

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9

**ENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Enfield, Connecticut**

10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15

**Students**

**5113**

16  
17  
18  
19

**Attendance Policy K-12**

20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

Connecticut law requires that children attend school regularly during the hours and terms that the public school is in session, unless specifically exempted from attendance by law. The Superintendent of Schools shall establish such procedures as deemed necessary to determine the cause of habitual truancy, including medical verification for excessive absence, and shall cooperate with other private and governmental agencies in correcting the causes thereof.

26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32

Experience indicates that regular school attendance is important for school success. These regulations reflect our belief that classroom learning activities are an essential part of the curriculum for all students and are intended to reduce tardiness and absence from class.

33  
34  
35

The Connecticut Board of Education adopted new definitions for an absence to be considered excused (see table below ~~on page 2~~). It is important to note that while the first nine absences in a school year can be deemed excused for any reason the parent or guardian provides, the tenth and each subsequent absence establish a more stringent and specific set of reasons for the absence to qualify as excused.

In cases of an excused absence other than family-initiated travel, appropriate provisions will be made by school staff regarding assistance with missed assignments, homework and tests. When an excused absence is the result of family-initiated travel, teachers are under no obligation to provide advance assignments or to review work missed during the period of absence. However, students must be allowed to take make-up tests. The student's Principal/Assistant Principal must be notified in writing of extended absences due to family-initiated travel.

The State Board of Education defines two levels of criteria for an absence to be considered an excused absence (see table below).

<b>Level</b>	<b>Total # of Days Absent*</b>	<b>Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to be Considered Excused</b>	<b>Documentation Required Within 10 Days</b>
1	One through nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Any reason that the student's parent or guardian approves.</li></ul>	Parent or guardian note <b>or phone call only</b>
2	Ten and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student illness (<i>Note: to be deemed excused, an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all</i>). The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (parental documentation is not required for this reason).</li></ul>	Parent or guardian note and in some cases additional documentation (see details of specific reason).

39

40 **Attendance Policy K-12** (continued)

41

42

<b>Level</b>	<b>Total # of Days Absent*</b>	<b>Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to be Considered Excused</b>	<b>Documentation Required Within 10 Days</b>
2 (cont.)	Ten and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student’s observance of a religious holiday.</li> <li>• Death in the student’s family or other emergency beyond the control of the student’s family.</li> <li>• Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required).</li> <li>• The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (parental documentation is not required for this reason).</li> <li>• Extraordinary education opportunities pre-approved by district administrators. (Opportunities must meet certain criteria. See below for details).</li> </ul>	Parent or guardian note and in some cases additional documentation (see details of specific reason).

43

\* Note: The total number of days absent includes both excused and unexcused absences.

44

45 **Definitions**

46

47 **“In attendance”** shall mean a student if present at his/her assigned school/class, or an activity  
 48 sponsored by the school (ex. Field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. A student who  
 49 is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion, should always be considered absent.

50

51 **“Absence”** means an excused absence, unexcused absence or disciplinary absence, as those  
 52 terms are defined by the State Board of Education or an in-school suspension that is greater than  
 53 or equal to one-half of a school day.

54

55 **“Truant”** shall mean a student a student age five to eighteen, inclusive, who has four unexcused  
 56 absences in any one month, or ten unexcused absences in one school year.

57

58 **“Chronically absent child”** is an enrolled student whose total number of absences at any time  
 59 during a school year is equal to or greater than ten percent of the total number of days that such  
 60 student has been enrolled at such school during such school year.

61

62 **“District chronic absenteeism rate”** means the total number of chronically absent children in  
 63 the previous school year divided by the total number of children under the jurisdiction of the  
 64 Board of Education for such school year.

65

66 **“School chronic absenteeism rate”** means the total number of chronically absent children for a  
 67 school in the previous school year divided by the total number of children enrolled in such  
 68 school for such school year.

