

**NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY  
AGGIE ACADEMY**

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**I. Introduction**

The North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University Aggie Academy recognizes the need for the uninterrupted personal interaction between teachers and students in the classroom environment where learning experiences are carefully planned by the teachers. Even though students may make up class work missed because of absences, they may never be able to replace the educational, cultural and social contacts which they would have experienced through face-to-face instruction and class participation. Students with good attendance generally achieve higher levels of learning than those with poor attendance.

**II. Policy Scope**

This policy shall apply to all students of the Aggie Academy and their parent(s). For purposes of this policy, every reference to "parent" shall include a parent, legal guardian, or other custodian having charge or control of a student attending the Aggie Academy. All references to "Principal" shall include the Principal's designee.

**III. General Policy Statement**

It is the Aggie Academy's policy to enroll its students in accordance with North Carolina General Statute § 115C-378 et. seq. (Compulsory Attendance) and the North Carolina Administrative Code governing school attendance and student accounting. Furthermore, it is the intent of this policy to ensure that the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education governing compulsory school attendance are enforced.

**IV. Attendance**

For purposes of this policy, a student is considered to be in-attendance and present on a school day at the Aggie Academy if they have been Present On-Site or Present Off-Site, as defined below.

Present On-Site – (a) the student is physically present in the school building for at least one-half of the school day for the purpose of receiving curriculum and direct instruction, or (b) when present at a place other than the school, with the approval of the Principal, for the purpose of attending a school activity which has been officially authorized under the policies of the Aggie Academy. This may include field trips, athletic contests, music festivals, student conventions, and other similar activities.

Present Off-Site – (a) the student is present on a school day for at least 75% of their assigned synchronous classes through the use of electronic mediums or has substantially completed assignments, as designated by the Aggie Academy, for the purpose of receiving curriculum and direct instruction, but is not physically present in the school building, or (b) when the student participates in another electronic/virtual activity, with approval of the Principal, for the purpose of attending a school activity which has been officially authorized under the policies of the Aggie Academy, but is not in the physical presence of an Aggie Academy teacher or administrator.

## V. Absences Classified

A. Excused: The following conditions shall constitute valid reasons for excused absences:

1. Illness or injury
2. Quarantine
3. Death in the immediate family
4. Medical or dental appointments
5. Court or administrative proceedings
6. Religious observances
7. Educational opportunity
8. Absence related to deployment activities of a parent

For a more complete definition of each condition, refer to the sections below and to the State Board of Education School Attendance regulations, as they may be amended from time to time. It shall be the duty of the students, with the support of their parents, to make up any work missed due to absences, consistent with the provisions of this policy.

B. Religious observances: Students, upon written request of their parents, will be granted an excused absence to observe a religious holiday or to participate in off-campus religious instruction or worship/devotional exercises associated with a sincerely held religious belief. A student shall not be excused to participate in off-campus religious instruction or worship/devotional exercises for more than two (2) hours of an instructional day.

C. Educational opportunity: A student may be granted an excused absence by the Principal to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity such as travel, an internship or a legislative page. To be approved, the student or the student's parent must submit a written statement explaining how the experience will enhance the student's knowledge or understanding consistent with the standards-based instruction taught at the Aggie Academy. If appropriate, the Principal may require the student to provide evidence (such as a presentation, paper, or other work product) to demonstrate how the educational opportunity has enhanced the student's knowledge.

D. Pre-arranged absences: Upon the request of a parent, preferably made in writing a reasonable period of time (at least 24 hours) in advance of the absence, the Principal may excuse a student's absence for a good and substantial cause in addition to those listed in "A" above.

E. Pre-arranged early departure: Upon the request of a parent, preferably made in writing a reasonable period of time (at least 24 hours) in advance, the Principal may permit a student to depart before the end of the instructional day for any of the reasons for an excused absence or for a good and substantial cause. If a student is removed without a valid reason for an excused absence, the removal shall be considered an "unexcused" early departure.

F. Technical or Connectivity Issues: Technical or connectivity issues that affect a child being Present Off-Site must be communicated to the student's teacher immediately upon occurrence. Upon notification, the Aggie Academy will work with the parent and student to make appropriate

accommodations.

G. Perfect Attendance Awards: Up to three (3) excused absences in a school year due to a death in the immediate family or religious observances will not be considered in determining eligibility for perfect attendance awards.

