and to establish when this makeup work is due
4. To complete work as assigned by the teacher when a pre-authorized absence is requested and approved
5. To follow the established school procedure when enrolling in or withdrawing from a class

##### **Parent Responsibilities for School Attendance**

1. To maintain communication with their children regarding attendance
2. To recognize that any absence, regardless of cause, has a possible detrimental influence on student achievement
3. To contact the school in a timely fashion based on the school's reporting procedures regarding absences and in the case of extended home confinement, request makeup assignments
4. To monitor the makeup work of the student who has missed class
5. To attend and participate in school attendance conferences when requested
6. To recognize that student attendance at school is a collaborative effort between the home and school.

## How to Excuse Your Student

**1. All absences: The student's parent/guardian is required to call the attendance office, 303-982-0111 no later than 24 hours following the beginning of the absence.** Calls made later than this time frame may not be excused without approval from the student's assistant principal.

- **Clearly give the student's name and spell both names**
- **Clearly give your name and your relationship to the student**
- **State the date of the absence**
- **State the reason for the absence** –see excused reasons below

**2. For multiple day absences:**

- State all the above
- Be specific by including the days and dates to be excused. Otherwise, only one day will be excused.

**3. Partial Day Absences:**

- The parent/guardian must call the attendance office on the day of the absence and report the reason for the absence and the period of time the student will miss – see excused reasons below
- Student must sign the attendance log when they arrive to school later than 1<sup>st</sup> period. The student will remain absent from class until he or she reports to class. The teacher will then mark attendance as absent or tardy according to policy. The attendance office will change the attendance to excused.
- Student leaving early must sign out at the attendance office.
- Students arriving late or checking out early will be excused when student signatures on the log are accompanied by parent/guardian phone calls.
- If the partial day policy is not followed properly, the absence may not be excused without approval from the student's assistant principal.

**4. Students on Medical Letter**

Call the attendance office with all information required as stated above; Submit doctor's note to attendance in order to be excused.

## II. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES EXCUSED ABSENCES

When a student requests to be dismissed during the school day, communication with the parent or guardian should take place before dismissal is approved.

**1. The following shall be considered Excused Absences:**

- **Per district policy, single period absences and early pick-up will not be excused unless it meets one of the 5 excused reasons as stated below.**

**2. AHS policy states single period absences for sick or Dr. visits will not be excused without a Dr. note. Per board guidelines, the school may require suitable proof regarding the above exceptions, including written statements from medical sources.**

- A. A student who is temporarily ill or injured or whose absence is approved by the school administration on a prearranged basis. Prearranged absences shall be approved for appointments or circumstances of a serious nature only which cannot be taken care of outside of school hours.
- B. A student who is absent for an extended period due to physical, mental or emotional disability.
- C. Excused absences include funerals, illness, injury, legal obligations, medical procedures and religious observations, and extenuating circumstances determined by the assistant principal or principal.
- D. A student who is attending any school-sponsored activity or who is receiving Jeffco educational services shall not be considered absent for attendance reporting purposes.

- E. A student who is visiting a parent or guardian who is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting.
  - A school will require communication from parents or guardian within 24 hours to verify the reason for a student absence.
  - **The school may require suitable proof regarding the above exceptions, including written statements from medical sources.**
  - Schools will then notify the parents or guardian if the absence will be considered unexcused pursuant to district policy. Students who are 18 years of age or over could petition the principal to call themselves in as absent. The student shall meet with the principal and work out an agreement.

### 3. **Prearranged Absences - Must submit 3 days prior to the absence**

Any absence not specifically covered by another section, such as family vacations, college visits, or other extended absence, **must complete a prearranged absence form in order to be excused. This form must be submitted at least three days prior to the scheduled absence.** In order for the absence to be excused, the student must meet one or more of the following conditions:

- A. Is in good academic standing
- B. Has no unexcused absences
- C. Has four or fewer excused absences in a semester or seven or fewer in a school year

### 4. **Make-up Work for Excused Absences**

It is essential that students absent from school make up work missed.

- A. It is the responsibility of the student and parent or guardian to initiate requests for and pick up makeup work on the day he or she returns to class from an excused absence.
- B. Makeup work should reflect class assignments missed during the absence, and a reasonable amount of time should be allowed for work completion.
- C. Time allowed to make up work is twice the number of classes or days missed (two days allowed for make-up work for each day of absence); however, an extension of this time limit may be approved by the school administration.
- D. Students who complete makeup work within the required timeline will receive full academic credit earned for the makeup work.

