



# Capital School District Board of Education Policy

Section: Student
Title: Student Attendance Regulations
Policy #: 700-02
Temporary Addendum to Policy #700-02 due to COVID19
Date Approved: 6/17/2020
Date Revised: 06/10/2020

## Temporary Addendum to Policy #700-02 Student Attendance Regulations due to COVID19

### Addendum:

Given the exigencies of Covid-19 and as required by the August 26, 2020 Twenty-Fifth Modification: State of Emergency Declaration (“Order”), the Board of Education of the Capital School District adopts this Temporary Addendum to Policy #700-02 Student Attendance Regulations policy, which shall expire without further action on the date the rescission or modification of the Order is effective.

Attendance and involvement in school each day is a fundamental condition to learning and student success. Attendance is required of all students enrolled in the District and the District will adhere to all state laws regarding student attendance.

During hybrid or remote learning, a school day shall consist of an average of 3.5 to 5 hours daily of synchronous (delivered same time) or asynchronous (not delivered same time) programming.

Attendance will be recorded daily (elementary by classroom teacher, secondary by teacher for each class) in eSchool using the traditional attendance features. A student will be marked as present for the day if they attend the daily Zoom session or complete the daily check-in assignment for the class. The daily check in assignment (warm-up, quick check, or exit ticket) will be assigned through the Learning Management System (SeeSaw for grades K-1; Schoology for grades 2-12) and must be completed by 11:59 (Midnight) in order to be marked as present for the day.

School and District administration shall develop a process to provide outreach and support when families are not participating.

The District shall post this attendance policy on its website and notify a parent, guardian, or relative caregiver of each student in writing where this policy can be accessed. A hard copy shall be provided to a parent, guardian, or relative caregiver upon request.

All other portions of the current attendance policy will continue to apply.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure regular attendance in school that is critical for students to fully take advantage of opportunities to learn and maximize their potential for success. This policy complies with Delaware state law regarding student attendance and further defines types of absenteeism, guidelines, and consequences for parents and students.

At the beginning of a school year, each school district or public school shall notify each student and the parent of each student of the school attendance requirements of the Delaware Code, including the procedures and penalties applicable to truancy. The school district or school may determine the form of the notification.

Delaware state law, Title 14, Chapter 27, which pertains to Compulsory Attendance, requires regular attendance for the school age child. Consistent with said policy, the Board of Education of the Capital School District requires regular and consistent attendance for all students between the ages of 5 and 16 who reside within its school boundaries. Students aged 16 to 21 who are enrolled in district schools are also required to follow these attendance policies. Delaware state law, Title 14, Chapter 27, further states, "Every student who is enrolled in a public school of this State shall attend the school each day of the minimum school term and any academic improvement activities required by §153 of this same title. A student who has been absent from school without a valid excuse for more than 3 school days in a school year is considered truant. A truant and the parent of a truant are subject to the administrative procedures and court proceeding set out in subchapter II of this Chapter."

Elementary, Middle and High school teachers are responsible for maintaining high standards of attendance for their respective groups. Teachers are responsible for notifying the administration of students with whom they are having attendance or tardy difficulties.

The school administration, upon notification of unsatisfactory attendance or excessive tardiness, should investigate and take such action as they deem necessary to obtain satisfactory attendance. If action does not obtain satisfactory results, the case should be referred to the Visiting Teacher for further action. If the Visiting Teacher does not obtain immediate action, court action will be necessary.

**Absenteeism (Time out of School)**

It is recognized that occasionally there is a need for students to not be in attendance during school hours. Every minute of instructional time is important. Each minute lost cannot be regained. Parents are reminded to limit absences, late arrivals and early dismissals.

1. Official instructional time for each school
  - a. All K-4 schools: 8:25 a.m.-3:10 p.m.
  - b. William Henry Middle School: 7:40 a.m.-2:22 p.m.
  - c. Central Middle School: 7:40 a.m.-2:22 p.m.
  - d. Dover High School: 7:25 a.m.-2:25 p.m.
  - e. Kent County Community School: 8:20 a.m.-2:45 p.m.
  - f. Kent County Intensive ILC: 7:30 a.m.-2:20p.m.

## 2. Types of missed time addressed in this policy

- a. Absent the entire school day
  - At the Principal's discretion, students with three (3) or more unexcused days absent per quarter may not be allowed to attend or participate in out of school time functions such as sporting events, musical or theatrical performances, prom, home coming or other special events.
- b. Late arrival to school
  - Students are considered tardy to school or class when they report after the official start of the instructional day or the assigned class.
  - Schools are to keep a careful record of all tardiness.
  - The process for addressing unexcused tardiness shall be worked out by each school. Teachers are instructed to report all cases of excessive unexcused tardiness to the principal. Excessive unexcused tardiness is defined as being late to school or class without a valid excuse for more than three (3) days during one marking period.
- c. Early dismissal from school
  - Early dismissals are when a student leaves school prior to the end of the instructional day.
  - Schools are to keep a careful record of all early dismissals.
  - The process for addressing unexcused early dismissals shall be worked out by each school.