H. Unlawful and unexcused absences: In accordance with the Compulsory Attendance Law and the Attendance Regulations adopted by the State Board of Education, an unlawful absence (sometimes referred to as unexcused absence) is defined as "a child's willful absence from school without the knowledge of the parent, or a child's absence from school without cause with the knowledge of the parent." The term "unlawful absence" applies only to the Compulsory Attendance Law.

## VI. Unexcused Tardiness and Early Departures

### A. Definitions

1. "Tardiness" or "tardy" is defined as arriving to class or school after the scheduled time for class or school to begin. A tardy is considered "unexcused" unless there is a valid reason for being late. Valid reasons for being late include, but are not limited to, the reasons for an excused absence as defined above.

2. "Unexcused early departure" is defined as the removal of a student from school prior to the end of the instructional day without a valid reason for an excused absence as defined above.

B. Tardiness or early departure constituting an absence  
If a student misses more than fifty percent (50%) of a school day, the student will be considered absent from school, except as provided in Section VI, paragraph E.

C. Excessive Tardiness and Unexcused Early Departures  
An accumulation of five (5) unexcused tardies/early departures, as defined above, shall be equal to one unexcused absence for the purpose of enforcing the compulsory attendance law and the provision of this regulation for addressing a student's excessive absences.

## VII. Record Keeping and Reporting

A. Each student shall be assigned to a teacher, generally the homeroom teacher, for the purpose of recording daily attendance. It shall be the responsibility of this teacher to record the daily attendance of each student assigned to him or her and to inform the students of the value and importance of regular school attendance.

B. The teacher shall inform the students that they are required to bring written excuses signed by a parent, stating the cause of their absences, on the first day back in school after an absence.

C. If the teacher does not receive a written excuse or learn that the cause of the absence was a valid condition for an excused absence as required by this policy, the teacher shall record the absence as unexcused.

D. A Principal may require a student's parent to provide a statement from the student's physician verifying the student's illness. However, if a student has three (3) or more consecutive absences due to an illness, then a statement from a physician is required for the absences to be excused.

#### VIII. Excessive Absences, Tardies, and Skipping class

A. When consecutive: The teacher shall inform a student who is absent or expected to be absent for three (3) or more consecutive days that it is the responsibility of the student's parent to notify the school and explain the cause for the absences.

##### 1. When cumulative:

9. Three Unexcused Days, First Notice, Compulsory Attendance Law. If a student accumulates three (3) unexcused absences in a school year, the Principal or a designee shall notify the student's parent of the student's excessive absences. Such notice shall be provided by telephone, note sent home with the student, and/or U. S. mail.

10. Six Unexcused Days, Second Notice, Compulsory Attendance Law. If a student in grades K through 5 who is subject to the Compulsory Attendance law has been absent without an acceptable excuse for six (6) cumulative school days during the school year, the Principal shall notify the student's parent, in writing, of the student's excessive number of unexcused absences or tardies, and that the student and the parent may be prosecuted under the Compulsory Attendance Law (N.C.G.S. § 115C-378) if the absences or tardies cannot be justified. See also N.C.G.S. § 116-239.8(b)(5). If the student is less than seven (7) years of age, the notice shall inform the parent of the option to withdraw the student from school in order to avoid prosecution. However, withdrawing the student may result in the student being required to repeat the grade. A copy of this notice shall be sent to the school's social worker.

11. Ten Day Notice and Action, Compulsory Attendance Law. If a student between the ages of five (5) and sixteen (16) accumulates ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year, the Principal shall:

a. Notify the parent in writing of the student's excessive number of unexcused absences or tardies, and that the student and the parent will be prosecuted under the Compulsory Attendance Law (N.C.G.S. § 115C-378) if the absences/tardies cannot be justified. If the student is less than seven (7) years of age, the notice shall inform the parent of the option to withdraw the student from school in order to avoid prosecution. However, withdrawing the student may result in the student being required to repeat the grade. The notice shall offer the parent the opportunity to meet or confer with the Principal about the student's non-attendance.

b. Review the report or investigation of the social worker prepared under the provisions of N.C.G.S. §115C-381.

c. After reviewing the social worker's report and meeting/conferring with the student and his/her parent, if possible, the Principal shall determine whether the parent has received notification of the student's non-attendance and made a good faith effort to comply with the law.

d. If the parent has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the Principal shall notify the district attorney and the director of social services.

e. If the parent has made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the Principal may file a complaint with the juvenile intake counselor alleging the student is habitually absent from school without a valid excuse.

f. Documentation demonstrating the parent was notified and the student accumulated at least ten (10) absences which cannot be justified pursuant to the attendance policy and regulation shall establish constitute a prima facie case evidence the student's parent is responsible for the absences.

