

Yancey County Schools Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is a significant factor in educational achievement and is encouraged in an effort to facilitate each student's optimum development. Regular attendance is necessary for successful completion of required class work and promotion to the next grade. Moreover, attendance and class participation are integral parts of the teaching-learning process. Regular attendance develops patterns of behavior essential to successful personal, social and professional life. The Yancey County Board of Education in its efforts to ensure that each child receives a quality education from our schools, and in accordance with Article 26, G.S. 115C-378, has adopted this policy regarding attendance.

1. Every parent/guardian or other person residing within the Yancey County School district having charge or control of a child between the ages 7 and 16 years, or if enrolled in school, will cause such child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the Yancey County Schools will be in session. No person will encourage, entice, or counsel any such child to be unlawfully absent from school. The parent/guardian or custodian of a child will notify the school of the reason for each known absence.
2. With documentation, the following reasons for absences, tardies, or early pick-ups will be excused:
 - a. Late or no bus
 - b. Out-of-school suspension
 - c. Death or serious illness in the immediate family
 - d. Medical or dental appointment
 - e. Student illness or quarantine ordered by a medical doctor, the local health department, or the school nurse
 - f. Court or administrative proceedings directly involving the student
 - g. Religious observations with the prior approval of the principal
 - h. Participation in valid educational opportunities, such as travel with prior approval documented by the affected school's Excused Absence for Educational Reasons Form (copy sent to the Superintendent's Office).
3. An absence not termed excused under the reasons listed above will be unexcused.

4. Within five (5) days after the student returns to school, the parent, guardian, or custodian will notify the school by phone, written statement, or doctor's statement of the reason for each absence. Failure to comply with the above will result in the absence being unexcused.
5. After five (5) consecutive or ten (10) accumulated absences, excused or unexcused, a doctor's excuse for additional absences may be required.
6. A letter of concern from the principal or his or her designee will be sent to the parent/guardian when a student has accumulated three (3) unexcused absences.
7. After no more than six (6) unexcused absences, the principal or his or her designee will send a second letter by mail to notify the parent/guardian that he/she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the State of North Carolina and the Yancey County Board of Education. This letter will request a meeting with the parent/guardian to discuss the attendance problem and explore possible solutions. If the principal determines that this could become a juvenile case, the juvenile court counselor will be notified. The Yancey County Schools attendance officer will be notified.
8. After ten (10) accumulated unexcused absences in a school year, the principal will review any report or investigation prepared under G.S. 115C-381 and will confer with the student and his parents, guardian, or custodian if possible to determine whether the parent, guardian, or custodian has received notification pursuant to this section and made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If the principal determines that parent, guardian, or custodian has not, he will notify the district attorney. If he determines that parent, guardian, or custodian has, he may file a complaint with the juvenile intake counselor pursuant to Chapter 7B of the General Statutes that the child is habitually absent from school without a valid excuse. Evidence that shows that the parents, guardian, or custodians were notified and that the child has accumulated ten (10) absences which cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the local board shall establish a prima facie case that the child's parent, guardian, or custodian is responsible for the absences.

9. All schools will develop incentive plans to improve student attendance.
10. Students must be in attendance 50 percent of the instructional day to be counted present for that day. Principal discretion may be used to make this determination.
11. For the purpose of this policy, three (3) unexcused tardies and/or early pick-ups will be considered one (1) absence.
12. For the purpose of this policy, absences caused by school-sponsored activities such as educational field trips and academic/athletic competitions will not constitute an absence.
13. Make-up work may be assigned when the student is absent. The student will complete all make-up work in a timely manner at the convenience of the teacher. Make-up work may be specific material missed by the student, reinforcement, or enrichment. Students are entitled to complete work caused by excused absences without receiving penalties to grades.
14. For the purpose of this policy, a student who misses three (3) or more days (excused or unexcused) is considered at risk.