69

71  
72 **Attendance Policy K-12**73  
74  
75 **Excused Absences (Grades K - 12)**

76  
77 A student's absence from school shall be considered excused if written documentation of the  
78 reason for the absence has been submitted within ten school days of the student's return to school  
79 or in accordance with Section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes and meets the  
80 following criteria:

- 81
- 82 A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered excused  
83 when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate  
84 documentation; and
- 85
- 86 B. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are  
87 considered excused for the following reasons:
- 88
- 89 1. student illness (**Note:** all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately  
90 licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of  
91 absence);
  - 92 2. student's observance of a religious holiday;
  - 93 3. death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's  
94 family;
  - 95 4. mandated court appearances (additional documentation required);
  - 96 5. the lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the  
97 student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason); or
  - 98 6. extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in  
99 accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.
- 100

101 **Excused Absences for Children of Service Members**

102

103 An enrolled student, age five to eighteen, inclusive, whose parent or legal guardian is an active  
104 duty member of the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, and has been called to duty for,  
105 is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat  
106 support posting, shall be granted ten days of excused absences in any school year and, at the  
107 discretion of the Board of Education, additional excused absences to visit such child's parent or  
108 legal guardian with respect to such leave or deployment of the parent or legal guardian. In the  
109 case of such excused absences such child and parent or legal guardian shall be responsible to  
110 obtaining assignments from the student's teacher prior to any period of excused absence, and for  
111 ensuring that such assignments are completed by such child prior to his or her return to school  
112 from such period of excused absence.

113  
114 **Chronic Absenteeism**

115

116 The Board of Education, in compliance with statute, requires the establishment of attendance  
117 review teams when chronic absenteeism rates in the District or at individual schools in the  
118 District meet the following circumstances:

119

120

121

123  
124 **Attendance Policy K-12**

125  
126  
127 **Chronic Absenteeism (Continued)**

- 128
- 129 1. A team for the District must be established when the District chronic absenteeism rate is
- 130 10 percent or higher.
- 131 2. A team for the school must be established when the school chronic absenteeism rate is 15
- 132 percent or higher.
- 133 3. A team for either the District or each school must be established when (a) more than one
- 134 school in the District has a school chronic absenteeism rate of 15 percent or higher or (b)
- 135 a District has a District chronic absenteeism rate of 10 percent or higher and one or more
- 136 schools in the District have a school chronic absenteeism rate of 15 percent or higher.
- 137

138 Each attendance review team shall be responsible for reviewing the cases of truants and  
139 chronically absent children, discussing school interventions and community referrals for such  
140 truants and chronically absent children and making any additional recommendations for such  
141 truants and chronically absent children and their parents or guardians. Each established  
142 attendance review team shall meet at least monthly.

143  
144 The District shall utilize the chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention plan developed by  
145 the State Department of Education when it becomes available. *(SDE to develop by 1/1/16.)*

146  
147 The District shall annually include in information for the strategic school profile report for each  
148 school and the District that is submitted to the Commissioner of Education, data pertaining to  
149 truancy and chronically absent children.

150  
151 The Principal or his/her designee of any elementary or middle school located in a town/city  
152 designated as an alliance district may refer to the children’s truancy clinic established by the  
153 Probate Court serving the town/city, a parent/guardian with a child defined as a truant or who is  
154 at risk of becoming a truant. *(An attendance officer or a police officer shall deliver the citation*  
155 *and summons and a copy of the referral to the parent/guardian.)*

156  
157 **Unexcused Absences**

158  
159 A student’s absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the  
160 following criteria:

- 161
- 162 1. the absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation
- 163 requirements); or
- 164 2. the absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence.
- 165

166 **Responsibilities of the School Community**

167  
168 **Student:**

- 169
- 170 • Report to school on time (Grades K-12)
- 171 • Follow the procedure for excused absences (Grades K-12)

172  
173  
174  
175  
176  
177  
178  
179  
180  
181  
182  
183  
184  
185  
186  
187  
188  
189  
190  
191  
192  
193  
194  
195  
196  
197  
198  
199  
200  
201  
202  
203  
204  
205  
206  
207  
208  
209  
210  
211  
212  
213  
214  
215  
216  
217  
218  
219

## Students

5113

### Attendance Policy K-12

#### Responsibilities of the School Community (Continued)

- Report to class on time (Grades 6-12)
- Make-up work due to absence

#### Family:

- Call the appropriate school office to indicate that your child will be absent within 48 hours in order to avoid the legal ramifications of truancy
- Provide the school with updated and accurate contact information for parents/guardians and for emergency contacts
- Stress the importance of regular school attendance with your child
- Monitor attendance in the Enfield Public School database (HAC)
- Have your child complete all missed work
- Schedule appointments after school hours
- Limit vacation to scheduled school vacations
- Contact the main office of the school to initiate a review of your child's absences
- Refer to grade appropriate Student-Family Handbook for detailed procedures