#### IX. Make-up Work

I. A key element in any effective attendance policy is the provision for make-up work during and/or following an absent period. Make-up work should be assigned when a student is absent, regardless of the reason for the absence. Make-up work may be specific material missed by the student or it may be of a reinforcement or enrichment nature.

J. A parent or student may request make-up assignments for an absence of two (2) or more consecutive days.

K. The Principal should establish a procedure for the collection of assignments or make-up work from teachers as requested by the parents or students. To the extent possible, assignments and/or make-up work may be communicated electronically via voice mail, e-mail or the internet.

L. If a student is expected to be confined to his or her home and/or a hospital for a period of four weeks or more due to an injury, illness or other disability, the student's parent should be referred to an administrator as soon as possible to obtain the services of a "homebound teacher."

M. Students placed under suspension by the Principal will be responsible for work missed during such suspension. Students who are suspended for ten (10) days or less shall be permitted to make up exams and other required course work missed while under suspension from school.

N. Responsibility for completing make-up work rests with the students. Make-up work does not have to be the same as the work that was missed. Make-up work must be completed promptly. Students will have one (1) day to complete make-up work for every one (1) day absent. Grades assigned to make-up work shall be considered in computing the student's overall grade for the particular grading period.

#### X. Attendance for Extra-Class Activities

A student must be present for a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the student day on the day of an extra-class activity in order to participate in the activity.

#### XI. Make-up Days for At-risk Students

O. At-risk students who miss days or classes may be allowed to make up the missed hours during non-school hours. The time must be made up on an hour-for-hour/day-for-day basis with participation limited to those students who are identified as an at-risk student based on the criteria set forth below.

P. Documentation. If the at-risk student completes the required make-up time, an absence may be changed to a present in PowerSchool, but documentation shall be placed in the student's cumulative folder indicating:

12. the day(s) or class(es) that the student actually missed,
13. the dates and times when the make-up work was done, and
14. the date on which the absence was changed in PowerSchool.

Q. Definition of At-risk Student. Any student who, because of a wide range of personal, familial, social, or academic circumstances, may experience school failure or unwanted outcomes unless there is intervention to reduce the risk factors. The following are the primary factors that may identify at-risk students:

15. school performance two or more years below grade level, or test scores below the 25th percentile
16. academic failure or non-promotion
17. truancy/excessive absences, substance abuse, delinquency, disinterest in school, low self-esteem
18. learning disabilities or other physical, mental, or emotional handicaps
19. physical or mental health concerns
20. physical or sexual abuse
21. pregnancy, unstable home environment, family trauma
22. family income at or below poverty level
23. negative parent attitude toward school
24. low parental educational attainment
25. frustration of unchallenged giftedness and unrecognized talents
26. limited English proficiency

R. Procedure for Identification of At-risk Students. Any teacher, counselor, or social worker may identify a student as "at-risk" by completing the at-risk identification form and submitting it to the Principal for certification. Upon receipt of the identification form, the Principal shall determine whether there is a sufficient basis to certify the student as "at-risk" based on the above

definition. If a student is certified as "at-risk," the Principal shall notify the student and the student's parent(s) that the student is eligible to make up missed days or classes by making a request to the Principal to obtain missed classwork, assignments, and/or exams. In addition, the school data manager shall be notified of those students who have been certified as at-risk.

S. **Deadline for Completing Missed Work.** Any missed work completed by an at-risk student pursuant to this policy must be completed before grades are entered in PowerSchool for the semester in which the class or school day was missed by the at-risk student. In other words, at-risk students must make up work during the semester in which the work was missed.

## **XII. Authority**

N.C.G.S. § 116-239.8(b)

N.C.G.S. § 116-239.8(b)(5)

UNC Policy Manual, The Code, Section 502

## **XIII. Additional References**

N.C.G.S. Article 26, § 378 et. seq. (Compulsory Attendance)

North Carolina State Board of Education School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual

**Original Effective Date:** August 29, 2022

**Authority:** Chancellor