

**STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES****Type of Absences**

**Definition of an Absence** – When a secondary student (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) misses more than fifteen (15) minutes of any class period.

When an elementary student (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade) checks in to school and misses more than ½ of the instructional time in any morning or afternoon session (1 ½ hours) they will be deemed absent for that session.

**Excused Absences** – Absences *with parent notification* to the school that their child will be absent including, but not limited to the following: personal illness, professional appointments that could not be scheduled outside school time, or serious personal and/or family problems. Excused absences will not count toward no-credit status.

**Unexcused Absences** – Absences *without parent notification* defined but not limited to the following: personal illness, professional appointments and in-school violations that result in suspension from school. Five (5) unexcused tardies also constitute an unexcused absence. *Unexcused Absences will count toward no credit status (secondary) or retention status (elementary).*

**Official Absences** – Absences which are school related including, but not limited to: athletic contests, music contests, DECA, county fair, and sanctioned 4H and rodeo activities. *Participation in “official” activities are not recorded as school absences and are not recorded toward no-credit status.* A student must meet the eligibility requirements of the New Mexico Activities Association for an “official absence” to be granted.

**Medical Doctor Excused Absences** – Absences with written doctor notification to the school that the student was absent due to a medical appointment or a medical condition of which the student was under a doctor’s care. *Doctor excused absences do not count toward no-credit status (secondary) or retention status (elementary).*

**Court Subpoena Absences** – Absences which require a student to be present in a court of law. *Court subpoena absences do not count toward no-credit status (secondary) or retention status (elementary).*

**Out-of-School Suspension** – Absences which are levied by the school administrator primarily for disciplinary reasons. A student that has been suspended from school for any reason will receive a grade of 0 for each day of suspension. *Out-of-school suspension will count toward no-credit status.*

## **When Absent from School**

State law mandates that children be in attendance during the period when school is in session. Therefore, when a student is absent, the parent shall call the school on or before the day of the absence in order to advise the school as to the reason for the absence if a telephone is available. If a parent does not have access to a phone, either at home or at work, a note will be accepted for verification purposes. (Notification to the office must be made within one business day after the absence.) All absences not verified by parental or administrative authorization, within one business day, will be considered unexcused. For absences greater than one (1) day in length, the school should be notified each day of the absence. (Principal has the authority to consider circumstances which have merit, when considering the waiver of unexcused absences.)

If a student is absent for three (3) or more successive school days, the school shall contact the student's parents, legal guardian or custodian by telephone. The school will contact the parent (if possible) no later than the close of school on the school day next succeeding the three (3)-day period. A written notice shall be dispatched if telephone contact has not been made. The provisions of this section do not apply to any absence if the parent, legal guardian or custodian, prior to the end of the three (3)-day period, has contacted the school to explain the absence prior to the end of the three (3)-day period.

All personnel will solicit cooperation from parents in the matter of school attendance and punctuality, particularly in regard to the following:

- the scheduling of medical and dental appointments after school hours except in the cases of emergency.
- the scheduling of family vacations during school vacation and recess periods.

## **Procedures for Notifying Parents of Student Absences**

After the third (3<sup>rd</sup>), fifth (5<sup>th</sup>), and (10<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absences during the current semester; parents will be notified by a form letter stating the number of student's absences.

When a secondary student (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) receives their eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence in any one (1) class, the student will be placed on no-credit status and the parent will be notified by telephone and/or a form letter stating the number of the student's absences and the appeals procedure.

When an elementary student (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade) receives their eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) absence in a semester, the student will be placed on monitor status for possible retention in the current grade and the parent will be notified by telephone and/or a form letter stating the number of the student's absences and the procedures for retention.

## **Secondary (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) “No Credit” Status**

The Compulsory School Attendance Law and the Artesia Public Schools Board of Education prohibit unexcused absences. On the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence in any one (1) class, the student will be immediately placed on “no credit” (“NC”) status for that class period. The student will not earn any credit and will receive a grade of “NC” for that class. A grade of “NC” will be equivalent to an “F” when factored into a student’s overall Grade Point Average. A parent/guardian will be notified by letter or phone that his/her student is on no credit status for the semester. If the student obtains eleven (11) unexcused absences in all of his/her classes, the student will be on “no credit” status for the entire school day. The student will not earn any credits and will receive a grade of “NC” for all of his/her classes for that semester.

*Absences which are not considered toward “no credit” status are as follows: 1) Medical Doctor Excused Absences, 2) Official Absences, 3) Court Subpoenaed Absences, 4) Excused Absences by parent notification (written or verbal within one business day after the absence), and Homebound Absences.*

### **Appeal Procedure:**

A student and parent/guardian may appeal the “no credit” status and grade of “NC” at a hearing with the school administration. The hearing will be scheduled by the student and/or parent before the end of the semester. The principal/assistant principal will determine the student’s final status for that semester. The student may appeal the principal’s decision by submitting a written statement asking for a hearing with the Superintendent of schools. This letter should be submitted within two (2) days of the school’s administrative decision. The Superintendent’s decision may be appealed to the Artesia Board of Education.

### **Tardies**

**Definition of a Tardy** – Secondary Student (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade): Arriving to any one (1) of the seven (7) class periods during the school day after the scheduled tardy bell has rung. Elementary Student (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade): Arriving after the official start time.

A secondary student (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) may be tardy to any one (1) class, two (2) times per nine (9)-week period, and no action will be taken. When a student receives three tardies in any one (1) class, the student will be sent to the office and the school administrator will take appropriate disciplinary action. Additional tardies will result in further disciplinary action taken by the school administrator. Tardiness of fifteen (15) minutes or more to a class (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) is considered an unexcused absence. The teacher shall notify the student when such incidents are recorded as absences.

All office/teacher-caused tardies will be discouraged to the utmost. When unavoidable, a

pass will be issued allowing sufficient passage time. Such situations will not be considered tardies.

*Five (5) unexcused tardies (during a nine week period) shall count as an unexcused absence. Each tardy (during a nine week period) thereafter will also count as an unexcused absence.*

### **Extra Credit for Regular Attendance**

Students who maintain consistent and regular attendance will be rewarded at the end of each nine (9) week period with points added to their final nine (9) week grade average as follows:

- Zero (0) to one (1) day absent per nine (9) weeks – four (4) points added to nine (9) weeks final average.
- Two (2) days absent per nine (9) weeks = three (3) points added to nine (9) weeks final grade average.
- Three (3) days absent per nine (9) weeks = two (2) points added to nine (9) weeks final grade average.

### **Make Up Work for Absences**

Make up work for absences is the responsibility of the student and will be allowed on the basis of one (1) days for everyone one missed, not to exceed two (2) weeks. A student who misses only one (1) day on the day of a previously announced test or deadline date will be responsible for making up the work the day he/she returns to school.

### **Homebound Program**

If a student is hospitalized or is out of school due to pregnancy or long-term illness, the student will be placed in the homebound program. A student's parent or guardian must notify the office within two (2) days after the start of a long-term illness. The principal or assistant principal will determine whether the student should be placed in the homebound program. A student that has been placed in the homebound program must bring a written physician's statement and Exclusion and Exemptions Form (J-1982 JHD-EB in School Board Manual) to the office explaining why the student is unable to attend school.

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