

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The Rensselaer City School District requires all students attend school every day unless they have an excuse. Excused absences are defined as absences due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads or weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, any other absence excused at the discretion of the Superintendent, or such other reasons as may be approved by the Commissioner of Education.

The District recognizes the relationship between class attendance and student performance. The success of the District's educational programs is based upon the principle that regular class participation and contact between students is an essential part of the educational process. Consequently, a portion of a student's final grade will be based on classroom participation, while the remainder of the student's final grade will be based on the student's performance on tests, papers, projects, and all teacher assigned work. For core subjects, the classroom participation grade will be no less than 10 percent and no more than 40 percent.

The student and his/her parents or guardian are responsible for providing written notification of the reason for such absences upon the student's return to school. Whenever possible, parents or guardian are encouraged to contact the school by telephone prior to the absence.

School officials will take attendance period by period throughout the school day. The following is a description of the District Attendance Coding System used for daily and class period attendance.

Legal Absence

A = Absence Excused
 H = Home Tutored
 J = Court Placed
 M = Medical / Hospitalization
 N = Suspended Internally
 S = Suspended Externally
 T = Legal Tardy
 W = Weather
 Z = Tutoring Program

Unexcused Absence

U = Absence Unexcused (No Notification)
 D = Unexcused Tardy
 F = Absent from Internal Suspension
 V = Vacation
 X = Unlawful Absence

Legal Dismissal

B = Removed for Discipline (Teacher)
C = Doctor / Dentist Appointment
U = Sent Home by School Nurse
R = Removed for Remainder of Day (Admin)

Unexcused Dismissal

E = Excused Early (no legal reason)
L = Left Illegally

In addition to the likelihood of enhanced educational progress, good attendance will be the basis for student recognition awards. Any student who has perfect attendance shall be eligible for perfect attendance recognition. Good attendance will be a positive endorsement factor in any letter of recommendation written by a school employee.

Chronic absences and tardiness, whether legally excused or unexcused, are disruptive to the educational process. Therefore, the District has developed the following procedures to encourage and support better attendance:

1. Anytime the school is not notified of a student's absence by a parent/guardian, a phone call will be placed to the parent/guardian.
2. A 5-day, 10-day and 15-day notice will be mailed home to the parent/guardian to inform them about the student's absenteeism/tardiness and the steps the School District will take.
3. Child Protective Services (CPS) may be called for educational neglect for excessive absences.
4. PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision) Petition may be filed with Family Court when a student is chronically absent.
5. If a student leaves the school grounds without permission, the parent/guardian will be immediately notified. The local police may be contacted as well.
6. Chronic absentees will be referred by the Attendance Assistant and/or Building Principal to the Multi-Disciplinary Team or Instructional Support Team who will review each individual case and develop strategies to remedy the chronic absentee issue.
7. Chronic tardiness at the secondary level will result in disciplinary actions.

*Students must be in attendance in order to participate in all afterschool and evening activities.

Adopted: June 25, 2002

Revised: August 24, 2011