

Arlington Central School District

Attendance Policy Summary FAQs

There is a strong connection between consistent school attendance and academic success. Our District recently updated our Attendance Policy ([Board Policy 7110](#)) to encourage regular school attendance. The following FAQs outline the key components of this policy.

- **What are the goals of the Arlington Attendance Policy?**

By encouraging regular school attendance, the policy strives to:

- Increase school completion for all students.
- Improve student achievement and close performance gaps.
- Identify attendance patterns to design targeted improvement strategies.

- **What are the definitions of an excused and an unexcused absence?**

We have established standards to determine whether absences, tardiness, or early departures are excused or unexcused. Please note that attendance in the middle and high schools will be taken (unless otherwise specified) for each period/class of scheduled attendance.

- Excused absences include personal illness, family deaths, family emergencies, religious observance, court appearances, approved college visits, business that cannot be conducted before or after the school day (e.g. road tests, social service appointments), or other reasons approved by the Building Principal.
- Unexcused absences include reasons that do not fit in the above categories, such as family vacations, hunting, babysitting, haircuts, or oversleeping.

- **What documentation is required when a student returns to school after being absent?**

The student must present a written note for an excused absence when they return to school; **notes will not be accepted if submitted more than 10 school**

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days after the absence. A note signed by the parent or sent from the parent's email address will be accepted for personal illness, family deaths, family emergencies, and religious observances only. An official note from an organization must be submitted for excused absences due to court appearances, approved college visits, or business that cannot be conducted before or after the school day (e.g. road tests, doctor's appointments, social service appointments). The note should include the dates the student was absent/tardy, the reason, and the parent/guardian's contact information so that the school can verify the information with the parent/guardian as necessary.

Middle and high school notes should be returned to the school attendance office. Notes can be submitted electronically to the school attendance office by emailing

- Arlington High School Attendance: ahsattendance@acsdny.org
- LaGrange Middle School Attendance: lmsattendance@acsdny.org
- Union Vale Middle School Attendance: UVMSAttendance@acsdny.org

Elementary Schools: Check the "Our School" section of your school website.

In order for an absence or tardy to be excused, a student's parent or guardian must submit a note explaining why a student was absent or tardy within 10 school days of the absence.

- **What are the guidelines for making up missed work/assignments?**

Upon returning to school following a properly **excused** absence, tardiness, or early departure, it will be the responsibility of the student to consult with their teacher(s) regarding arrangements to make up missed work, assignments, and/or tests per the schedule specified by the teacher.

Consistent with the importance of classroom participation, **unexcused** student

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absences, tardiness, and early departures may result in students not being permitted to make up missed assignments or exams. Unexcused absences can affect a student's grade and credit for a course. Regular communication between the classroom teacher and the family is strongly encouraged to ensure that parents are aware of their child's progress in class.

- **What is chronic absenteeism?**

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing at least 10% of enrolled school days in a year for any reason, excused or unexcused. Chronic absenteeism differs from truancy because it emphasizes missed instructional time rather than unexcused absences. Missed instructional time can increase a student's risk for disengagement, low achievement, and dropping out, among other things.

Students who miss at least 5% of enrolled school days in a year are at risk of becoming chronically absent. In light of this, the District will implement intervention strategies for students who miss 5% or more of the enrolled school days in a year. **Medical documentation may be requested for students who are chronically absent due to illnesses even with parent-written notes.**

- **What is the District doing to encourage consistent attendance?**

Each school will have an Attendance Intervention Team responsible for monitoring and improving student attendance.

In order to encourage student attendance, the District will develop and implement grade-appropriate or building-level strategies and programs including, but not limited to:

- Check and Connect Programs (student mentoring)
- Special events (e.g., assemblies, guest speakers, field days) scheduled on days that historically have high absenteeism (e.g., Mondays, Fridays, day before vacation)

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- Classroom acknowledgment of the importance of good attendance (e.g., individual certificates, recognition chart, bulletin boards)
- Annual poster or essay contests on the importance of good attendance;

In summary, the Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy aims to increase school completion, improve academic performance, and ensure the safety and well-being of all students. Schools will monitor attendance, implement interventions, and provide incentives to promote regular attendance and student success.