

Raymond School District Policy - JH

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Each student enrolled in the Raymond Public Schools is required to attend school on a regular basis. In order to take maximum advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the Raymond School District, students need to establish a pattern of regular and punctual attendance. Student attendance is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student. Students should always be in school except when:

1. The student's health prohibits attendance.
2. The student's presence is required elsewhere by sound, pressing, and unavoidable out-of-school activity.
3. The student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and the Principal agree that the reason for the absence is in the best interest of the student.

Absences, even with the approval of the parent(s)/guardian(s), that are excessive and/or interfere with the student's educational program will be discussed with parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or the student will be referred to the Student Intervention Team.

The Board considers more than four (4) absences per marking term to be excessive. As the student progresses through school, the major responsibility for attendance shifts from parent(s)/guardian(s) to the student; therefore, the school's response to an excessive number of absences will differ from level to level. Each school will develop procedures outlining how it will deal with students who have an excessive number of absences. There are a number of items that are common to all levels; these include:

1. Tardiness has a negative impact on a student's performance in school. Each school will develop procedures to deal with students who are tardy.
2. Any procedures that impact a student's grade due to excessive absences will contain an appeal process.
- ~~3. Students are expected to make up all work missed due to absence, tardiness, or dismissal. Credit for make-up work will be given only to students with excused absences.~~
4. Students who do not attend school due to an unexcused absence will not be allowed to participate in or attend school activities on that day. *Students who have an unexcused absence on the last day of school before a weekend school activity will not be permitted to participate in the weekend activity.*
5. Students who do not attend school due to a medical reason will be provided a temporary home-based program not to exceed 45 days in a school year.

Attendance will be counted as present during that time period. Medical permission will be required.

Absences

The Board requires that school-aged children enrolled in the District attend school in accordance with all applicable state laws and Board policies. The educational program offered by the District is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order for students to achieve academic standards and consistent educational progress.

Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the District during the days and hours that school is in session, except that the Principal may excuse a student for temporary absences when receiving satisfactory evidence of conditions or reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence.

The Board considers the following to be excused absences:

1. Illness (~~Physician statement required for more than 3 consecutive days.~~)
2. Recovery from an accident/natural disaster
3. Required court attendance
4. Medical and dental appointments
5. Death in the family
6. Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
7. ~~Approved school activity~~
8. ~~Individual Education Program/Alternative Education Program~~
Special Event or Family Occasion
9. College visitations

Any absence that has not been excused for any of these reasons will be considered an unexcused absence.

~~In the event of an illness,~~ Parent(s)/guardian(s) must call the school and inform the District of the student's ~~illness and~~ absence. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide written notice or a written excuse that states one of these reasons for non-attendance within 2 days of the student's return. The Principal may require parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide additional documentation in support of their written notice, ~~including but not limited to doctor's notes, court documents, obituaries, or other documents~~ supporting the claimed reason for non-attendance.

If parent(s)/guardian(s) wish for their child to be absent for a reason not listed above, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide a written explanation of the reason for such absence, including why the student will be absent and for how long the student will be absent. The Principal will make a determination as to whether the stated reason for the student's absence constitutes good cause and will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) via telephone and writing of his/her decision. This advanced planning will allow teachers enough time to work with parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student regarding work completion. If the Principal determines that good cause does not exist, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may request

a conference with the Principal to again explain the reasons for non-attendance. The Principal may then reconsider his/her initial determination. However, at this juncture, the Principal's decision shall be final.

Each Building Principal is responsible for overseeing attendance procedures. ~~at his/her school and assuring that:~~

1. Attendance is accurately checked and reported to the school office daily for each class.
2. All student absences are recorded.
3. All permanent records of pupil attendance are maintained at the individual schools.

The following applies to those students eighteen (18) years of age and older: After fifteen (15) consecutive days absent, when there has been no firm understanding with an absent student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), the school will send a warning letter to the parent(s)/guardian(s) giving notice that the student will be dropped from registration effective the 20th day of his/her consecutive absence unless a clear understanding, in writing, with parent(s)/guardian(s) is achieved beforehand. A copy of this letter will go to the Superintendent of Schools.

School Principals are responsible for developing Student Handbooks that will include rules regarding student absences, excuses, suspensions, and truancy. These rules will apply to all students.

Statutory References:

RSA 193:1, 2, 7, 8, and 16

RSA 306.10 (a) (1)

See Policy JHB

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