

JOPLIN HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Guidelines Procedures for Meeting JHS Attendance Requirements.

The following guidelines and procedures have been developed in order to be more helpful, consistent, and fair to all students. These procedures have been developed to help implement the attendance policy.

Each student should not exceed nine (9) days per semester if he/she expects to earn credit in each course enrolled (Note: *Earning course credit requires that students meet the attendance requirement, earn a passing grade in the course, and take the final exam for the course unless exempt because of the attendance incentive.* The attendance requirement required is figured on a class-by-class basis). **Absences are categorized as either Excused or Unexcused (Truancy is considered an Unexcused absence).**

Excused reasons for being gone from school are absences that are beyond the student's control and both the parent/legal guardian and school can confirm the "legitimacy for the absence." **Excused Absences require proper verification/documentation from the parent/legal guardian the day of the absence; however, it should be noted that prior-notification is preferred.** Excused absences, like all absences (excluding school sponsored activities), count against the 9 days allowed by the policy for earning credit in the course.

Examples of **Excused Absences** are the following:

- a. School sponsored activities.
- b. Appointments with licensed practitioners who deal with dental, medical, or psychiatric problems in the event the appointment cannot be scheduled outside the school day (prior notification of appointments is important).
- c. Funerals or the death of a family member as verified by parent/legal guardian.
- d. Personal illness or injury (parents need to notify the principal the day of the absence).
- e. Counseling, business, or legal appointment accompanied by parent or verified by parent prior to the absence.
- f. Serious family problems or serious personal situations that requires immediate attention upon immediate verification from the parent/legal guardian.
- g. Observance of religious holidays with verification from parent/legal guardian. The principal will have discretionary authority to grant approval in cases of religious observances.
- h. Any other absence of an emergency nature or set of conditions which in the Principal or Assistant Principal's judgment constitutes sufficient cause for being absent from school.

Note: Parents may petition the administration for "modification" for **family vacations** (that cannot be scheduled for any other reason during non-school time

and are out of the student's control) to Excused status provided: 1) the parent makes personal contact with administration well in advance of the event (at least two weeks prior to the event), and 2) the parent provides reasonable justification for the absence during school time.

It should be noted that necessary and unavoidable family vacations will contribute to the overall absence count for each student and are counted against the attendance policy for conditions for earning credit - as are all Excused absences. Family vacations taken at the beginning of school (first week of school or soon thereafter), or during finals week will be considered unexcused absences.

College visits – Any student who has acquired Senior status and is in his/her 4th year of high school may petition administration to make **one college visit per semester** during his/her senior year. Applications may be found in the guidance offices or senior office. Approved college visits will be “modified” as an Excused Absence if all of the following apply: 1) the student must be in good standing by verifying passing grades in all classes, 2) the student attained no unexcused absences for the semester, and 3) the student must be responsible for completing all missed assignments. In addition, the student must list the college attending, date, appointments scheduled for the day, and bring back verification to the attendance office upon return. If all conditions are met the student's college visit will be “modified” to an Excused absence.

Any other college visit will be considered an Unexcused absence and consequences for make-up work and the attendance policy will be followed. In the case a student has an unusual or special circumstance whereby the college, or institution, requires the student to be present more than one day for honors or awards, and it is in the best interest of the student as deemed necessary by the principal; hence, the parent will need to make personal contact prior to the event to appeal for special consideration by the building principal.

Important: Absences not verified with proper documentation within two school days after the absence will be considered unexcused. **The Principal/Assistant Principal has final judgment in deciding whether an absence is Excused or Unexcused.**

Unexcused Absences are absences that are not considered legitimate reasons for being absent from school. Make-up work is allowed for unexcused absences and is recommended, however teachers may determine the timeframe for submitting late or make up work for credit. Students who choose not to make up their work for unexcused absences will lessen their chances to make a passing grade toward the end of the course by not learning the material offered to them.

Examples of **Unexcused Absences** include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Missing the bus, oversleeping, or babysitting.
- b. Leaving school without proper cause, “Authorization”, and permission/notification in the office to the principal/assistant principal.

- c. Non-school sponsored activities, trips, etc.
- d. Three unexcused tardies to a class.
- e. Shopping, staying at home, or running errands during the school day.
- f. Truancy and/or skipping school (see Truancy).
- g. Any absence for which proper procedures have not been followed.
- h. Job seeking, hair appointments, or senior pictures.
- i. Car trouble. (Note: any student who is delayed because of faulty transportation must have their parent notify the assistant principal for the absence/tardy to be considered Excused)
- j. Any other absence, which in the Principal or Assistant Principal's judgment, constitutes insufficient cause for being absent from school.

Truancy is defined as a deliberate or unexcused absence from school. In other words, truancy is an intentional, deliberate unexcused absence from school whether student or parent initiated. A student is willfully truant when he/she does not appear or leaves school without prior notification and administrative approval. A student who is considered **Habitually Truant** maybe referred to the juvenile authorities and/or a student intervention team.

