

**NORTH PENN SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**School Board Policy**

**5110(a)**

**STUDENTS**

Reference: Administrative Regulation #5144

**Elementary and Secondary**

**Student Attendance**

The board requires that school age students enrolled in district schools attend school regularly. This policy adheres to all federal and state laws that address student attendance in public schools. The educational program offered by the district is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order for students to achieve academic standards and consistent educational progress.

Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in district schools during the days and hours that school is in session, except that a principal or teacher may excuse a student for temporary absences when receiving satisfactory evidence of mental, physical, or other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence. Urgent reasons shall be strictly construed and do not permit irregular attendance.

The board permits conditions to constitute reasonable cause for absence from school as defined in Administrative Regulation #5144.

Absences shall be treated as unlawful until the district receives a written or verbal excuse explaining the absence, to be submitted within three (3) school days of the absence. The determination of whether a submitted excuse properly contains satisfactory evidence shall be made exclusively by the school principal or his/her designee.

The board may report to appropriate authorities infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of seventeen (17). The board shall issue notice to those parents/guardians who fail to comply with the statutory requirements of compulsory attendance that such infractions will be prosecuted according to law.

Attendance need not always be within school facilities. A student will be considered in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the board; the student is receiving approved tutorial instruction, or health or therapeutic services; the student is engaged in an approved and properly supervised independent study, work-study or career education program; the student is receiving approved homebound instruction.

All absences occasioned by observance of the student's religion on a day approved by the board as a religious holiday shall be excused. A penalty shall not be attached to an absence for a religious holiday.

The board shall, upon written request of the parents/guardians, release from attendance a student participating in a religious instruction program acknowledged by the board. Such instruction shall not require the child's absence from school for more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year, and its organizers must inform the board of the child's attendance record. The board shall not provide transportation to religious instruction. A penalty shall not be attached to an absence for religious instruction.

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The board will recognize other justifiable absences for part of the school day. These shall include medical or dental appointments, court appearances, family emergencies and other urgent reasons.

The board shall excuse the following students from the requirements of attendance at the schools of this district:

1. On certification by a physician or submission of other satisfactory evidence and on approval of the Department of Education, children who are unable to attend school or apply themselves to study for mental, physical or other reasons that preclude regular attendance.
2. Students enrolled in nonpublic or private schools in which the subjects and activities prescribed by law are taught, except that such students and students attending college who are also enrolled part-time in the district schools shall be counted as being in part-time attendance in this district.
3. Students fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) years of age whose enrollment in private trade or business schools has been approved
4. Students fifteen (15) years of age, and fourteen (14) years of age who have completed sixth grade, who are engaged in farm work or private domestic service under duly issued permits.
5. Students sixteen (16) years of age regularly employed during the school session and holding a lawfully issued employment certificate.

The board may excuse the following students from the requirements of attendance at district schools:

1. Students receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the district's curricula from a properly qualified tutor approved by the superintendent, when the excusal does not interfere with the student's regular program of studies.
2. Homebound children unable to attend school on the recommendation of the school physician and the school psychologist or a psychiatrist and approval of the Secretary of Education.
3. Students enrolled in special schools conducted by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit or approved by the Department of Education.

#### Educational Tours and Trips

The board may excuse a student from school attendance to participate in an educational tour or trip not sponsored by the district if the following conditions are met:

1. The parent/guardian submits a written request for excusal prior to the absence.
2. The student's participation has been approved by the superintendent or designee.
3. The adult directing and supervising the tour or trip is acceptable to the parents/guardians and the superintendent.

The board may limit the number and duration of tours or trips for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school term.

The superintendent or designee shall develop procedures for the attendance of students which:

1. Ensure a school session that conforms to requirements of state regulations.
2. Govern the keeping of attendance records in accordance with state statutes.
3. Distribute annually to staff, students, and parents/guardians school rules and regulations governing student attendance, absences and excusals.
4. Identify the habitual truant, investigate the causes of truant behavior, and consider modification of the student's educational program to meet particular needs and interests.
5. Ensure that students legally absent have an opportunity to make up work.
6. Ensure the creation of an Attendance Improvement Plan before further legal action is taken to address unexcused absences by the child. Although the parent is not required to attend, the conference must still take place even if the parent declines to participate or fails to attend. The school must provide advance written notice and attempt to communicate via telephone prior to this conference.
7. Require the issuance of written notice of the child's violation of compulsory school attendance when a child is truant to the person in parental relation with the child who resides in the same household as the child within ten (10) school days of the child's third unexcused absence. Such notice: (1) shall include a description of the consequences that will follow if the child becomes habitually truant; (2) shall be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation; (3) may include the offer of a school attendance improvement conference; and (4) when transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, shall also be provided to the child's biological or adoptive parent if the parent's mailing address is on file with the school and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order.

The school may not expel or impose out of school suspension, disciplinary reassignment, or transfer for truant behavior.

Policy:

Adopted: November 15, 2007  
Amended: September 19, 2013  
Amended: December 14, 2017