

CPS Student Attendance Policy: Adopted 05.15.18
Revised & Submitted to the School Committee Subcommittee 05.29.19

File: JE - STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular and consistent attendance is essential to learning, to improving the achievement of all students, to maintaining a respectful school climate and to a student's successful school performance. The goal of the student attendance policy is to promote consistent, daily school and class attendance. The expectation is that all students will have, at a minimum, at least ninety-five percent (95%) attendance in school and in each class during each school day. A student who is truant, frequently absent or frequently tardy to school without adequate reason is in violation of this policy.

- a. Parents/Guardians/Caregivers must call the school to give notification of an absence by no later than the morning of the absence.
- b. If a call is not made, a note from the parent/guardian/caregiver or the student's medical provider is due on the day that the student returns to school explaining the absence. No student, however, shall be sent home to obtain a written explanation from their parent/guardian/caregiver during a school session.
- c. In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school principal/head of upper school may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.
- d. If an extended absence of a student is foreseen, the parent/guardian/caregiver should contact the principal/head of upper school to make arrangements for the completion of academic requirements.
- e. A student who is truant, chronically absent or tardy will be referred to the Office of the Safety and Security. The Director of Safety and Security, after consultation with the appropriate Principal/Head of Upper School, will review each matter and initiate corrective action which may include referral to the Middlesex County Court if the student is deemed to require additional services under the direction of the Court.

Excused absences include:

- a. personal illness or quarantine;
- b. absences attributable to personal trauma; grieving, death in the family or serious illness in the family;
- c. observance or practice of a religious holiday;
- d. medical appointments that absolutely cannot be made outside of school hours or counseling visits;
- e. legal matters requiring a personal appearance;
- f. suspensions or expulsions in or out of school;
- g. school-related trips, assemblies or meetings;
- h. college visits (two days in junior year of high school and three days in senior year of high school);
- i. one trip or educational experience of no more than five days during a student's years at high school; or

- j. weather so inclement as to endanger the health or safety of the child.

A student may also be excused for other exceptional reasons, with the approval of the school administration not exceeding seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions in any six-month period.

Unexcused absences include:

- a. Truancy from school or from individual classes or study halls;
- b. Trips not approved in advance by the principal/head of upper school;
- c. Looking for employment without prior approval from the principal/head of upper school;
- d. Staying home to avoid an examination in a given subject or to study for an examination;
- e. Leaving the school building during the school day without signing out in the principal/head of upper school's office;
- f. Oversleeping or otherwise being tardy to school (three unexcused tardies will be counted as one unexcused absence);
- g. Remaining on or near school grounds, but not attending assigned classes; or
- h. Any other absence that is not excused or any excusable absence that is not reported by a parent/guardian/caregiver by a telephone call or written note from a parent/guardian/caregiver or the student's medical provider upon the student's return to school.

When a student is at school, the student is under the supervision of all teachers and school authorities and must get permission from the principal/head of upper school's office to leave early. Any student who does not sign out of school in the principal/head of upper school's office before leaving will be unexcused and receive no credit for all class activities or assignments missed. Each teacher shall keep a record of the absence or tardiness of students. A student who enters the classroom after the time appointed for the beginning of the session shall be recorded as tardy. Parents/guardians/caregivers will be notified when a student has any unexcused absence, or unexcused tardy or unexcused misses of two (2) or more periods of school. The school must ensure that it notify the student's parents/guardians/caregivers of a student's absence within three (3) days of the absence if the school has not received notification of the absence from the student's parent/guardian/caregiver. When a child has been tardy five (5) times, has been absent five (5) days or ten (10) half-days in the previous six (6) months for which there is no lawful excuse for said tardies or absences, misses five (5) or more school days unexcused in a school year or two (2) or more periods unexcused in a school year, it shall be the duty of the principal or head of upper school or designee in which such child is enrolled to report such attendance record to the Superintendent of Schools. The principal or head of upper school or designee also shall make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent/guardian/caregiver of the student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal, head of upper school or designee, the student and the student's parent/guardian/caregiver and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies, as appropriate.

Any student with an excused absence from school or classes has the privilege of making up the class assignments, missed homework, quizzes, exams, papers, projects and other assignments. The principal or head of upper school shall ensure that there is a school-wide education service plan in place for all students who are suspended or expelled from school for more than five (5) consecutive days, whether in or out of school. Additionally, the principal or head of upper school shall ensure that any student suspended or expelled from school for more than five (5) consecutive days, whether in or out of school, has an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of exclusion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers, projects and other assignments.

