

Students

Attendance/Excuses/Dismissal

Attendance

Connecticut state law requires parents to cause their children over five years of age and under eighteen years of age to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Classroom learning experiences are the basis for public school education. Time lost from class is lost instructional opportunity. The CREC Council requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child, and students should not be absent from school without parental knowledge and consent. Guidelines for addressing absences and tardiness are contained in the individual school parent-student handbooks.

Students are considered to be “in attendance” if present at their assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day; or if they are engaged for not less than one-half of the school day in (1) virtual classes, (2) virtual meetings, (3) activities on time-logged electronic systems, or (4) the completion and submission of assignments, y during remote learning authorized in accordance with the standards developed by the Commissioner of Education.

Excused Absences

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

- A. For absences one through nine, if the student’s parent approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation.

Students enrolled in grades kindergarten through twelve may take two mental health wellness days during the school year, during which they shall not be required to attend school, to attend to their emotional and psychological well-being. No student shall take mental health wellness days during consecutive school days.

- B. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, if the student’s absences from school are for one of the following reasons:
1. Student illness. All student illnesses must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence.
 2. Student’s observance of a religious holiday.
 3. Death in the student’s family or other emergency beyond the control of the student’s family.

4. Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required).
 5. The lack of transportation that is provided by a district other than the one the student attends.
 6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by CREC administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.
- C. A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active-duty member of the armed forces, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, will be granted ten days of excused absences in any school year to visit the parent or legal guardian. The student and parent or legal guardian will be responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to the student's absence, and for ensuring that the assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school from such absence.

Written documentation of student absence should include a signed note from the student's parent; a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent regarding the absence; or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or a licensed medical professional; as appropriate. Documentation should explain the nature and reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. Separate documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absence. Steps should be taken to allow non-English speaking parents to submit documentation in their native language.

Unexcused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless it meets one of the following criteria:

- A. The absence meets the definition of an excused absence (including documentation requirements); or
- B. The absence is the result of school or district disciplinary action.

Tardiness to Class

Continued tardiness on the part of any student will be viewed as a very serious matter. Promptness to class is extremely important. Students are expected to be in their places, ready for work, at the bell.

Requests for Early Dismissal

No school, grade, or class may be dismissed before the regularly scheduled dismissal time without the approval of the Executive Director or designee.

No student may be permitted to leave school at any time other than at regular dismissal without the approval of the student's parent/guardian. If a court official with legal permission takes custody of a student, or if a police officer arrests a student, the parent/guardian shall be notified by the administration.

Permission for leaving school early must be granted by the principal/program director or designee according to each individual case.

(cf. 5113.2 Truancy)

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-184 Duties of parents

10-198a through 10-202 Attendance, truancy in general.

10-202e-f Policy on dropout prevention and grant program.

10-221(b) Board of education to prescribe rules.

Campbell v New Milford, 193 Conn 93 (1984).

Connecticut State Board of Education Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences, adopted June 27, 2012.

P.A. 21-46 An Act Concerning Social Equity and the Health, Safety and Education of Children, as amended by Special Session Public Act 21-2, Section 393

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