#### School:

- Keep accurate attendance records, including a record of calls or notes regarding absences or tardiness
- Notify parent/guardian of any absences from school (based on accurate contact information provided in eSchool)
- District attendance letters to parents as indicated below:

-5 <sup>th</sup> absence	letter #1
<del>-9<sup>th</sup> absence</del>	<del>letter #2</del>
-10 <sup>th</sup> absence	letter #3 #2
-After the 10 <sup>th</sup> absence	letter #4 #2 every 5 <sup>th</sup> absence (ex. 15 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> etc.)
- High School administration will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) by mail as follows:

a. Semester Courses:	5 <sup>th</sup> absence – warning
	11 <sup>th</sup> absence – loss of credit
b. Yearlong Courses:	10 <sup>th</sup> absence – warning
	21 <sup>st</sup> absence – loss of credit
- Take all actions necessary to ensure the success of the students which may include parent/guardian conferences, counseling and the use of community services to address student needs
- Publish attendance procedures in the Student-Family/Faculty Handbook

221

222 **Attendance Policy K-12**

223

224

225 **Responsibilities of the School Community (Continued)**

226

227 **Community:**

228

- 229 • Encourage and verify regular school attendance as a prerequisite of student employment
- 230 • Encourage area businesses to refrain from allowing students to congregate during school
- 231 hours
- 232 • Do all that is possible under current law to ensure that all students attend school regularly

233

234 **Early Dismissal from School (Grades K-12)**

235

236 Any dismissal from school can only be authorized by the school office or building  
237 administrator(s). Parent(s)/guardian(s) that wish their child to be dismissed early should send the  
238 student to school with a signed note stating the time of dismissal. This note should be presented  
239 to the school administration before homeroom period or in the morning on the day of the  
240 dismissal. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are to sign out their child in the main office. For the protection  
241 and safety of the student, dismissals are routinely made only to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of that  
242 student. If there are special circumstances that necessitate someone other than the  
243 parent(s)/guardian(s) to pick up the student, their name should be stated in the dismissal note.

244

245 **Tardy to School (Grades K-12)**

246

247 Tardy to school is defined as a student that enters the school building after the start of the school  
248 day or homeroom period. Ensuring that a student arrives to school on time is a parental  
249 responsibility. If a student arrives late to school, they need to report to the school office/house  
250 office to sign in. The student needs to bring a signed note from a parent(s)/guardian(s) to explain  
251 their tardiness.

252

253 **Additional Information (Grades 9-12)**

254

255 Since the classroom is the primary area where most learners experience the acquisition of  
256 knowledge, it becomes apparent that attendance in class is a valid, reasonable requirement. It is  
257 the position of the Board of Education that mandatory attendance by students is required. The  
258 following attendance procedures have been developed to encourage students and  
259 parent(s)/guardian(s) to minimize absences in order to gain the maximum benefits from daily  
260 classroom activities. Students who fail to meet their responsibilities may lose course credit.

261

262 **I. Attendance to School**

263

- 264 1. While the above stated reasons for absences are classified as excused, they will count  
265 toward the total number of absences when determining course credit. Suspensions  
266 from school do not count towards the total number of absences for loss of credit.
- 267 2. Students who are participating in school sponsored activities will be considered  
268 present for attendance purposes.

269

271

272 **Attendance Policy K-12**

273

274

275 **Attendance to School (Continued)**

276

277 3. Students who exceed ten (10) absences in semester courses, and twenty (20) absences  
278 in yearlong courses, will lose full course credit.

279 4. At the time of notification, the student will be required to date and sign the  
280 warning/loss of credit sheet, indicating the impact of the student's attendance on  
281 his/her credits. Notification may be sent home unsigned if the student's absenteeism  
282 prevents the student from signing the notification in a timely manner. Students who  
283 lose credit as a result of this policy, will be given an opportunity to appear before an  
284 Appeals Committee.

285

286 The intent of this policy is not to say that a certain number of absences from school or a  
287 course are acceptable or allowable.

288

289 **A. Unexcused Absences**

290

291 A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet  
292 one of the following criteria:

293

294 1. The absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including  
295 documentation requirements);

296 2. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence;

297 3. Students who stay out of school for an entire school day without parental or  
298 school consent are considered truant.

