

POLICY

HAMBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION

PUPILS
5200/page 1 of 1
Attendance
M

5200 ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education requires the pupils enrolled in the school of this district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. The educational program offered by this district is predicated on the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of pupils with one another in the classroom and their participation in a well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose.

Attendance at school may be excused for certain absences as defined by the Board. All absences for reasons other than excused, shall be unexcused.

Pupils absent from school for any reason are responsible for the completion of assignments missed because of their absence. No pupil excused for a religious holiday shall be deprived of an award or eligibility to compete for an award or the opportunity to make up a test given on the religious holiday.

Prolonged or repeated absences, excused or unexcused, from school or from class, deprive the pupil of the classroom experience deemed essential to learning and may result in retention at grade level.

Pupils shall be subjected to the school district response for unexcused absences during the school year as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.8(a)4 and Regulation 5200. In addition, unexcused absences from school or from classes within the school day shall subject a pupil to the disciplinary rules of the Board, which may include the denial of a pupil's participation in co-curricular activities and/or athletic competition. Repeated trancies that interfere with efforts of this Board and its staff in the maintenance of good order and the continuity of classroom instruction may result in the suspension or expulsion of any pupil from the course of study during which absences have occurred or the suspension or expulsion in accordance with Policy Nos. 5610 and 5620.

The Superintendent shall calculate and monitor the average daily attendance rate for the district and for each school in the district. Whenever the average daily attendance rate for the district or for a school in the district does not meet the New Jersey Department of Education requirements, the Superintendent or designee shall develop performance objectives to improve pupil attendance pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-12.2(a)3.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 et seq.; 18A:38-25 et seq.

N.J.S.A. 34:2-21.1 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.8

Adopted: 13 August 2008



REGULATION—

HAMBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUPILS
R 5200/page 1 of 8
Attendance
M

R 5200 ATTENDANCE

A. Definitions

1. "Attendance" is a pupil's presence in school and in the classroom to which he/she is assigned at the times scheduled for instruction or other school activities.
 - a. A pupil will be considered to have attended school if he/she has been present at least four hours during the school day.
 - b. A Kindergarten pupil will be considered to have attended school if he/she has been present at least two hours during the Kindergarten session to which the pupil is assigned.
 - c. A pupil not present in school because of his/her participation in an approved school activity, such as a field trip, meeting, cooperative education assignment, or athletic competition will be considered to be in attendance.
2. "Excused absence" is a pupil's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for one or more of the following reasons:
 - a. The pupil's illness,
 - b. Family illness or death,
 - c. Educational opportunities,
 - d. Excused religious observances, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16,
 - e. Where appropriate, when consistent with Individualized Education Programs, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§ 794 and 705(20), and individualized health care plans pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.3,
 - f. The pupil's suspension from school,
 - g. The pupil's required attendance in court,



2. A note explaining a pupil's absence for noncommunicable illness must be accompanied by a physician's statement of the pupil's illness.
 3. A pupil who has been absent by reason of having or being suspected of having a communicable disease must present to the school nurse written evidence of being free of communicable disease, in accordance with Policy No. 8451.
- D. Instruction
1. Teachers are expected to cooperate in the preparation of home assignments for pupils who anticipate an excused absence of five school days duration. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult pupil must request such home assignments.
 2. A pupil who anticipates an excused absence due to a temporary or chronic health condition may be eligible for home instruction in accordance with Policy No. 2412. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult pupil must request home instruction.
 3. Pupils absent for any reason are expected to make up the work missed
 4. In general, pupils will be allowed one day to make up missed work for each one day of absence. Teachers shall make reasonable accommodations to extend time for pupils.
 5. A pupil who missed a test because of an excused absence shall be offered an opportunity to take the test or an alternate test.
- E. School District Response To Unexcused Absences During the School Year
1. For up to four cumulative unexcused absences, the Building Principal or designee shall:
 - a. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the pupil's parent or legal guardian of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day;
 - b. Conduct an investigation of the cause of each unexcused absence, including contact with the pupil's parent or legal guardian;
 - c. Develop an action plan in consultation with the pupil's parent or legal guardian designed to address patterns of unexcused absences, if any, and to have the child return to school and maintain regular attendance;