Elementary School Attendance Procedures

1. At the elementary school level, excused and unexcused absences, which exceed twenty five (25) days, are excessive and may result in grade-level retention.
2. The principal will give written notification to the parent/guardian after the 10th, 15th, and 20th excused and unexcused combined absence that the child is in danger of violating the Yancey County Schools Attendance Policy and that excessive absences have serious academic consequences which may result in grade-level retention.
3. After the initial 25th excused and unexcused combined absence, the principal will notify the parent/guardian that the child is violation of the Yancey County Schools Attendance Policy and subject to retention. Parents have the right to appeal the retention decision to an attendance committee. The Yancey

County Schools attendance officer will be notified.

4. Students at the elementary school level may earn credit for days missed up to twenty five (25) days by attending after-school academic sessions. Five and half (5 1/2) contact hours will equal one day. This credit must be earned prior to the 170th day of school.

Middle School Attendance Procedures

1. At the middle school level, excused and unexcused absences, which exceed twenty (20) days, are excessive and may result in grade-level retention.
2. The principal will give written notification to the parent/guardian after the 6th, 10th, and 15th combined absence that the child is in danger of violating the Yancey County Schools Attendance Policy and that excessive absences have serious academic consequences which may result in grade-level retention.
3. After the initial 20th excused and unexcused combined absence, the principal will notify the parent/guardian that the child is in violation of the Yancey County Schools Attendance Policy and subject to retention. Parents have the right to appeal the retention decision to an attendance committee. The Yancey County Schools attendance officer will be notified.
4. Students at the middle school level may earn credit for days missed up to twenty (20) by attending after-school academic sessions. Five and half (5 1/2) contact hours will equal one day. This credit must be earned prior to the 170th day of school.

High School Attendance Procedures

1. At the high school level, excused and unexcused absences, which exceed ten (10) days per semester, are excessive and may result in no-credit for the class.
2. The principal will give written notification to the parent/guardian after the 6th combined absence that the child is in danger of violating the Yancey County Schools Attendance Policy and that excessive absences have serious academic consequences which may result in no-credit for the class.

3. After the initial 10th excused and unexcused combined absence, the principal will notify the parent/guardian that the child is violation of the Yancey County Schools Attendance Policy and subject to course credit denial. Parents have the right to appeal this decision to an attendance committee. The Yancey County Schools attendance officer will be notified.
4. Students at the high school level may earn credit for days missed up to ten (10) by semester by attending after-school academic sessions. One and half (1 1/2) contact hours will equal one period of attendance. This credit must be earned prior to the end of the semester.

Appeal Rights

1. A parent may appeal the principal's decision to retain an elementary or middle school student to the attendance committee provided that the appeal request is delivered in writing within five (5) days of the students receipt of the retention notice. A parent may appeal the principal's decision to deny high school course credit to the attendance committee provided that the appeal request is delivered in writing within five (5) days of the retention notice. The principal will establish an attendance committee to hear the appeal and notify the parent/guardian in writing of the appeal meeting. Any documents relevant to the absences should be brought to the appeal meeting.
2. The attendance committee will include at least the following:
 - a. The principal and/or assistant principal
 - b. A counselor
 - c. Regular classroom teacher
 - d. Other appropriate staff.
3. The attendance committee will notify the parent/guardian in writing of the decision. The attendance committee will base the decision on the following criteria:
 - a. The nature and circumstances of the absences
 - b. Student's academic performance
 - c. Satisfactory completion of assigned make-up work.
4. Within five (5) school days of the attendance committee's decision to retain or

deny the student course credit, the parent/guardian may appeal in writing to the Superintendent. Within five (5) days of receiving the appeal, the Superintendent will notify the parent/guardian in writing of his/her decision. Within five (5) days after receiving the Superintendent's decision, parents may appeal in writing to the Yancey County Board of Education. The hearing process will be conducted according to established policies regarding hearings by the Yancey County Board of Education. The Yancey County Board of Education's decision will be final.