



NORTH SHORE HIGH SCHOOL

Student Attendance Policy, 2020-2021

The North Shore Schools recognize that regular school attendance is a major component of academic success. The purpose of this policy is to reduce the level of unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures and to encourage full attendance by all students.

Attendance is recorded each class period. A student is considered absent if he or she misses more than ten minutes of class. Attendance at school-sponsored programs (e.g. field trips, assemblies), court mandated appearances, and suspensions are not considered absences.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes for at least 85% of the scheduled days of instruction in order to receive credit for the course. A lateness of more than ten (10) minutes to class is considered an absence. To ensure that parents and students are aware of the implications of this minimum attendance requirement, the teacher or other designated staff member(s) will advise the student and contact the parent(s) by telephone and mail at appropriate intervals prior to the student reaching the maximum number of absences.

I. Parent/Guardian and Student Responsibilities

The following list articulates parent/guardian responsibilities when a student is absent from school for all or part of a day.

- **If your child will be absent for the entire school day** call the High School attendance office (277-7020 or -7021) by 8am the morning of the absence. If the attendance secretary is on another line or out of the office, a voice mail service will allow you to leave a message. If your child is returning to school after an illness that has extended for more than three (3) days, he or she must bring a doctor's note to the attendance office. Medical documentation of absences allows us to excuse your child so these absences will not count against the attendance policy. *(Automated phone calls go home every school night when a child misses one or more classes, so PLEASE make a point to call the attendance office when you know your child will not be in school for any amount of time.)*
- **If a student is absent from school for a court mandated appearance**, please provide documentation to excuse the absences from the attendance policy.
- **If your child is leaving school early or temporarily during the school day** he or she must sign out at the attendance office directly before leaving. A student will not be permitted to sign out unless one of the following has occurred: a parent/guardian has called or the child presents a note written by the parent/guardian explaining that the student is leaving early, including the time leaving and returning if applicable. If the child is returning to school they must sign back in at the attendance office before proceeding to their class. *Please note: Parents of ninth grade students are required to come into the attendance office to sign their child out of school.*
- **If your child is arriving late to school** they must sign-in at the attendance office before proceeding to their classes. A parent must have called or the child must present a note from his or her parent/guardian in order to acknowledge the lateness to school.
- Students are expected to make up all work missed due to absences.
- Failure to comply with the above responsibilities will result in absences being considered unexcused. The manner in which attendance is recorded may not be changed after five school (5) days from the date of the absence.

The following is a list of excused absences:

- Illness of the student (three (3) days or less)
- Extended illness for more than three (3) days requires a doctor's note
- Serious illness of immediate family member
- Death in the student's family
- Serious, contagious, or epidemic disease in the household where the pupil resides
- Emergency doctor or dental appointments
- Mandated attendance in a court of law or related court proceeding
- Documented college visits
- Religious observance
- Dangers imposed by weather conditions

Attendance at school sponsored programs (e.g., field trips, assemblies) and suspensions are not considered absences.

Failure to comply with the above responsibilities will result in absences being considered unexcused. The way attendance is recorded may not be changed after five (5) school days from the date of the absence.

2. North Shore High School Attendance Policy: Grades 9 - 12

Full year courses: (1 credit)

- By the fourteenth unexcused absence, a letter will be mailed home describing the mandatory attendance requirement for course credit and the consequences of noncompliance.

- By the twenty-first unexcused absence, a second letter will be sent home reiterating the attendance requirements for course credit and the consequences of non-compliance. At this point, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with an Assistant Principal to discuss the problems of non-attendance and excessive absence. A student's off-campus privileges may be suspended for up to four weeks.
- At twenty-eight unexcused absences a final letter of notification will be mailed to parents stating that their child **will not receive credit for the course**. In order for students to repeat the course for credit in summer school or repeat it in the following year, they must continue to attend daily. If students continue to miss classes, each day absent will be treated as a cut, detentions will be assigned and students may become ineligible for summer school and/or face more serious disciplinary consequences.

Half-year courses: (1/2 credit)

- By the sixth unexcused absence, a letter will be mailed home describing the mandatory attendance requirement for course credit and the consequences of non-compliance.
- By the tenth unexcused absence, a second letter will be sent home reiterating the attendance requirements for course credit and the consequences of non-compliance. At this point, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with an Assistant Principal to discuss the problems of non-attendance and excessive absence. A student's off-campus privileges may be suspended for up to four weeks.
- At fourteen unexcused absences a final letter of notification will be mailed to parents stating that their child **will not receive credit for the course**.

Physical Education: Half-year course that meets on alternate days (¼ credit)

- By the third unexcused absence, a letter will be mailed home describing the mandatory attendance requirement for course credit and the consequences of non-compliance.
- By the sixth unexcused absence, a second letter will be sent home reiterating the attendance requirements for course credit and the consequences of non-attendance and excessive absences. A student's off-campus privileges may be suspended for up to four weeks.
- At eight unexcused absences a final letter of notification will be mailed to parents stating that their child **will not receive credit for the course**. In order for students to repeat the course for credit in summer school or repeat it in the following year, they must continue to attend daily. If students continue to miss classes, each day absent will be treated as a cut, detentions will be assigned and students may become ineligible for summer school.