299 4. After each truancy, the student will receive a written notification of possible  
300 loss of course credit in accordance with the following procedures:

301 a. Upon the student's first truancy from school or from an individual class,  
302 the student shall be issued a written warning that an additional truancy  
303 from school or from the specified class, will result in a loss of  $\frac{1}{4}$  credit in  
304 any classes from which the student was truant. The student shall be  
305 required to sign this notification. Notification may be sent home unsigned  
306 if the student's absenteeism prevents the student from signing the  
307 notification in a timely manner. The student shall be provided a copy of  
308 this notification. Additional copies shall be maintained in the student's  
309 records.

310 b. Upon the student's second truancy from school or from an individual  
311 class, the student shall be issued a written notification that he/she has lost  
312  $\frac{1}{4}$  credit in any classes from which the student was truant. The student  
313 shall be required to sign this notification. Notification may be sent home  
314 unsigned if the student's absenteeism prevents the student from signing  
315 the notification in a timely manner. The student shall be provided a copy  
316 of this notification. Additional copies shall be maintained in the student's  
317 records.

321 **Attendance Policy K-12****A. Unexcused Absences (Continued)**

325 c. A similar pattern of warnings and credit losses will be followed for

326 subsequent truanancies. A third truancy from school or from a specified class

327 will result in a warning for potential loss of credit. A fourth truancy from

328 school or from a specified class will result in an additional loss of credit.

329 5. These absences will also count towards the total number of absences under the  
330 attendance policy.

331 6. Students will receive a zero (0) for all schoolwork on the day of truancy.

**B. Participation in After-School Activities**335 1. Students who are absent from school will not be allowed to participate in any  
336 after school activity on the day of the absence.

337 2. Students absent on Fridays will not participate in Friday or weekend events.

338 3. At the discretion of the Building Principal, or the Principal's designee, tardy  
339 students who have established a pattern of tardiness, may be suspended from  
340 after school activities for that day.341 a. A pattern of tardiness shall be defined as three or more unexcused tardies  
342 in a given marking period.343 b. Students who have established a pattern of tardiness are to be warned that  
344 continued tardiness would result in suspension from after school activities  
345 before such suspensions are to take place.

346 c. The decision of the Building Principal or the Principal's designee is final.

347 d. The Principal or the Principal's designee is to notify the student's coach or  
348 activity advisor of such a suspension.**C. Class Attendance****A. Tardiness to Class**

353 1. Excused Tardies to Class

354 a. Students who arrive late to class are expected to obtain a pass from a  
355 teacher or administrator, excusing their tardiness.356 b. Students have up to 24 hours to secure an official pass for the  
357 tardiness; otherwise it will be considered an unexcused tardy to class.

358 2. Unexcused Tardies to Class

359 a. Unexcused tardies to class will be treated as part of the attendance  
360 policy.361 b. Every two (2) unexcused tardies will be the equivalent of one (1)  
362 absence from class and will be included in the total number of  
363 absences that cannot be exceeded in order to gain course credit.

364  
365  
366  
367  
368  
369  
370  
371  
372  
373  
374  
375  
376  
377  
378  
379  
380  
381  
382  
383  
384  
385  
386  
387  
388  
389  
390  
391  
392  
393  
394  
395  
396  
397  
398  
399  
400  
401  
402  
403  
404  
405  
406  
407  
408  
409

## **Students**

**5113**

### **Attendance Policy K-12**

#### **A. Tardiness to Class (Continued)**

- c. Students who arrive to class after the mid-point of the period without a pass excusing their tardiness, will be charged with an unexcused absence.
- d. Students will be subject to disciplinary action for each unexcused tardy in the form of teacher detention, office detention or possible suspension from school.
- e. Teachers will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) when a student is developing a pattern of habitual tardiness to class.

#### **B. Unexcused Absences from Class**

- 1. Students who deliberately miss class will be subject to disciplinary action in the form of administrative detention and possible suspension from school.
- 2. Students will receive a zero (0) for all schoolwork missed.
- 3. Unexcused absences from class will result in possible loss of course credit in accordance with Section I, Part A, Item 2.
- 4. These absences are also included in the total accumulated per class.

