



## **Individual Student Attendance Requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (2016)**

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***Of the days that school is in session (minimum is 180), students are expected to be marked as present at least 90% of the time. Any student who falls below this percentage of time present is deemed “chronically absent.”***

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It is the district’s responsibility to monitor and identify any indication that suggests a student may be suffering from chronic absenteeism for unwarranted reasons (illness, family emergency, etc.).

This issue must be addressed actively by the school by working with the student and his/her parents/caregiver to improve attendance and prevent further absenteeism.

### **REASONS FOR ABSENCES**

All absences from school MUST be reported to the school before the start of the school day. This ensures our awareness that the student is safe and sound. Reported reasons for absences should be limited to serious reasons such as these:

- Illness
- Family Emergency
- Funeral/Family Death
- Court Appearance

Regardless of the reason, EVERY ABSENCE COUNTS towards the student’s attendance percentage. Therefore, absences deemed “excused” for the reasons noted above are, indeed, absences and count towards the maximum allowance of 18/year/student (10% of 180 = 18 absences/student/year).

Specific absences ARE NOT DEDUCTED from a Student’s Total Number of Absences The ONLY reasons the State of New Jersey allows students to be absent WITHOUT it counting against their attendance are as\* follows:

- Religious Observance (must be documented by parent/caregiver)
- College Visit (3/year for students in grades 11 and 12 ONLY)
- Take Our Children To Work Day (must be documented by parent/caregiver)

*\*The only other time a student may not be in school, but the absence does not count against him/her is if the student receives bussing from the district and the district is unable to provide bussing on the given day.*

## **THE STANDARD (FULL) SCHOOL DAY**

For a student in any full-day program to be marked present on a standard day of school, he/she MUST be present in school for at least one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon.

- If a student is present for one hour in the morning session, but not for one hour in the afternoon session, he/she is AM Present and PM Absent.
- If a student is present for one hour in the afternoon session, but not for one hour in the morning session, he/she is PM Present and AM Absent.
- Both of these scenarios result in a half-day's absence for the student.

For a student in any half-day program to be marked present on a standard school day, he/she MUST be present in school for at least one hour.

## **HOME INSTRUCTION**

Student who are on an approved "Home Instruction" plan are marked as Present on days school is in session as long as they are satisfying the criteria of the Home Instruction plan designed for them.

## **FIELD TRIPS AND SCHOOL SPONSORED, OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS**

When a student is participating in a school trip or any other school-sponsored program, under the guidance and direction of a teacher, the student is considered and marked as Present.

## **ABSENCES DUE TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION (E.G.: SUSPENSION)**

Students assigned to full-day In-School Suspension or Out of School Suspension are marked as Absent since they are not continuing with the curriculum appropriately under the guidance and direction of a teacher certified in each content area.

When only a portion of the school day is spent in In-School Suspension, it does not result in an absence.

## **EXTENDED TRAVEL WITH FAMILY**

Travel with family, for vacation or other purposes, is not a recognized reason for absence and is not endorsed by the Tenafly Public Schools, the State of New Jersey or by ESSA Regulations.

It is the collective belief of all three groups that students should be present, in school with their peers on all days school is in session provided they are healthy. Vacations should be scheduled for days/breaks/time when school is not in session.

We do recognize, however, that it is a family's prerogative to remove children from school for travel/other "educational" reasons.

In these situation, and since students are not in school receiving the instruction that is a vital component to the homework assignments, It is not the district's obligation to provide work for students to complete during the travel time. It is expected that students will be encouraged to read daily and will be engaged in stimulating academic activities during their time out of school. It will be the student's responsibility to make up the work within the time frame allowed by policy upon his/her return to school.

Any travel that is less than 10 consecutive days in total will be accumulated as absences for the student.

Any travel that is equivalent to or greater than 10 consecutive days will result in the student's disenrollment from the Tenafly Public Schools.

The student is removed from our roster, just as he/she would be if he/she were moving/transferring. Depending on the circumstances of the travel and information available pertaining to the child's return date, the parent/caregiver may be required to re-enroll the student into the district, completing and submitting all required residency paperwork, health information, etc. upon return to district.

**UPON DISENROLLMENT, THE STUDENT FORFEITS HIS/HER PLACE IN THE SCHOOL AND IN HIS/HER ASSIGNED CLASS/CLASSES**

Therefore, at the time of re-enrollment the student MAY or MAY NOT be re-assigned to his/her previous school, class, or schedule. Any return to his/her previous school and class/classes will depend upon a variety of factors which will be assessed accordingly. We will do our best to return the student to his/her previous placement, but there are absolutely no guarantees that this will happen.

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