- d. Proceed in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 9:6-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11, if a potentially missing or abused child abuse situation is detected; and
 - e. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.
2. For between five and nine cumulative unexcused absences, the Building Principal or designee shall:
- a. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the pupil's parent or legal guardian of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day;
 - b. Conduct a follow-up investigation, including contact with the pupil's parent or legal guardian, to determine the cause of each unexcused absence;
 - c. Evaluate the appropriateness of the action plan developed pursuant to F.1.c. above;
 - d. Revise the action plan, as needed, to identify patterns of unexcused absences and establish outcomes based upon the pupil's needs and specify the interventions for achieving the outcomes, supporting the pupil's return to school and regular attendance that may include any or all of the following:
 - (1) Refer or consult with the building's Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8;
 - (2) Conduct testing, assessments, or evaluations of the pupil's academic, behavioral, and health needs;
 - (3) Consider an alternate educational placement;
 - (4) Make a referral to a community-based social and health provider agency or other community resource;
 - (5) Refer to the court program designated by the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts; and



REGULATION—

HAMBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUPILS
R 5200/page 6 of 8
Attendance

- (1) The sending school district shall proceed in accordance with the district Board of Education policies and procedures pursuant to F. above and the provisions of F.2. through F.4. above, as appropriate.

F. Discipline

1. Pupils may be denied participation in co-curricular activities if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth in Policy No. 2430.
2. Pupils may be denied participation in athletic competition if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth in Board Policy No. 2431.
3. No pupil who is absent from school for observance of a religious holiday may be deprived of any award or of eligibility for or opportunity to compete for any award because of the absence.
4. In addition to the requirements as outlined in F.3.a. through e. above, a pupil deemed truant shall be subject to appropriate pupil discipline.
5. The absence of a pupil missing from school for unexplained reasons will be handled in accordance with Regulation No. 8464.

G. Recording Attendance

1. Teachers must accurately record the pupils present, tardy, and absent each day in each session or each class. Attendance records must also record pupils' attendance at out-of-school curricular events such as field trips.
2. Teachers must classify and record each absence as excused, unexcused, or truancy.
3. A report card will record the number of times the pupil was absent and tardy in each marking period.
4. A pupil's absence for observance of a religious holiday will not be recorded as such on any transcript or application or employment form.



H. Appeal

1. A truant pupil may be suspended or expelled for trancies in accordance with Policy Nos. 5610 and 5620.
2. A pupil who has been retained at grade level for excessive absences may appeal that action in accordance with Policy No. 5410.
3. A pupil who has been dropped from a course and/or denied course credit for excessive absences may appeal that action in accordance with the following procedures:
 - a. The pupil shall file a written appeal to the Principal within five school days of receiving notice of the action. The appeal should state the reasons for admitted absences, documentation that would reduce the number of absences, and reasons why the pupil should continue to be enrolled in the course and/or receive course credit.
 - b. The Principal will respond in writing no later than seven working days after receiving the pupil's appeal.
 - c. If the pupil is not satisfied, he/she may submit a written request to the Principal for consideration by an Attendance Review Committee.
 - d. On the pupil's request, the Principal shall convene an Attendance Review Committee. The Attendance Review Committee shall meet informally to hear the pupil's reasons for reenrollment and/or credit. The pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and teacher may attend the meeting.
 - e. The Attendance Review Committee shall decide the appeal and inform the pupil in writing within seven working days of the meeting. The committee may impose conditions on any reenrollment and may require the pupil to agree to those conditions.
 - f. The pupil may appeal an adverse decision of the Attendance Review Committee to the Superintendent, the Board of Education, and the Commissioner of Education, in that order and in accordance with Policy No. 5710, Pupil Grievance. Resort to the Attendance Review Committee shall be considered to have exhausted the first step of the grievance.



REGULATION—

HAMBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUPILS
R 5200/page 8 of 8
Attendance

I. Attendance Improvement Plan

1. The Superintendent will collect attendance data and calculate the average daily attendance rate for the school. The attendance rate shall be calculated by dividing the total number of pupil days present for all pupils by the total possible number of pupil days present for all pupils and multiplying the result by one hundred.
2. When the average daily attendance rate for the district does not meet the New Jersey Department of Education requirements, performance objectives to improve pupil attendance pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-12.2(a)3 shall be developed.

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