#### **C. Dismissals from School**

- 1. Included here are classes missed when a student has an early dismissal. The only acceptable reasons for leaving school early are those stated in the section dealing with excused absences from school.
- 2. Dismissals from class due to activities such as field trips, band lessons, and other school sponsored activities, will not count towards the total number of course absences.

## **II. Appeal Procedure**

- A. Any student who has lost credit as a result of any portion of the attendance policy may request from his/her Assistant Principal, a hearing for the purpose of restoring the credit.
- B. The student may meet with his/her guidance counselor and submit a written explanation for the reason(s) why the credit should be restored.
- C. The completed request form is to be returned to the student's Assistant Principal no less than five (5) school days before the end of the quarter. Appeals filed after that date; will not be heard unless the student was notified of his/her loss of credit after that date. In such cases, students are to file their appeals to the Appeals Committee during that quarter.

411

412 **Attendance Policy K-12**

413

414 **II. Appeal Procedure (Continued)**

415

416 D. An Appeals Committee will meet at least quarterly. The voting members of the  
 417 Appeals Committee will consist of an administrator, a guidance counselor (or a  
 418 neutral teacher), and a neutral teacher.

419 E. The Appeals Committee may re-instate credit for absences in excess of ten (10)  
 420 for semester courses, twenty (20) for yearlong courses, or for unexcused absences.

421 1. Re-instatement of credit may only be granted when the excessive or  
 422 unexcused absenteeism is the result of extraordinary circumstances.

423 2. The Appeals Committee may grant waivers on a conditional basis, requiring  
 424 changes in student behaviors to validate the waiver.

425 F. The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the opportunity to present all  
 426 corroborating information in support of the appeal at the hearing.

427 G. The Appeals Committee will render a decision within three (3) school days after  
 428 the conclusion of the hearing and so notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student  
 429 of the decision in writing.

430 H. The decision of the Appeals Committee panel is final.

431

432 **III. Credit Loss/Restoration**

433

434 A. Students who lose course credit due to the attendance policy may be permitted to  
 435 remain in the course and receive a grade for the following purposes: to maintain  
 436 full-time student status, G.P.A. computation, eligibility for summer school,  
 437 eligibility for extracurricular activities and for the student's transcript.

438 B. Credit lost due to the attendance policy may be restored by one of the following  
 439 methods:

440 1. Repeat the course during the school year.

441 2. Attend summer school (provided summer school requirements are satisfied).

442 3. Repeat the course during the summer at an approved college.

443

444 **IV.** The Board of Education recognizes the seriousness of absenteeism and authorizes the  
 445 Superintendent of Schools to develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

446

447

448

449 **Legal Reference** **Connecticut General Statutes**

450 10-220(c) Duties of boards of education (as amended by PA 15-225)

451 10-184 Duties of parents (as amended by PA 98-243 and PA 00-157)

452 10-185 Penalty

453 10-198a Policies and procedures concerning truants (as amended by  
 454 PA11-136, An Act Concerning Minor Revisions to the Education Statutes

455 and PA 14-198, An Act Concerning Excused Absences from School for

456 Children of Service Members, and PA 16-147, An Act Concerning the

457 Recommendations of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight  
458 Committee)  
459 10-198b State Board of Education to define “excused absence,”  
460 “unexcused absence,” and “disciplinary absence”  
461 10-198c Attendance review teams.  
462 10-198d Chronic absenteeism (as amended by PA 17-14)  
463 45a-8c Truancy clinic. Administration. Policies and procedures. Report.  
464 (as amended by PA 15-225)  
465 10-199 through 10-202 Attendance, truancy - in general  
466 *Action taken by State Board of Education on January 2, 2008, to define*  
467 *“attendance.”*  
468 *Action taken by State Board of Education on June 27, 2012, to define*  
469 *“excused” and “unexcused” absences.*  
470 PA 17-14 An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Department  
471 of Education  
472  
473  
474

475	Policy Adopted:	September 11, 1979
476	Effective:	September 24, 1979
477	Amended:	August 25, 1981
478	Amended:	June 16, 1986
479	Effective:	September 1, 1986
480	Amended:	July 10, 1989
481	Amended:	December 11, 1990
482	Amended:	May 9, 1995
483	Revised:	May 11, 2004
484	Revised:	February 22, 2011
485	Revised:	October 23, 2012
486	Revised:	June 14, 2016
487	Revised:	

488  
489