

Policies

Newport Public Schools

Students -Administrative Policies – Attendance

No. 5160

Rhode Island law states that, “Every child who . . . has not completed eighteen (18) years of life shall regularly attend some public day school during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session . . .”

It is the responsibility of each student and their caretaker(s) to maintain regular school attendance and to remain in school for the full day.

All students of the Newport Public Schools, including students in regular classes who have reached the age of 18, students in the adult education program, and any post-secondary students attending the high school, shall observe all the rules and regulations established by School Committee policy or the school administration for all students unless special exceptions have been made.

Students will be encouraged to stay in school through graduation. However, if a student leaves early—whether to enroll in an alternative learning program before age 18 or to withdraw entirely after turning 18—the counseling office shall complete a brief exit report documenting the reason for their departure. These reports will be maintained for planning purposes, and the data will be reviewed annually to identify trends.

Records Of Absences – For Each Class Period

It shall be the responsibility of every homeroom and classroom teacher to keep an accurate record of student absences and tardies.

Written Excuses Required for Absences

Absences will be categorized as “Excused” and documented in the Student Information system if the following criteria are met:

1. Caretaker provides a doctor's note for a single day or consecutive days for illness or a doctor's appointment.
2. Student has a documented chronic medical need that inhibits regular attendance and the caretaker provides an annual doctor's note which excuses periodic absences.
 - a. After 5 consecutive days absent, a new doctor's note will be required in order to document the absence as excused.

Absences will be categorized as “Unexcused” and documented in the student information system anytime a student is absent and does not provide a doctor's note.

Excused Absences

With the approval of the Superintendent of Schools and such decision making bodies at the school-level such as the Multi-tiered System of Support Team or the IEP Team for Special Education students, students may be permitted to be absent for part of the regular school day to receive instruction elsewhere, participate in a work-study or internship program, or for reasons in the best interest of the child.

Students may also be excused from school attendance for a reasonable time in connection with:

- Death or illness in the family
- A family problem requiring the student's assistance
- Religious observances
- College visits
- Other specific reasons may be approved by the Principal.

Chronic Absenteeism

Students are chronically absent when they are absent 10% (18 days) or more of the school year. Each school will maintain an attendance team that regularly reviews attendance data and provides interventions or supports to students and families to assist with chronic absenteeism.

As required by law, the Superintendent shall annually appoint an attendance officer/facilitator. Principals shall promptly report to the attendance officer/facilitator every truant and every student suspected of truancy, and any absentees whose attendance is so irregular as to make their parents liable under the law.

When the attendance officer/facilitator is unable to secure the student's attendance at school, it shall be the duty of such officer to prosecute according to the law.

Chronically absent students may also receive social suspension from extracurricular activities, such as athletic events, dances, prom, field trips, and field days. It is the responsibility of each school administration to consistently and adequately communicate with students and families regarding the use of social suspension.

Tardies and Early Dismissals

Tardies and Early Dismissals will be categorized as excused or unexcused per the same criteria as absences. Students who are chronically tardy or dismissed early from school without documentation (unexcused), will be subject to the same interventions as indicated for chronically absent students.

Make Up Work

It is the responsibility of the student and/or caretaker to arrange with their teacher to make up for all academic work missed due to absence. Reasonable make-up opportunities shall be offered. Failure to take advantage of make-up opportunities may result in adverse academic consequences.

Disenrollment

Any student who is not present during any of the first 5 days of the school year will be subject to the following:

1. Attendance Officer/Facilitators will attempt to contact the family to encourage attendance.
 - a. If unable to contact, after 5 days, a disenrollment letter will be sent to the student.
 - b. If the student needs to re-enroll, they will follow the registration procedures. Please note that specific classes/programs are not guaranteed upon re-enrollment.

Students whose unexcused absences exceed 10 consecutive school days during the school year may be disenrolled and will be subject to the following:

1. Attendance Officer/Facilitators will attempt to contact the family to encourage attendance.
 - c. If unable to contact, a disenrollment letter will be sent to the student.
 - d. If the student needs to re-enroll, they will follow the registration procedures. Please note that specific classes/programs are not guaranteed upon re-enrollment.

References

RI Gen. Laws § 16-19-1

RI Gen. Laws § 16-19-3

History: JEA; JECE, 5/10/83; JED, 10/9/61; JEDA, 10/9/61; JFD, 1978; JEF, 10/9/61.

First Reading: August 12, 2025

Second Reading and Adoption: September 9, 2025