3. Appeals

Parents of any student facing denial of credit for excessive unexcused absences have a right to a hearing. Appeals of such circumstances must be requested by letter, e-mail or phone call to the school Principal. **The student must be present at the appeal hearing or the meeting will be postponed.** At the discretion of the Principal, absences may be excused with the documentation of such extenuating circumstances as extended illness of three (3) days or more, hospitalization, family crisis, bereavement, or legal obligation.

4. Unexcused absences

The following is a list of unexcused absences:

- Visiting relatives or friends
- Vacationing/traveling
- Making motor vehicle department appointments excluding road tests with documentation of appointments
- Babysitting or helping at home
- Working
- Shopping
- Oversleeping
- Experiencing vehicle breakdown (subject to administrative review)
- Leaving school during the day and/or missing a regularly scheduled class, without proper notification*
- Non Emergency Medical or Dental appointments

*Notification and/or acknowledgement by the parent/guardian of the absences will not automatically excuse an absence that does not comply with the stated policy. Approval should be granted by an Assistant Principal.

Unexcused absences are absences that also include: Missing an entire class and any time in which more than ten (10) minutes of a class is missed without permission.

- Unexcused absences may warrant after-school detentions.
- Three or more unexcused absences in one day may result in in-school suspension.

Students will be denied credit for one credit courses on the 28th unexcused absence. Students will be denied credit for half credit courses on the 14th unexcused absence. Students will be denied credit for Physical Education on the 8th unexcused absence.

5. Illness during the Day

A student who becomes ill during the day must report to the Health Office. No student may go home unless a parent is aware and can arrange transportation. If the student is sent home, the Health Office will sign the student out. Students who leave without following this procedure will be considered unexcused.

6. Lateness to Class

Lateness to a class is defined as arriving within the first ten (10) minutes of that class. As with lateness to school, three unexcused latenesses to each individual class throughout the day, within a marking period, will result in detention. **A lateness of more than ten (10) minutes is considered an unexcused absence and, as stated above, may result in a detention.**

7. Truancy

Truancy, or unexcused absence from school for the day, is illegal. Truancy results in an unexcused absence for each missed class, and may result in one day of in-school suspension for each full day missed.

8. Contracts of Agreement

Certain events, such as the proms and the Fashion Show, require that student participants and their parents sign a "Contract of Agreement" similar to that used when students go on overnight field trips. It states that students are expected to follow all rules that apply during the school day, as stated in the Code of Conduct. If students wish to attend the event, then they understand that they have promised to abide by the contract and will accept the consequences should

they violate it. These consequences may include up to five (5) days out-of-school suspension with a Superintendent's Conference Hearing attached, missing games or performances as per the Code of Conduct and Athletic Handbook, and a conduct review by the National Honor Society.

9. In-school Suspension

In-school suspension means that a student spends the entire school day working in the detention room. Teachers provide classwork, homework and other assignments. Students are escorted to get lunch or to visit the restroom. There are no breaks or socializing. Students and parents will be notified prior to an in-school suspension. A follow-up letter is sent home.

10. Out-of-school Suspension

To be suspended out of school is to forfeit one's right to be in this school, on our campus or anywhere on district property. An out-of-school suspension is recorded on a child's permanent discipline record. It may affect a student's membership in the National Honor Society or other activities. It could influence the college application process or the recommendations that a student would receive.

Parents will be notified of an out-of-school suspension. A letter explaining the suspension will be sent to the home and parents may request a meeting with an Assistant Principal or the Principal. After the suspension is served and prior to returning to class, a re-entry meeting between the student, parent, and administration may be held.

11. Channels for Parent Communication with Teachers

The procedures outlined below were instituted in order to establish channels for parent communication with teachers.

1. Parents, teachers, guidance counselors, and school administrators are encouraged to discuss their concerns informally at any time. Anonymous inquiries cannot be dealt with directly; they will be considered an inappropriate approach for solving problems or for receiving suggestions.
2. In the continuing interest of promoting better communication between parents and teachers, the following channels are reaffirmed from past practice and established as formal administrative procedures:
 - a. A parent who has a specific question, concern or suggestion should first contact the teacher concerned for an appointment.
 - b. Should the parent and teacher be unable to resolve the problem, a meeting will be arranged with the parent, the teacher, and the Department Director/Teacher Leader.
3. It is anticipated that most problems will be resolved at the first or the second level. Should a satisfactory resolution not occur, any of the above parties may arrange to meet with a building administrator.

(**Please see North Shore High School's Guidelines for Eligibility for Sports and Activities for important information on the Attendance Eligibility Policy.)