

DOUGLAS SECONDARY SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY 2007-2008 SCHOOL YEAR

Per Nevada State Law, the Board of Trustees of the Douglas County School District has established a 90% attendance requirement for earning credit in a specific class. The emphasis of the attendance policy is on the importance of keeping students in school and providing access to the curriculum.

Douglas secondary schools do not take the denial of credit lightly, and, with this in mind, it is critical that everybody understand the appropriate policies, laws, regulations, and the appeal process provided by the state and district. This document will define the 90% attendance policy, the appeal process and the absences that can be appealed and those that cannot.

NINETY PERCENT ATTENDANCE POLICY:

A student must be in attendance for a minimum of ninety percent (90%) of the instructional days in order to be considered for credit obtainment according to School Board Policy 504. The policy says, "At secondary school, a minimum of 81 days per semester is required." All absences, excused or not excused, count against student attendance. Therefore, a student cannot have more than NINE (9) absences per class per semester. All sanctioned school activities will not count against the 90% policy.

Withholding Academic Credit:

Any student who is absent in excess of nine (9) times per period per semester in any combination of absences in the following categories, avoidable, unavoidable, unverified, or truant, will be considered in violation of Douglas County School District attendance policies. Violations may result in the awarding of an academic grade of an F ("failing") and the denial of credit for the affected class or classes in that semester.

Tardies as They Relate to the 90% Attendance Policy:

Tardies that exceed 50 minutes will be considered an absence. These tardies may or not be appealable depending on the circumstances.

TYPES OF ABSENCES

Avoidable Absences (these absences cannot be appealed; please refer to appeal process below):

Avoidable absences are those that are not health and/or medical related. These are absences that parents or guardians deem important enough for their children to miss school. The school does not support such absences. Some examples of avoidable absences are staying home to care for siblings; did not feel like coming to school; sleeping in too late; missing the bus; riding to school with a friend and being absent; or a truancy absence of any kind. These absences will count against the 90% attendance policy.

Unverified Absences (cannot be appealed):

If a student is absent for one or more classes, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school's attendance office within THREE (3) school days after the student returns to school regarding any absence the student may have. Parents/guardians may call the school at 782-5136 ext.1029 for the attendance office, or send a note upon the student's return to school. Any absence NOT CLEARED within THREE (3) school days will be labeled "truancy" and will count against the 90% attendance policy.

Truant Absences (cannot be appealed):

Truancies are unexcused absences for all or part of a school day as defined in our School Board Policy 504 and NRS 392.130[1]. If a student's absence is deemed truant, the absence will count against the 90% attendance policy.

Unavoidable Absences (these absences may be appealed, but adherence to the appeal process below is vital):

Sickness (physical or mental), death in the immediate family and emergency medical or dental attention all are examples of “Unavoidable Absences,” and they do count against the 90% attendance policy.

Prearranged Absences (these absences may be appealed, using the outlined process below):

If a student has plans to be absent more than three (3) days, a Prearranged Absence Form must be completed and returned to the attendance office BEFORE the student takes his/her leave. The completion of the form requires at least two (2) days for the teachers to complete. ALL assignments MUST be made up! Any assignment not completed will affect the student’s academic grade and any future appeal reviews which are discussed below. Prearranged absences will count against the 90% attendance policy. Forms are available in the attendance office.

Zero Period Absences:

Upon the ninth (9th) semester absence in a zero period class, the student will receive an academic grade of an “F” and will be dropped from class. The student may attend the alternative school (night school) to make up this lost credit. Thereafter, the student will not be allowed to enroll in a zero period class and will be placed in the day school schedule. Absences during zero period count against the 90% attendance policy.

Parents or guardians may be asked to write a letter explaining how they will provide for their student’s education during a prearranged absence. In the event students have excessive absences and/or difficulty academically, the principal or designee will contact the parents or guardians discouraging the absence. These letters will become a part of the student’s educational records.

Makeup Work:

Makeup work must be provided for any absence, but it is the student’s responsibility to request the work in advance or on the first day upon returning to class. Students will have as many days as they are absent plus one additional block day to make up their work. Students may only receive 75% of the assignment grade for absences that are unverified or truant per DHS policy.

Appeal Process (for appealable absences only):

NRS 392.122 does provide parents and students with an appeal process. Every student is provided 10 absences per year, and they can be used at any time during the semester when the student’s absences have exceeded the nine allowable absences per class per semester. (For example, a student is out for 11 days in the first semester and the student is able to provide documentation that 2 of them were due to significant unavoidable issues. Upon appeal, the principal or his designee finds the request to waive the two days is acceptable and the principal decides that the student may have credits issued to him or her.)

For a student or parent/guardian to ask for a review or to appeal any absences, a student will be asked to provide written documentation from a physician or other health care professional or a parent note testifying to the student’s sickness. In order for an absence to be considered for review or to appeal an absence, the student MUST have completed the makeup work required by the classroom teacher.