### 5. **Attendance Procedures Unexcused Absences**

Unexcused absences are defined as absences not covered within the grounds for excused absences, including students leaving class without permission of the teacher or administrator in charge, students missing a class without parental approval, 'sneak days,' 'ditch days,' and 'prank days,' and circumstances determined by the principal. Each unexcused absence shall be entered on the student's record. The parents or guardian of the student receiving an unexcused absence shall be notified orally or in writing by the school of the unexcused absence ...*District Policies – Jefferson County School District R-1 Truancy JHB.*

- A. Each unexcused absence shall be entered on the student's record and the parents or guardian of the student receiving an unexcused absence shall be notified orally or in writing by the school. Unexcused absences will subject the student to appropriate consequences, including school sanctions and/or the imposition of academic sanctions for classes missed.

- B. At the senior high school level, persistent unexcused absenteeism may, in the judgment of the teacher and school administration, result in a failing grade.
- C. Court action may be initiated by the designated school authorities when deemed necessary in order to enforce school attendance requirements.
- D. The maximum number of unexcused absences a student may incur before judicial proceedings are initiated to enforce **is four days in one month or 10 days in one year.**

For attendance purposes, any absence from school resulting from suspension will be considered an "unexcused" absence. Such absences due to suspension, however, shall not be counted in the total of unexcused absences when determining if a student is "habitually truant."

Unexcused absences and tardies may subject the student to appropriate school sanctions. These may include detention, In School Suspension (ISS), attendance contracts, and family meetings.

**For students under age 17, the maximum number of unexcused absences a student may incur before judicial proceedings are initiated to enforce compulsory attendance is four days in one month or 10 days in one school year.** By District Policy, a remedial attendance plan shall be developed for a student who is at risk of being declared habitually truant with the goal of assisting the child to remain in school. When practical, the child's parent, guardian or legal custodian shall participate with the attendance administrator during the development of the plan. Appropriate school personnel shall make all reasonable efforts to meet with the parent, guardian or legal custodian to review and evaluate the reasons for the child's truancy.

**Attendance at Truancy meetings with District and school personnel will be required for students receiving one or more attendance letters.** ... *The State Legislature passed HB 96-1203, which requires a plan to be developed, by the school, when a student is habitually truant. \*HB 96-1203, Sec. 4, 22-33-107 Enforcement of compulsory school attendance.*

**For students age 17 and older, the same attendance requirement applies as for students under age 17.** In lieu of truancy court, **meetings will take place with district and school drop-out prevention and the appropriate grade level administrator.** An attendance plan, credit recovery, or alternate school placement may be implemented as needed to ensure student remains on track for graduation.

## 6. **Make-up Work for Absences**

Classroom instruction and interaction with teachers are essential to a student's education. Because of the importance of classroom instruction and learning, students with unexcused absences will be expected to complete classroom assignments to demonstrate their learning on content standards and to meet the academic expectations of the teacher.

- A. As with excused and unexcused absences, time allowed to make up work is twice the number of classes or days missed (two days allowed for makeup work for each day of absence); however, an extension of this time limit may be approved by the school administration.
- B. **Students who complete the required makeup work within the required timelines will receive academic credit earned for the makeup work as described below.**
- C. Makeup work will be allowed for full credit for unexcused absences.

## 7. Tardy to Class

Tardiness is defined as the appearance of a student without proper excuse after the scheduled time that a class begins. Because of the disruptive nature of tardiness and the detrimental effect upon the rights of non-tardy students to uninterrupted learning, consequences shall be imposed for excessive tardiness. Parents or guardians shall be notified of all penalties regarding tardiness.

- **Student tardiness to class shall only be considered unexcused if it does not fall within one of the reasons for an excused absence as specified in the excused absence section of this policy.** Students who arrive late to school due to a late bus will not be penalized.
- A student who arrives after the scheduled time that a class begins, but **meets the State Board of Education requirements of the attendance period which is attending 50% of the class, shall be considered present for that entire period.** The student may still be marked tardy (unexcused tardy or excused tardy as applicable.)
- A student who arrives after the scheduled time the class has begun but **does not meet the 50% of the class period the State Board of Education requires, shall be considered absent for that entire period.** Schools will develop a fair and equitable tardy policy that will effectively utilize resources and not result in an increase in out-of-school suspensions.

## 8. Innovative Alternatives

An individual school may propose innovative alternatives for improving school attendance and reducing student tardiness to class. *District Policies – Jefferson County School District R-1 Student Absences and Excuses #JH.*

- **10 Unexcused Tardies:** Lunch detention; call home; document in Admin. Conf.
- **20 Unexcused Tardies:** Lunch detention; call home; document in Admin. Conf.
- **30 Unexcused Tardies:** After-school detention; referral to dean, school counselor, and social worker; family conference
- **40 Unexcused Tardies:** ISS; referral to grade-level administrator; family conference