For any student who is legally absent for five (5) or more days, the school will make arrangements with families to have the student make up home assignments and upon return, the student will have the opportunity to make up class work, including tests, quizzes, class assignments, missed homework, exams, papers, projects and other assignments. The parent/guardian/caregiver of any student who will have a prolonged absence (2 weeks or longer) due to illness or injury must notify the school to make the necessary arrangements for homebound instruction.

Absences or tardiness without satisfactory explanation shall be grounds for disciplinary action. School officials are encouraged to take all other appropriate disciplinary action before resorting to suspension in an effort to help a student with problems of truancy, tardiness and class cutting, including referral of the student to the Juvenile Court as a habitually truant child in need of services and/or referral for evaluation as a child in need of special education. No credit will be given to students who miss school work due to truancy, tardiness or class-cutting, unless the student makes up the missed work as directed by his teacher and teachers should afford students a reasonable amount of time upon their return to class to make up missed homework, quizzes, exams, papers, projects and other assignments. No adverse, prejudicial or discriminatory effect shall result to any student because they are absent to observe a religious holiday. Teachers should, to the extent feasible, refrain from scheduling any important tests, culminating activities, and/or major papers/reports during religious holidays.

Attendance Violation (AV) Language begins here:

Cambridge Rindge and Latin School and the High School Extension Program will treat four (4) unexcused absences as an Attendance Violation (AV). Excused absences, including verified personal illness, will not be counted against a student and will not result in the issuance of an Attendance Violation (AV) if the absences fall into the following categories: (a) absences attributable to personal trauma, grieving, death in the family; (b) observance of a religious holiday; (c) medical appointments or counseling visits that absolutely cannot be made outside of school hours; (d) legal matters requiring a personal appearance; (e) suspensions in and out of school; (f) school-related trips, assemblies or meetings; (g) college visits (two days in junior year and three days in senior year); and (h) one trip or educational experience of no more than five days during a student's years at the high school.

Four (4) unexcused absences in any class, however, will result in an Attendance Violation (AV). In this case, a grade of AV will be issued for the term grade by the Dean of Students. In addition, three (3) unexcused tardies to class will be counted as one (1) unexcused absence. Unexcused absences include: (a) truancy from school or from individual classes; (b) trips not approved in advance by the principal; (c) looking for employment without approval of the principal; (d) staying home to avoid an examination in a given subject or to study for an examination; (e) leaving the school building during the school day without signing out in the dean's office (cutting class); (f) oversleeping or otherwise being tardy to school; (g) remaining on or near school grounds, but not attending assigned classes (cutting class); and (h) any other absence that is not excused or any excusable absence that is not reported by parents/guardians/caregivers by a phone call or written note from parents/guardians/caregivers or the student's medical provider upon the student's return to school. Additionally, a student who receives twelve (12) unexcused tardies in any one class, will receive an AV for the course.

In accordance with the school district's policy, the school will notify the parents/guardians/caregivers after each absence and/or tardy of the student and also will notify the parents/guardians/caregivers after four unexcused absences occur. Parents/Guardians/Caregivers may seek a medical waiver for any chronic condition, reoccurring illness or for any illnesses that exceeds four (4) days.

Parents/Guardians/Caregivers will have the right to appeal any AV to the Appeals Review Committee at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School and the High School Extension Program within ten (10) days of the issuance of the AV and, if the appeal is denied, the parents/guardians/caregivers may within ten (10) days of the denial submit a written appeal to the Superintendent of Schools for review. The decision of the Superintendent of Schools shall be final.

~~A student who receives an AV for any given class, in any given term, will receive a ten-point reduction to the final term grade for that class. If the student wishes to NOT receive a ten-point reduction then, the~~

~~student must meet with their Dean of Students to create a "Buy Back" contract/proposal established between the student and Dean of Students.~~

Learning Community teams will work with students who meet AV criteria and implement one of the following three supports.

- a. Complete a ***Buy Back*** contract/proposal (offered to all students)
- b. Enroll student in ***Studentship Workshops*** (for students who need additional time management and studentship support)
- c. ***Individual Support Plan*** co-created with LC team (used for students with extenuating circumstances who need unique supports)

If a student does not successfully complete the support plan, they may receive a 10-point reduction.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L.c. [76, §§1, 1B, 16 & 20](#)

Supporting Document

The pages that follow represent:
CRLS Multi-Tier Attendance Plan
Winter 2018/Spring 2019

This 3-part document was created by the CRLS/HSEP Attendance Working Group and is meant to provide a guide for the implementation of student supports, interventions, and services designed to address issues of chronic absenteeism.

