

Haverhill School Committee  
Policy JH-R2  
STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

**High School**

CLASSIFICATION OF ABSENCES

A. Excused Absence. (Absence approved by home and school)

1. Illness of student or other medical reason classified as an emergency (i.e., an appointment which cannot be scheduled during non-school hours);
2. Death in the family;
3. Religious holiday;
4. Court appearance/subpoena;
5. School field trip, suspension, representing school at an event, etc.
6. Emergencies (to be determined by school administration).
7. Surgery, accident, or prolonged illness.

B. Unexcused Absence. (Absence approved or unapproved by home, not approved by school)

By state law, parents/guardians do not have the option of keeping a student out of school for other than legal reasons (those cited in statutes). Even if an absence meets with the approval of the parents, the superintendent or designee will make the final determination as to whether it is classified as "excused." Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, the following:

family vacation	missed bus
working	car problems
class "skip day"	appointments (non-emergency)
oversleeping	skipping a class(es)
truancy	working at elections

Note: Students who are unable to attend the regular school session because of illness or an unexcused reason may not attend or participate in any extra-curricular activities sponsored by the school that day.

C. Tardiness to Class. A tardiness to class, which is not excused by school administration, which will cause a student to miss fifteen (15) minutes (or more) of a class period will be counted as an unexcused absence from that class. Other tardiness to class will be handled by the classroom teacher or, if chronic in nature, by the Assistant Principal.

D. Teachers' Obligations. Teachers are required to record both absences and tardiness from every class. The Assistant Principal is responsible for determining whether the student's absence is excused or unexcused and for taking appropriate action.

#### PENALTIES TO BE ASSESSED.

A student who has been ruled absent (unexcused) for the third time in a marking period will have his/her name reported to the attendance clerk in the main office by the Assistant Principal. A letter will be mailed to the student's parent/guardian informing them of the possible impending administrative failure if this type of absence from class continues, and the student will be notified by the Assistant Principal.

A student who has been ruled absent (unexcused) for the sixth time in a marking period will fail for that quarter with a comment symbol to denote "Administrative Failure--Unexcused Absence." The student will get credit for the quarter if, and when, the average for the year reaches a minimum of 65.

Since the marking system at Haverhill High School allows for a student to receive a passing grade/credit based on the average of the four marking periods (two marking periods if in a semester course), it is incumbent upon a student to do his/her best work in each marking period to make certain a passing grade will still be attainable.

#### REVIEW PROCESS

A parent/guardian/student has the right to dispute the classification of "unexcused absence." However, any dispute must be made in a timely fashion. The following procedures should be followed:

Within ten school days of the notification given after the third unexcused absence mailing, or within ten school days of the issuance day of school report cards, a letter should be written to the High School Principal, 137 Monument Street, Haverhill, MA 01832 requesting a review and the reasons for that request. Upon receipt of this request, the High School Principal will refer the request to the Attendance Review Board (Student's Assistant Principal, Student's Guidance Counselor, and a faculty member). A review will be conducted and the findings submitted to the principal for a final decision. Parent/guardian/student will be notified in writing of this decision.

#### MAKEUP PROVISIONS

Students who have been absent from classes will be permitted to make up work without the assessment of penalty. Makeup is the responsibility of the student and should be completed on the following schedule:

Absent one (1) day: Work to be made up by the end of the next school day after receiving assignments (or at next afternoon makeup session for that teacher) unless special arrangements are made with the expressed permission of the teacher.

Absent two (2) to five (5) days: Work to be made up by the end of the next consecutive 5 school days following return to school (or at afternoon makeup sessions of teachers) unless special arrangements are made with the expressed permission of the teacher.

Absence more than five (5) consecutive days: Arrangements to be made with each classroom teacher. Makeup work has priority over extra-curricular activities and jobs.

Notification of extended absences (if known in advance) should be made to the Special Education Department in order that the student may receive tutoring while absent (if eligible).

Any decisions made in following the provisions of this attendance policy will not violate any state or federal legislation nor will decisions be made that will violate the civil rights of a student/parent/guardian.

If it is necessary for anyone other than the parent or guardian to sign an excuse for absence or any other school document, he/she must indicate the relationship to the student beside his/her signature (i.e., Mrs. Henry White, Aunt). If the parent cannot sign his/her name, he/she must make his/her mark beside the signature which someone else may write for him/her. Parents who do not write English are welcome to use their native language. Absence notes must be brought to the homeroom teacher on the day the student returns to school. Students who fail to do so will be assigned a detention.

#### TARDINESS TO CLASS

Students who are late arriving to class should have a pass from the teacher or administrator who detained them. A student who does not have a late pass will be admitted to class, and a tardy report will be filed with the appropriate administrator.

#### TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

Students who arrive at their homeroom after the 7:27a.m. bell rings are considered tardy. They are admitted to homeroom and marked tardy on the daily attendance form. Students who are tardy to school AFTER the homeroom period has ended must report at once to the Main Office and comply with the following procedures:

1. Fill out a regular tardy slip:

- a. Name and homeroom
  - b. Stamp on both stubs the time arrived (use time clock)
  - c. Sign the tardy book, noting the date, time and reason for tardiness
  - d. Leave a portion of the tardy slip with one of the main office staff.
2. Immediately report to your Assistant Principal:
- a. Leave the second half of your tardy slip with your Assistant Principal

Obtain an admit to class slip signed by your Assistant Principal.

On the day following tardiness, students are required to bring to their homeroom a note from their parent or guardian explaining the reason for such tardiness.

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