

# Policy 0500-10

## Secondary Attendance

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Idaho law requires compulsory school attendance for children between the ages of seven (7) and sixteen (16) years of age. State law also requires each school district to establish attendance policies. Regular and consistent attendance is an indicator of success in school and is necessary for maximum student learning and success. West Ada School District attendance policies are established to achieve the following:

- Increase the likelihood of academic success for all students
- Increase daily student attendance
- Encourage students to be academically current in classes
- Develop student responsibility
- Increase parental/guardian involvement in student attendance
- Prepare students for career attendance expectations

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to aid school officials in enforcing district policies.

Administrators will make decisions in keeping with the overall intent of this policy. All absences from class shall be counted unless the student physically remains within an accountable school setting such as with a counselor, nurse, administrator, etc. Each school shall keep accurate attendance records.

Incentives for student attendance are encouraged and expected. Incentives and additional intervention plans may be determined at each building or classroom site, as approved by the administrator.

Schools shall establish clear procedures to implement this policy, including, but not limited to:

- Regular and accurate recording of attendance
- Parental access to current attendance records
- Clear communication of school hours
- Advance notice of attendance penalties
- Parent contact in the event of excessive absences
- Provide written notification to parents in the instances of unverified absences changing to truancy and/or notification that a habitual truancy notice will be sent to the prosecuting attorney for action

# HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT

High school students must attend three (3) periods during a regular school day to be considered a full-time student. With approval of the superintendent or designee, a student may be released for the following and still be considered full time:

1. One (1) period for religious instruction or other approved program in grades 9-12
2. Juniors and Seniors may be eligible for one additional release period. The additional period may not be scheduled on the same day as the period allowed for religious instruction or other approved program.
  1. For seniors to be eligible for the additional release periods they must have completed a minimum of forty-five (45) credits by the end of the eleventh grade, successfully completed all ninth (9th) through eleventh (11th) grade required credits, and scored proficient or advanced on all portions of the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT).
  2. For juniors to be eligible for the additional release period they must have completed a minimum of twenty-eight (28) credits by the end of the tenth grade, successfully completed all ninth (9th) and tenth (10th) grade required credits, and score proficient or advanced on all portions of the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). Additionally, eligible juniors must be enrolled in six (6) or more Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and/or Concurrent Credit courses while attending a West Ada School District high school.

The attendance standard for high school students is as follows:

Students are allowed three (3) absences per class period during the semester. Students who receive four (4) absences in any class will lose credit unless cleared by the attendance office as extraordinary within five (5) days of the absence. Verbal communication must come from a parent/guardian within 48 hours of the absence to prevent truancy.

Students enrolled in any two credit (double block) class are allowed six (6) absences per two credit (double block) class during the semester. Attendance is taken twice each day during the two credit (double block) class. Students who receive seven (7) absences in a two credit (double block) class will lose both credits unless cleared by the attendance office as extraordinary within five (5) days of the absence. Verbal communication must come from a parent/guardian within 48 hours of the absence to prevent truancy.

Excessive tardiness may result in administrative discipline and loss of credit.

A high school student who is absent during any part of the day of an evening performance or function may not participate in that performance or function unless deemed an extraordinary absence. A student suspended in school for more than one period or out of school on the day of an activity will not be allowed to participate in that activity, game, or practice.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT

The attendance standard for middle school students is as follows:

Students are allowed six (6) absences per class period during the semester. Students who receive seven (7) absences in any class will lose credit unless cleared by the attendance office as extraordinary within five (5) days of the absence. Verbal communication must come from a parent/guardian within 48 hours of the absence to prevent truancy. School staff enforces daily attendance and initiates measures to correct attendance problems.

Students attending one of the alternative middle schools are allowed three (3) absences per class period during the semester. Students who receive four (4) absences in any class at one of the alternative middle schools will lose credit unless cleared by the attendance office as extraordinary within five (5) days of the absence.

Excessive tardiness may result in administrative discipline, as determined by building administration.

Middle school students must be in attendance at school the entire school day in order to participate in extracurricular activities after school or in the evening of that same day. Exceptions include situations beyond the control of the student such as court appearance, bereavement, medical/dental appointments, etc. Students, who are suspended, including in-school suspension for a major discipline offense, are not allowed to practice or participate in school activities.

## EXTRAORDINARY ABSENCES

Extraordinary absences require prior notification from a parent or guardian, except in the cases of illness, accident, or bereavement. The student will be expected to complete assigned work within a time period agreeable to the teacher(s) of the missed class (es). The following criteria are used to determine extraordinary absences:

1. National or International Activities: Events organized for the purpose of continuing competition or as an extension of an approved school program/contest, or special activities such as Olympic qualifying meets.
2. Court Appearance: Verified by official documentation
3. Professional Appointments: Confirmed with documentation from professional personnel such as counselors, attorneys, etc.
4. Extended Family Educational Trip: In the instance that an extended family educational trip occurs while school is in session, the parent/guardian and student requesting this exception must meet the following:
  1. Submit a letter of request to an assistant principal at least two (2) weeks prior to the trip;
  2. Have passing grades in all classes;

3. Not exceed six (6) absences in a traditional schedule or four (4) absences in a block schedule prior to this request;
4. Not have any truancies or school suspensions;
5. Request work from teachers and agree to turn in all pre-arranged work on or before the first day back to class;
6. Work that cannot be pre-arranged will be completed upon return based on Make Up Work expectations below.
7. Call the attendance office prior to the dates of absence;

5. Religious Observances: Verified by parent/guardian, church official, or document.

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

If a student is absent for fifteen (15) consecutive school days, that are unverified, the student may be dis-enrolled from school. At the time the student returns to school, the student may be re-enrolled. Students receiving homebound services or absent due to illness documented by licensed medical personnel will not be included in this procedure.

## **MAKE UP WORK**

If a student is to be out of school for an extended absence of 15 days or less, it is his/her responsibility to make arrangements for assignments with the teacher. Written assignments will be gathered during the absence and provided to the student upon his/her return to school. Please be aware that up to 70% of the classroom activities consist of class participation, projects, discussion and practice that cannot be duplicated or made up. In all absentee cases, class assignments must be completed within the number of days equal to the number of days of absence to receive credit.

## **TRUANCY**

Truancy occurs when a student intentionally absents himself/herself from school either before arriving or after having arrived at school without previous knowledge and consent of parents or school officials.

A written record of truancies shall be kept with or in the student's cumulative record folder and forwarded to the receiving school.

## **HABITUAL TRUANCY**

Any student who is deemed habitually truant, may be referred to the prosecuting attorney pursuant to Idaho Code 33-206.

Principals/assistant principals, as the authorized representative of the board of trustees, will submit documentation of the excessive absences/truancies to the prosecuting attorney in the county of the student's residence.

## **APPEAL PROCEDURE:**

In the event that a parent chooses to appeal the decision of the principal or designee, it must be made no less than ten (10) working days after the decision of the principal is rendered. The Superintendent or Designee will receive the appeal and respond within five (5) working days. This decision of the director is final.

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Reference: Code of Idaho 33-202, Code of Idaho 33-205, Code of Idaho 33-206