

TRUANCY

Truancy

FOR WITHDRAWAL

Truancy is defined as any unexcused absence from class or school. Any absence that has not been excused as per policy JH, Student Absences and Excuses, will be considered an unexcused absence.

Ten half-days of unexcused absence during a school year constitutes habitual truancy.

A full-day presence is defined as a student who attends 4 or more hours of instructional time. A half-day presence is defined as a student attending at least 3, but less than 4, hours of instructional time. A full-day absence is defined as a student attending less than 3 hours of instructional time.

The Principal or designee is hereby designated as the District employee responsible for overseeing truancy issues. The Principal shall not file a petition alleging that a child is in need of services pursuant to RSA 169:D-2, II (a) until all steps in the school district's intervention process under RSA 189 have been followed.

Intervention Process to Address Truancy

The Principal shall ensure that the administrative guidelines on attendance properly address the matter of truancy by including a process that identifies students who are habitually truant, as defined above.

When the Principal identifies a student who is habitually truant or who is in danger of becoming habitually truant, he/she shall commence an intervention with the student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and other staff members as may be deemed necessary. The intervention shall include processes including, but not limited to:

1. Investigates the cause(s) of the student's truant behavior;
2. Considers, when appropriate, modification of his/her educational program to meet particular needs that may be causing the truancy;
3. Involves the parent(s)/guardian(s) in the development of a plan designed to eliminate the truancy;
4. Seeks alternative disciplinary measures, but still retains the right to impose discipline in accordance with the District's policies and administrative guidelines on student discipline;

Parental Involvement in Truancy Intervention

When a student reaches habitual truancy status or is in danger of reaching habitual truancy status, the Principal will send the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) a letter which includes:

1. A statement that the student has become or is in danger of becoming habitually truant;
2. A statement of the parent's/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the student attends school; and

3. A request for a meeting between the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Principal to discuss the student's truancy and to develop a plan for reducing the student's truancy.

Developing and Coordinating Strategies for Truancy Reduction

The Board encourages the administration to seek truancy-prevention and truancy-reduction strategies along the recommendations listed below. However, these guidelines shall be advisory only. The Superintendent is authorized to develop and utilize other means, guidelines and programs aimed at preventing and eliminating truancy.

1. Coordinate truancy-prevention strategies based on the early identification of truancy, such as prompt notification of absences to parents/guardians.
2. Assist school staff to develop site attendance plans by providing developmental strategies, resources, and referral procedures.
3. Encourage and coordinate the adoption of attendance-incentive programs at school sites and in individual classrooms that reward and celebrate good attendance and significant improvements in attendance.

Parental Notification of Truancy Policy

Prior to adopting this policy, the Board will place the item on the agenda of a public school board meeting and will allow a minimum of two weeks for public input as to the policy's provisions. Any public input shall be advisory only and final adoption as to the policy's provisions will remain solely with the Board.

Additionally, the Superintendent shall also ensure that this policy is referenced in the student handbook.

Legal References:

RSA 189:34, Appointment

RSA 189:35-a, Truancy Defined

RSA 193:1, Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Pupil

RSA 193:7 Penalty

RSA 193:8, Notice Requirements

RSA 193:16 Bylaws as to Nonattendance

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04 (a)(1), Attendance and Absenteeism

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04 (c), Policy Relative to Attendance and Absenteeism

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