

STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ABSENTEEISM AND TRUANCY

The Londonderry School District believes every pupil should attend school regularly. The principal or his/her designee(s) has the authority to excuse students for absences due to personal illness; bereavement; family commitments or personal appointments which cannot be scheduled at another time such as lawyer, physician, court; compliance with the established ordinance for religious instruction or observance. A student who is excused must, however, still fulfill the school's requirements for advancement.

Parents/Guardians, students, school administrators, and teachers all have important responsibilities to ensure that students attend school and are on time.

Students have an obligation to attend school and to be on time for scheduled classes and scheduled activities. A student who has been absent from school on the day of a school activity taking place after school or in the evening is not eligible to take part in the activity unless advance approval of the absence has been given by the school administration.

Parents have the obligation to avoid whenever possible disruptions of the academic year by planning appointments and vacations at times that will not require students to be out of school.

The building principal or his/her designee(s) is responsible for truancy issues. The building principal or his/her designee (s) must submit attendance information to the Superintendent's Office and must communicate with parents when a student's attendance becomes a concern or as required by policy. School officials and parents/guardians must then work together to come up with a plan to address the child's absences or tardiness.

Truancy

Truancy is defined as any unexcused absence from class or school. Any absence that has not been excused for any reasons listed in JED-R (elementary, middle or high school) will be considered an unexcused absence. Truancy and continued unexcused absences, including tardiness, will result in disciplinary action under The Disciplinary Code, Londonderry School District Policy JG.

In addition, truancy may result in zero credit for all work missed.

Ten half days of unexcused absence during a school year constitutes habitual truancy. A half day is defined as a student missing more than two hours of instructional time and less than three and one-half hours of instructional time.

Any absence over three and one-half hours of instructional time shall be considered a full-day absence.

The principal, his or her designee(s) or the truant officer is hereby designated as the District employee responsible for overseeing truancy issues.

Intervention Process

After three school days or six half-days of unexcused absences, the building principal or his/her designee(s) shall contact the parent/guardian by telephone and in writing requesting a meeting within three school days to discuss the matter and to develop a plan to prevent any further unexcused absences.

In accordance with New Hampshire law, the building principal or his/her designee(s) shall enclose copies of RSA 193:1, this policy, and the students attendance record. The building principal or his/her designee(s) will send a copy of the letter to the District's truant officer and the Superintendent.

If a student has five days or ten half days of unexcused absences in the school year, the building principal or his/her designee(s) shall notify the Superintendent, parents/guardians, and truant officer. The building principal or his/her designee(s) shall schedule a meeting with the parent/guardian, truant officer, and appropriate school personnel. The purpose of the meeting shall be to develop a revised plan to address the habitual truancy. At the meeting, the building principal or his/her designee(s) and the truant officer shall inform the parents/guardians that additional unexcused absences may result in a report to the Division of Children Youth and Families (DCYF) and/or the filing of the appropriate action (usually a CHINS) petition under RSA 169-D: 2, III (a) in the local district court.

If a student fails to comply with the revised plan and has either 10 full days or 20 half-days of unexcused absences, the building principal or his/her designee(s) and the truant officer shall consult with the Superintendent to determine whether DCYF should be notified and/or court action filed.

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

LONDONDERRY SCHOOL BOARD

- Adopted: April 25, 1978
- Amended: September 18, 1978
- Amended: March 5, 1979
- Amended: May 20, 1985
- Amended: March 15, 2011