

Attendance Practice and Policy at JJHS

Parents/Guardians please call 763-7218 to report an absence

Statement of Philosophy

In order for students to receive the most comprehensive education possible, student attendance on a regular basis is vital. It is the responsibility of all educators, parents and students at John Jay High School to ensure students late arrivals to school and classes and absences are kept to a minimum. Those absences that cannot be avoided must be cleared through the attendance office. To maintain accountability on the part of all stakeholders, weekly tardy and attendance reports will be sent out to administration by the attendance clerk and managed by the assistant principals. This plan is aligned to both state regulations and our Board of Education policies.

Excused Absence

The State of New York categorizes absences from school as either excused or unexcused. The Katonah-Lewisboro Board of Education recognizes the following as excused student absences:

1. Personal illness
2. Death in the family or extended family
3. Religious observance
4. Required legal attendance
5. Approved school-sponsored activities including field trips, interscholastic athletic events, music lessons in school by arrangement, other school-approved events or competitions with prior approval.
6. Directed or authorized meetings at the administrative, guidance, or nurse's office.
7. Emergency dental or medical appointments.
8. Military obligations
9. Approved internships or cooperative and work study programs.
10. College visits not to exceed four days a year (*juniors and seniors only.*)
11. Extraordinary circumstances (**pre-approved in advance**) by the Principal.
12. Quarantine

When a student is absent on a regular basis or for three consecutive school days, the school will request a doctor's note. Where there is a concerning pattern of "excused" absences a school administrator will communicate with the parent/guardian to develop an intervention plan for consistent attendance.

Unexcused Absence

Any absence not on the list of excused absences will be recorded as unexcused. Notes excusing absence from entire classes or lateness for reasons such as “needed at home” or “oversleeping” will be unexcused.

School policy requires that all students regardless of their age must provide written documentation signed by a parent/guardian. Students who are eighteen (18) years old and have signed legally notarized emancipation forms on file with the school may write and sign notes explaining their own absences.

Cutting

Cutting refers to unexcused absence from a subject or activity to which a student has been assigned, including an assembly. Any suspected cut will be looked into by the student’s assistant principal and if verified, the cut will never be able to become “excused”.

Procedures to Verify an Absence

Families will be informed of any absence from a class by email within 24 hours of its occurrence by our attendance clerk. They will also be informed that they must document the absence in writing within **two (2) days**. Email messages are accepted. An absence that would otherwise be excused but goes unexplained for more than two (2) days following the end of absence period will be recorded permanently **and dealt with** as unexcused. Unexcused absences that remain on the record beyond two (2) days will become permanent, and the consequences noted below (*Consequences for Unexcused Absences/Cutting*) for unexcused absences will be assigned to the student.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences/Cutting:

Unexcused Absences

- Conferences with parents and guardians in person or by telephone
- Conferences or continuing meetings with appropriate school personnel
- Referral of the family to family court (PINS- Person In Need of Supervision), or CPS (Child Protection Services)
- Credit denial as noted in **Board Policy Regarding Absence Leading to Course Credit Denial**
- Attendance Intervention Plan

Cutting

A grade of “zero” will be assigned to any work done in class or due on the day of the cut. Teachers are not expected to assist students who cut class to make up missed work or review missed content.

Failure to attend class (cutting) will not only jeopardize a student’s academic performance but will lead to disciplinary actions, including:

- In-school detention
- After-school detention
- In-school suspension (student may not participate in after school activities)
- Out-of-school suspension (student may not participate in after school activities)
- Parent/Guardian conference
- Loss of eligibility for teams, clubs, school activities and Varsity Option
- Possible withdrawal from the class in question as per BOE policy

Board Policy Regarding Absence Leading to Course Credit Denial (minimum standard of attendance)-

Students who are absent from a ½ credit course for eight (8) sessions and from a full credit course for sixteen (16) sessions (including from PE) may be denied credit for that course. For the purpose of assigning or denying course credit all absences (excused and unexcused) will be counted. The decision to grant or deny course credit is the responsibility of the building principal.

The assistant principals will communicate with the student and their family when four (4) class sessions for a ½ year course and eight (8) class sessions for a full year course have been missed. This communication is intended to ensure that parents/guardians and students understand that continued absences may likely result in denial of course credit.

A student who has been denied credit for a course due to absences must continue to attend (audit) the class or, with their parent/guardian, petition for an appropriate adjustment to their schedule. Not attending the class, even after credit has been denied, will lead to one or more the consequences identified in “*Consequences for Unexcused Absences*” above.

Making Up Missed Work for Excused/Unexcused Absences (This does not include cutting)

Students who cut classes are not allowed to make up the work for credit.

Students who have not exceeded the minimum standard of attendance:

Students must make up work/assessments missed during excused or unexcused absences (cuts are not included) by arrangement with their teacher usually within twice the number of days as the absence itself. If missed work/assessments are not completed within the agreed

upon time frame, students will not receive the credit that would have been assigned had the work/assessments been completed.

Students and parents/guardians may stay informed about work missed during absences by checking e-chalk accounts, by contacting friends, or by contacting the school to arrange for work to be made available for pick up.

Students who have exceeded the minimum standard of attendance (eight (8) sessions for a ½ credit course and sixteen (16) sessions for a full credit course:

Students *may* complete any work missed by special arrangement with the teacher, however, they *may not* receive any credit that would have been assigned had the work been completed according to the policy for making up missed work.

Making Up Missed Class Sessions

Students may make up *excused* absences by arrangement with the teacher within five (5) days of returning to school after the excused absence. While students may make up *work* missed due to an *excused* absence, students may not make up *unexcused* class absences.

Medical Excuses from Classes or Events

Students who encounter health issues during the school day must report to the health office if they are going to be absent from a class and expect to have the absence excused. Health Office staff will always inquire whether a student is missing a class. Based on a health assessment, the student will be sent to class, allowed to remain in the Health Office, or released from school in the care of parent/guardian. Class absences of students remaining in the Health Office or who are released to a parent/guardian will be recorded as excused.

If a student is unable to participate in a class due to a medical condition (e.g. concussion), a parent/guardian must provide a written note including the date and reason for the exclusion *before* the class session occurs (in advance or on the same day). A student with medical restrictions requiring non-participation for several class sessions or for certain activities in a class must submit a written note from a doctor addressed to the Health Office. A doctor's note excusing a student from school or class participation must indicate the reason for the exclusion, the specific time frame of the exclusion, and any activities in which the student may not participate (example: "no aerobic activity" or "may not read for longer than five (5) minutes"). The school may request further verification of a note from a doctor calling for a student to be excused from a class or classes "until further notice." Curriculum and instructional events will be modified or eliminated based on the ability of the student according to the doctor's direction.

*References: N.Y. Education Law §§ 1709, 3024, 3025, 3205, 3210, 3211
8 NYCRR §§ 104.1, 109.2*