## 3. Excused time away from school. Absences, late arrivals, and early dismissals may be excused for each of the following:

- a. Any professional appointment (ie: doctor, dentist, counselor, court), excused with a professional note submitted to the school within 3 school days of the child's return.
- b. Any illness or hospitalization of student as verified by health professional with a professional note submitted to the school within 3 school days of the child's return.
- c. Religious holidays with a written note or email from parent/guardian submitted to the school prior to the absence or within 3 school days of the child's return.
- d. Exclusion by school nurse due to health reasons.
- e. Up to 12 personal days per year, at parent/guardian discretion, excused with a written note or email from parent/guardian submitted to the school within 3 school days of the child's return.
- f. Any student who is a volunteer firefighter of a Delaware volunteer fire department, as certified by the Delaware State Fire Prevention Commission, shall be excused from being tardy up to 12 times per year, assuming that all work for missed classes is made up, each tardy was directly associated with a fire call for the volunteer fire department in which the student is a member, the student arrives at school within 30 minutes of being excused from the scene of the fire call, and an adult member of the fire department in which the student is a member submits written documentation substantiating that the tardy was associated with a fire call.

## 4. Notification Methods for Excused Time Away from School

The following methods are generally accepted:

- a. Parent/guardian note to match bona fide signature, including a phone number for school staff to call and confirm if there are questions/concerns.
- b. Professional note from dentist, health care provider, court, or other professional service provider.

- c. Email to school's attendance clerk (listed below) from parent/guardian, including a phone number for school staff to call and confirm if there are questions/concerns.

East Dover Elementary School at [eastattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:eastattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

Fairview Elementary School at [fvattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:fvattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

Hartly Elementary School at [hartlyattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:hartlyattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

North Dover Elementary School at [northattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:northattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

South Dover Elementary School at [southattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:southattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

Towne Point Elementary School at [tpattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:tpattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

Booker T. Washington Elementary School at [btwattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:btwattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

William Henry Middle School at [whmsattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:whmsattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

Central Middle School at [cmsattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:cmsattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

Dover High School at [dhsattendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:dhsattendance@capital.k12.de.us)

Kent County Community School at [kccs@attendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:kccs@attendance@capital.k12.de.us)

Kent County Alternative Programs at [kcsilc@attendance@capital.k12.de.us](mailto:kcsilc@attendance@capital.k12.de.us)

5. Unexcused times away from school are:

- a. Conditions or situations in which a student deliberately chooses to be absent:
- Leaving school during the day without permission.
  - Absent without valid reason – truancy.
- b. Absences not supported by parent/guardian or other note

6. Absences and missed school work

Time away from school shall be excused without penalty should the reason meet the aforementioned criteria. A maximum of 12 (entire day) excused absences, 12 excused early dismissals and 12 excused late arrivals per year will be granted with the support of a parent/guardian note or email. Notes regarding absences must be turned in within three (3) school days of the student's return to school. Excuse notes explaining a late arrival must be presented at the time that the student arrives to school. Parent/guardian explanations regarding early dismissals must be noted on the student sign out log at the time of dismissal. Should a parent/guardian wish to submit a health care provider or other professional to excuse the absence, the note from the professional's office (on letterhead) must be submitted no later than the day that the student returns to school. The principal will have final discretion in determining excused and unexcused time away from school.

Students who are absent, whether excused or unexcused, will be given the opportunity to make up work or tests missed within a reasonable amount of time. A reasonable amount of time for the completion of homework is defined as two class sessions for every one session absent. A teacher will extend this time if the student is making progress towards completing assignments.

While students are making up work due to an absence or absences, teachers may use the following codes in eSchool Grade Book:

- a. ABS – Absent from Class – it assigns a zero for the assignment until the grade is entered.
- b. EX – Exemption – it excludes the assignment from being included in the student average if the teacher determines an exemption is needed.

## Truancy Response Guidelines

The school administration, upon notification of more than 3 unexcused absences, late arrivals, and/or early dismissals, should investigate and take such actions as they deem necessary within the confines of the law to obtain satisfactory attendance. The actions may include a referral to the Visiting Teacher and ongoing home visits to assess familial needs/strengths and assist the family as needed to ensure compliance with the district's attendance policy. Additional actions may include seeking parent and/or student participation in an Attendance Review Conference, the development of a contract designed to delineate parental and/or student responsibilities and possible consequences, and the filing of truancy charges against parents and/or selected students (age 12 or older).

Below are district guidelines to be used to help ensure overall continuity and consistency of services. It should be noted that these actions are in line with Delaware Law and, per the principals' discretion, may or may not be used in a consecutive format.

<u>Unexcused Days Absent</u>	<u>School Response</u>
3-5	Contact with families will be made by the building principal or designee to discuss the unexcused absences and plan a course of remediation.
6-9	Notification letter sent and attendance review conference with school officials and Visiting Teacher will be held. Conference may include counseling and will include the development of a contract in which the parent/guardian agrees to make every effort to have their child attend school regularly according to the attendance policy. In grades 6-12, the student may be included in the conference. Students age 12 and older may conference with school officials and Visiting Teacher alone if parent/guardian does not attend the pre-scheduled conference. At the time of the conference student will be asked to sign an attendance contract that states they will make every effort to improve their attendance in school. The parent/guardian and/or student will also be advised that should the number of unexcused absences reach a total of ten (10) or more, the district may elect to file truancy charges. Visiting Teacher will contact parent/guardian. Further absence may require an excuse printed on letterhead (physician, therapist, court, etc.).
10	Truancy notice sent to home by the school and charges may be filed in Justice of Peace Court.
15	Certified attendance letter sent to parent/guardian by the school requesting parent contact the school for an attendance meeting.

Following the 20th day of unexcused absence by a student, the school and Visiting Teacher will file truancy charges in Justice of Peace Court.

The Capital School District may require any student to participate in academic improvement activities specified for the student as district policy. A student who refuses to comply with the district's requirement for participation in academic improvement activities shall be subject to the same disciplinary actions as for other acts of absenteeism or truancy.