

SECTION 2: ATTENDANCE

ABSENCES - Policy 4.7

If any student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan conflicts with this policy, the requirements of the student's IEP or 504 Plan take precedence.

Education is more than the grades students receive in their courses. Important as that is, students' regular attendance at school, whether in person or digitally, is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them to accept responsibilities they will face as an adult. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom, enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction which results in higher student achievement.

Absences for students enrolled in synchronous digital courses shall be determined in the same manner as for District students attending courses in person.

When a student has five (5) and eight (8) unexcused absences, his/her guardian, or person in loco parentis shall be notified that the student has missed half the allowable days for the semester. Notification shall be by telephone by the end of the school day in which such absence occurred or by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day. Upon his/ her return to school, the student will provide documentation regarding the absence.

Whenever a student exceeds ten (10) unexcused absences in a semester, the district shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

Students with five (5) unexcused absences in a course in a semester may not receive credit for that course. If the student fails to receive credit for a sufficient number of courses and at the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the absences, the student may be denied promotion or graduation. Excessive absences, however, shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly's intention that students having excessive absences due to illness, accident, or otherwise unavoidable reason be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Therefore, any time prior to when a student exceeds the number of allowable absences (unless unable to do so due to unforeseen circumstances), the student, or his/her parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis may petition the school or district's administration for special arrangements to address the student's absences. If formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement's requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student, the student's parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis, and the school or district administrator or designee. If a student's excessive absence is due to an unforeseen circumstance, the district may accept a doctor's note for a student's excessive absence.

Days missed due to in-school or out-of-school suspension shall not count toward the excused number of days absent.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons and the student brings a written statement upon his/her return to school from the parent, guardian, person in loco parentis, or appropriate government agency stating such reason within five (5) school days from the absence date:

1. The student's illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students. A maximum of six (6) such days are allowed per semester unless the condition(s) causing such absences is of a chronic or recurring nature, is medically documented, and approved by the principal;
2. Death or serious illness in their immediate family;
3. Observance of recognized holidays observed by the student's faith;
4. Attendance at an appointment with a government agency;
5. Attendance at a medical appointment;
6. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal;
7. Participation in a FFA, FCCLA, or 4-H sanctioned activity;
8. Participation in the election poll workers program for high school students;
9. To visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and has been called to active duty, is on leave

from active duty, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.

10. Absences granted, at the superintendent's discretion, to seventeen (17) year-old students who join the Arkansas National Guard while in the eleventh grade to complete basic training between grades eleven (11) and twelve (12).
11. Absences for students excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak because the student has an immunization waiver or whose immunizations are not up to date.
12. Absences due to conditions related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation: labor, delivery, and recovery; prenatal and postnatal medical appointments; the illness or medical appointment of a child belonging to a parent who is enrolled at a District school.

Up to one (1) time during each scheduled election, a student shall not be considered absent from school for the time the student accompanies the student's parent when the parent is exercising the parent's right to vote in a scheduled election.

Unexcused Absences

Absences not defined above or not having an accompanying written statement from the parent, legal guardian; person having lawful control of the student; or person standing in loco parentis; or appropriate government agency stating such reason presented upon the student's return to school, may be considered as unexcused absences. At the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the unexcused absences, the student may be denied promotion or graduation. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

The district shall notify the Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student fourteen (14) years of age or older is no longer in school. The Department of Finance and Administration is required to suspend the former student's operator's license unless he/she meets certain requirements specified in the code.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-229, A.C.A. § 6-18-209, A.C.A. § 6-18-220, A.C.A. § 6-18-222, A.C.A. § 6-27113, A.C.A. § 7-4-116, A.C.A. § 27-16-701, A.C.A. § 6-18-107, *Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Digital Learning*
HISTORY BOE: ADOPTED MARCH 11, 2008 REVISED JUNE 11, 2013; MAY 11, 2015; JUNE 25, 2019; JUNE 8, 2021; JUNE 14, 2022

For the complete policy regarding ABSENCES POLICY 4.7, refer to the JPS District Policy on the JPS website.

MAKE-UP WORK - Policy 4.8

- A. Students who miss school due to an excused absence shall be allowed to make up the work they missed during their absence under the following rules.
 1. Students are responsible for asking the teachers of the classes they missed what assignments they need to make up.
 2. Teachers are responsible for providing the missed assignments when asked by a returning student.
 3. Students are required to ask for their assignments on their first day back at school or their first class day after their return.
 4. Make up tests are to be rescheduled at the discretion of the teacher, but must be aligned with the schedule of the missed work to be made up.
 5. Students shall have five class days to make up their work
 6. Make up work which is not turned in within the make up schedule for that assignment shall receive a zero.
 7. Students are responsible for turning in their make-up work without the teacher having to ask for it.
 8. Students who are absent on the day their make-up work is due must turn in their work the day they return to school.
 9. Students who miss school due to excessive absences are not allowed to make up work.
 10. As required/permitted by the student's Individual Education Program or 504 Plan.
- B. Work may not be made up for credit for unexcused absences unless the unexcused absences are part of a signed agreement as permitted by Policy 4.7.
- C. Work for students serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be in accordance with the District's programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during the student's period of suspension or expulsion, including offering an expelled student an opportunity for enrollment in digital learning courses or other alternative educational courses that result in the receipt of academic credit that is at least equal to credit the expelled student may have received from the District if the student had not been expelled.
- D. In lieu of the timeline above, assignments for students who are excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak are to be made up as set forth in Policy 4.57 – IMMUNIZATIONS.

E. In addition to the make-up work process above, at the conclusion of a pregnancy-related or parenting-related period of absence, a student may choose from various options to make up missed work.

HISTORY BOE: ADOPTED MARCH 11, 2008 REVISED JUNE 14, 2011; JUNE 12, 2012; MAY 11, 2015; JUNE 9, 2020; JULY 14, 2020; JUNE 13, 2023

TARDIES - Policy 4.9

- A. Promptness is an important character trait that district staff is encouraged to model and help develop in our schools' students. At the same time, promptness is the responsibility of each student. Students who are late to class show a disregard for both the teacher and their classmates which compromises potential student achievement.
- B. Each school shall establish a uniform procedure in which to discipline students with respect to tardiness. Information related to each school can be obtained from the building administration.
- C. Tardiness to school in the morning is disruptive, and repeated tardiness cannot be tolerated. When excessive tardiness is a problem, a team of school officials and the student and parent will meet to develop a plan to alleviate the problem.
- D. Arkansas Department of Education attendance guidelines require that students be present six (6) instructional hours per day. Students should not arrive late nor leave early.

HISTORY BOE: ADOPTED MARCH 11, 2008 REVISED JUNE 12, 2018; JUNE 25, 2019; JULY 14, 2020

**For the complete policy regarding MAKE-UP WORK POLICY 4.9, refer to the JPS District Policy on the JPS website.*