Tier 1 Services

Tier 1 services are provided to *all* students by CRLS team members.

These services represent the core school support program.

<p>DAILY ATTENDANCE REPORTING - Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a student is absent, a daily call or text will automatically to families and caregivers. Added second 10 AM call (New this year) Reinforcing attendance policies with families 	Daily	Clerks (automated system)
<p>MAINTAINING UP-TO-DATE CONTACT INFORMATION - Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All student and family contact information (e.g., home phone number, cell phone number, email addresses) is obtained 	Start of year	Clerks and Deans of Students
<p>DATA-DRIVEN PROGRESS MONITORING - Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each student is assigned appropriate tiers of service after progress monitoring Student and family notified if student are eligible for Tier 2 or Tier 3 services Sub-group analysis and outreach plan 	At start of year + reviewed every term	Jen Amigone, ILT
<p>GRADE LEVEL ATTENDANCE ASSEMBLY - In Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each grade level holds an assembly during which students are oriented to attendance policy and campaign. Sharing attendance policies with families (especially with 9th grade families-in planning) 	Start of year	ILT
<p>SHARING GRADE LEVEL + LEARNING COMMUNITY ATTENDANCE - In Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance data shared openly with students (i.e., by posting attendance rates publicly in the school) 	Monthly	Jen Amigone
<p>POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INCENTIVES - In Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize students publicly for maintaining good attendance or for making progress with respect to attendance. (In Planning) If students have no more than 3 absences (excused or unexcused) they may attend a celebration after the end of each term. (In Planning) Term awards given to students with best attendance rates and to students who are most improved. (Ongoing) VIP seating at graduation for most improved/perfect attendance 	At end of term	Clerks, Jen Amigone and ILT
<p>ATTENDANCE VIOLATION (AV) SUPPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer students to participate in Buy Back program/process. 	All year	Deans of Students

Tier 2 Services

Tier 2 services are provided to **some** students as identified by LC team members.

A student will receive Tier 1 and Tier 2 services if (a) they have a school attendance rate between 80% and 90%

<p>COMMUNICATION TO STUDENTS AND FAMILIES - Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is communicated via letters to students and their families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and class attendance rates for the previous term are provided Google form created to share information Family conferences to discuss available supports for improved attendance 	At start of term	Dean of Students Jen Amigone
<p>PROGRESS MONITORING STUDENTS ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES - Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly LC team meetings to discuss students TATs 	At start of every term	LC Teams Jen Amigone
<p>BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY ADMINISTRATORS - Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigning consequences and detention as appropriate Arranging conferences with families 	Daily	Deans of Students
<p>ESTABLISHING POSITIVE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS - Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal check-ins with students Students informed about this attendance initiative and their current status 	Weekly	LC Team
<p>ALTERNATIVE SENIOR EXPERIENCE - Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering Internships, reduced course loads, early graduation, community service 	At start of every term	LC teams
<p>ATTENDANCE VIOLATION (AV) SUPPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enroll students who need additional time management and studentship support) in <i>Studentship Workshops</i> 	All Year	Dean of Students

Tier 3 Services

Tier 3 services are provided to a **few** students by other school support staff.

A student will receive Tier 1 and Tier 3 services if (a) he/she has a school attendance rate less than 80%, (b) he/she did not respond to consistent implementation of Tier 2 services, or (c) he/she has social, emotional, or psychological needs beyond those a classroom teacher can address.

<p>CASE MANAGEMENT PROCESS – Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring individual students to group for problem solving • Email appropriate staff members to inquire about services being delivered and about students' progress • Flexible start and end times, reduced course loads • Coordinate social support from support staff and community partners through LC team meetings - Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC support staff (guidance, social workers, psychologists) • BRYT Program/SAC • Teen Health Center • After school programs (EX: Workforce, Breakthrough, EnRoot, Youth Centers) • Safety Net, Probation Officers 	Weekly	LC Team
<p>MEETING FOR INDIVIDUAL CASES OF STUDENTS - In Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management support with ILT and District Admin. to support students for whom available supports have not been enough 	Monthly	Chronically Absent Team
<p>ATTENDANCE VIOLATION (AV) SUPPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Individual Support Plan with student, caregivers, and CRLS Learning Community personnel 	All Year	Dean of Students