

ATTENDANCE POLICY  
REVISION COMMENCING SEPTEMBER 2003

(i) It shall be the policy of the Milford Central School District to encourage regular and consistent attendance of all students. The Board of Education, in accordance with the state Education Law, requires that each minor from six to seventeen years of age shall regularly attend school full time, unless he or she has completed a four-year high school course of study.

Attendance is important. It is each student's basic responsibility as a member of the school community. In addition, regular attendance is directly related to academic and career success.

Every student is expected to be on time and attend all classes and study halls. Attendance is taken by teachers and staff each day and each period. It is expected that all missed work be made up.

(ii) Specific strategies to accomplish the objective of ensuring regular school attendance may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Ensure that course content and instruction are meaningful, challenging and appropriate for all students including those with disabilities.
2. Provide on-going professional development in the areas of instructional delivery, curriculum development and alignment and classroom management.
3. Communicate regularly with parents and guardians about attendance issues.
4. Coordinate efforts with outside agencies such as Department of Social Services, Family Court, Probation Department and Department of Mental Health to provide support for students and families struggling with attendance issues.

(iii) The following absences are considered excused absences:

1. College visits for seniors only who have submitted permission forms prior to scheduled visit.
2. Military appointments or obligations
3. School sponsored field trips/activities
  - a. This may include, but is not limited to, SIP presentations/workdays, job shadowing, Art in Education workshops, government class observations)
4. Vocal/instrumental lessons
5. Athletic dismissal
6. Religious observances
7. Absences due to in-school and out-of-school suspension
8. Students on home-bound instruction
9. Any medical appointment or excused appointment with an official written document from said office or institution (Parent's notes are not acceptable).
10. A Doctor's letter/prescription stating student cannot attend school for specified amount of time
11. Bereavement (death of family member (only) up to 3 days)

The following absences are considered unexcused absences:

1. Any other absence not listed above.
2. Tardiness to a class after 20 minutes or more.
3. MCS School Nurse office visit consisting of 20 minutes or more.

(iv) The following codes are used in the attendance register:

AL = excused absence  
 AI = unexcused absence  
 D = dismissed  
 ES = out of school suspension  
 IS = in school suspension  
 TL = excused tardy  
 TI = unexcused tardy  
 HL = half excused absence  
 HI = half unexcused absence

(v) To earn credit for passing a course, students may not exceed an absence rate of 20 unexcused absences for a full-year course or 10 unexcused absences for a one semester or half-credit course. A pro-rated amount of days will be determined for students' entering after the school year has begun. Unexcused absences are defined in section iii of this document. Students who miss class due to an unexcused absence will have the opportunity to make-up the class time missed and the absence will not be counted as an absence for the purpose of granting course credit. The following is a list of *suggestions* for making up missed class time. This is to be determined at the discretion of individual teachers. This is not a comprehensive list.

- \*come in after school to make up the time missed
- \*complete a project or a given assignment
- \*schedule an appointment with the teacher
- \*make up the work during a study hall, period missed = a study hall
- \*make up time during lunch
- \*come in during another section of the class if possible (from study hall)
- \*conference with the teacher about a possible alternative if absence is lengthy
- \*complete all the notes and class work and assignments for each day absent
- \*students have five school days from a missed lab due to an absence to make it up for full credit.
- \*come in on a Saturday

Teachers will report any student upon their fifth (5), tenth (10), fifteenth (15), and twentieth (20) unexcused absences to the guidance counselor. The guidance counselor will make contact with the student and parent/guardian in an effort to improve attendance rates. The principal will be included in such interaction when it is deemed appropriate by the counselor. After ten (10) unexcused absences, a parent/teacher

student conference will be conducted. After fifteen (15) unexcused absences, a parent/teacher/principal student conference will be conducted.

Once a student has reached 21 unexcused absences for course credit, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing. This notice will include a copy of the school attendance policy, complete with a list of the make-up options available to students, and incentives the district will use to encourage improved attendance.

When a student has 21 or more unexcused absences he/she has 5 school days to make-up the class time missed.

(vi) Incentives:

Students that attend school 100% of the days 100% of the time will receive an award from a local restaurant and a certificate from the school.

Tardy Disciplinary Sanctions:

Students that are tardy to each class including 1<sup>st</sup> period will receive a detention after their third late.

Early Departure Sanctions:

Students leaving school early cannot participate in extra curricular activities unless they have a valid excuse. Such an excuse would include, but not limited to a doctors note, work release.

(vii) Form letter that will be sent to parents:

School Year 2003-2004

Mr. &Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_  
Main Street  
Milford, NY 13807

Dear Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

As per the attached report, please be advised that ( student name ) has been absent from ( course name ) for ( amount of days ) days. I am concerned about this excessive number. To earn credit for a course, students may not exceed an unexcused absence rate of 20 days for a full credit course or 10 days for a half year/half credit course. Students who miss class due to an *unexcused absence* will have the opportunity to make-up the class time missed and the absence will not be counted as an absence for the purpose of granting course credit.

Enclosed is a copy of the school's attendance policy. Highlighted are those make-up options available to your child as well as incentives used by Milford Central School to encourage improved attendance.

Punctuality and good attendance is important for continued success in school. If

you wish to discuss this with me, I may be reached at 286-3349.

Sincerely,

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First reading: June 13, 2002  
Adopted: June 27, 2002

Amendment First Read: June 12, 2003  
**Amendment Adopted: June 25, 2003**

Lynda Bookhard  
Principal  
Attachment

(viii) The process to develop specific interventions strategies:

1. The teacher should meet with the student to discuss reasons for the missed classes, what support he/she may need from the teacher, and how work can be completed.
2. If a teacher/student meeting does not resolve the absentee problem, the teacher should notify the parents, in writing, and request a meeting. At the meeting, the teacher, parents and student should work on a plan to correct the problem.
3. In the event the parents do not respond, or refuse to help remedy the absence problem, the teacher should notify the administrator. Working with the student, teacher and, guidance counselor, a decision may be made to use PINS for the individual student, or to use some other means of intervention.
4. All efforts to help the student achieve consistent attendance, and to complete the necessary course work should be documented by the teacher.

(ix) Eileen Leach is responsible for reviewing pupil attendance records and initiating appropriate action to address unexcused pupil absence, tardiness and early departure consistent with the comprehensive attendance policy.

Milford Central School will abide by state regulations on retention and disposition of attendance registers according to the ED1 — 6 years. (1.44)