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Hermon School Department

Attendance Policy

The Hermon School Department believes that learning experiences that occur in the classroom are meaningful and essential components of public education. Hermon schools are committed to the fact that every student should attend every class every day. Time lost from class is irretrievable in terms of instructional interaction, sequential presentation of material, and continuity of instruction. The school places primary responsibility for regular attendance upon the student and the family. The school assumes the responsibility for providing an educational setting conducive to learning.

Attendance Procedure

Regular and punctual attendance will be expected of each student enrolled in Hermon schools. However, it is recognized that absence may be necessary under certain conditions.

A comprehensive system of attendance records will be maintained for each student. Each teacher is responsible for accurately reporting daily attendance for each class and for making attendance records available to the administration and/or parents and students upon request. All absences, excused or unexcused, will be considered in the fulfillment of attendance requirements. When absent, students will be responsible for having their parent or guardian call the school or send an email or written note explaining the reason for the absence.

Excused Absences

According to Maine state law, the following school absences are deemed excusable:

1. Personal illness (medical documentation is required for three or more consecutive days absent).
2. An appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day.
3. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day.
4. A family emergency (death in family, legal obligation, etc.)
5. A planned absence for a personal or an educational purpose that has been approved by administration.
6. Emergencies and other exceptional situations approved by administration, including educational disruptions.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are those absences that are not recognized by the state as warranting excused status.

Definitions

Truancy: A student is habitually truant if he/she is required to attend school or alternative instruction under Maine compulsory attendance law (20-A M.R.S.A. § 5001-A) and he/she:

- A. Has completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year; or
- B. Is at least 7 years of age and has not completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 7 full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year.

Chronic Absenteeism: Students are considered chronically absent if they are enrolled for a minimum of 10 days and are absent for 10% or more of the days enrolled. Absences include both excused and unexcused absences. Additionally, students who are tardy or released early are considered absent if they miss more than 50% of the school day.

Actions

Whenever a student is determined to be truant, the school administration will follow 20-A M.R.S.A. § 5001-A; 5052-5054 and the Hermon School Department Policy JHB.

Whenever a student misses ten (10) days of school, excused or unexcused, the student and parent or guardian will be notified in writing by the school that attendance is determined to be chronically absent and that the attendance record will continue to be monitored.

Whenever a student misses fifteen (15) days of school, the student and parent or guardian will be contacted by phone and notified in writing by the school that attendance is unsatisfactory and the student and parent or guardian must meet with administration and superintendent to discuss the ramifications of the student's attendance status.

Whenever a high school student misses twenty (20) unexcused days of class/school of a full year course or ten (10) unexcused days of a semester course, the student and parent or guardian will be notified in writing that the student has lost credit.

High school students who have lost credit due to excessive absences are expected to continue to attend class through to completion. Students in this situation will be receiving course grades to the end of the semester and these grades will be recorded on the student's transcript with no credit awarded.

Appeal Process

To appeal the rulings of the attendance policy, a student and parent or guardian may request, in writing, a hearing with the Hermon School Committee as to why he/she should be exempt from the policy.

Other Provisions

All students, parents, guardians and faculty will be provided a copy of this policy (through the Student/Parent Handbook/Code of Conduct).

In situations where a student is out of class/school due to a school-initiated request, there will be no impact on the student's attendance record. (The student will still be held responsible for all work assigned/missed during his/her absence.)

Cross Reference: JHB Truancy