Organized Skip Days- JHS does not sanction or approve student "skip days". Students who willfully *skip school* and are truant will receive proper consequences for their actions. In the event a significant number/percentage of students organize and/or participate in a known skip day, it will be the discretion of the administration to add days during "senior privilege week" or require underclassman to attend additional hours of school to receive course credit or promotion. In the event a number of students *skip school*, they will not be admitted back to school until the students bring their parents and have a conference with the principal or assistant principals.

Tardiness is defined as any unexcused appearance of a student after the scheduled time a class begins. **Three unexcused tardies to a class will be counted as an "Unexcused Absence" for quality attendance purposes, earning credit in the class, and receiving attendance incentives.** Tardiness of more than ten (10) minutes will be considered a late arrival and after three (3) offenses may result in disciplinary action. Tardies and late arrivals will count when determining quality attendance.

Students whose tardiness resulted from being detained by administration or counselors will not be counted against the students with proper documentation/verification. Teachers may make advanced arrangements with other teachers to detain a student and the tardiness (or absence) will not count against the student if proper documentation and procedures have been followed.

Leaving school – Students who have to leave school for any reason must check out in the office or with his/her assistant principal. Students who are leaving school must bring a note from home detailing the: 1) the student's name, 2) date, 3) detailed reason for absence, 4) time to leave, reason, 5) time of return,

6) parent/legal guardian name, 7) parent/legal guardian phone number – home/office, and 8) parent/guardian signature.

Failure to follow proper procedures when leaving school is considered an **Unexcused Absence**, and the student will face consequences for leaving school without permission.

Contacting Parents in the event of an Absence – The administration will attempt to contact parents via telephone or letter for absences when the reason for the absence is unknown. In addition, the school employs a dialing system to notify parents of student absences when applicable. In those instances when a student accumulates an unusual number of absences, it will be the responsibility of the assistant principal to confer with the parents in an attempt to resolve the attendance problem.

In addition, the student will be notified by assistant principal and/or **Student Intervention Team (SIT)** of excessive absences and the affect continued absence from school will have on he/she earning credit in the classes affected. The **Student Intervention Team** will meet with the student to offer support, suggestions, and problem-solve the student’s attendance situation.

Finally, the **SIT** may also meet with the student at the parent/guardians request if the student fails to meet the attendance requirement for credit near the end of the semester. The **SIT** will make a recommendation to the assistant principal/principal in reference to the student’s options for earning credit. The assistant principal/principal will make the final decision and convey his/her decision to the student and parent/guardian.

Parental Notes and/or Verification of Absences should include the following information: 1) student’s name, 2) date, 3) detailed reason for absence, 4) time to leave/arrive/or return to school, 5) parent/legal guardian name, 6) parent/legal guardian phone number –home/office, and 7) parent/guardian signature.

QUALITY ATTENDANCE PROGRAM

To qualify for the Quality Attendance Program you must meet the requirement listed below during the current semester for the school term:

4 days or fewer of absences in class (Excluding JHS school-sponsored events)

The Quality Attendance program doesn’t discriminate between authorized or unauthorized absences. Regardless of the reasons for the absences only four (4) absences per semester will be allowed on a class-by-class basis excluding school-sponsored activities. Students receiving Quality Attendance status receive the option of final exemption from non-college prep courses.

NOTE: If a student opts to be exempt from finals in a final exempt course, he/she will be required to engage in an activity such as: career awareness research, service learning projects in the community, researching careers, participating in counseling activities, school surveys and information/feedback, volunteering at school or in community, college or trade school visits, or any other approved activity from a menu of choices on (or near) the day of the final exemption. Each student who qualifies for Quality Attendance will work with their advisor to appropriately document and report the approved activities. Approved activities will be required in order for the student to be considered in "good standing" as "student activity" during finals for the current semester.

In addition, students who qualify and opt out of finals must provide documented proof of their activities to their advisor by January 15 for the first semester and the last day of school for the second semester. Failure to provide adequate and timely documentation will disqualify the student for QA for the next semester. Senior and part-time students who do not have an advisory period will work with an assigned advisor.

Final semester exams are required in all courses that are designated as "college prep" courses, all weighted courses, and all Advanced Placement and Dual Credit courses. In addition, a teacher will have the option of requiring a final semester exam if the course is considered an upper level class, regardless of honor points distinction, the teacher has the option to require a final exam for the course.

Note: Students may opt to take a final in a final exempt course in which they earn QA. Students who are "final exempt" in a final exempt course can agree to take the final in class and not hurt their grade in the course regardless of their "final exam" grade.

The student must be passing the class for the semester to be exempt from the final in the class. An absence check will be reviewed/announced one week before finals. It is the student's responsibility to check the list and contact the assistant principal's office with concerns. If the student's eligibility changes during that week the incentive privilege is lost.

CLOSED LUNCH - Important – Students who skip lunch will receive an absence towards their 5th hour class in terms of Quality Attendance in addition to regular disciplinary actions.

ATTENDANCE DURING Eagle Time/ADVISORY (Tues & Thurs) – Students who skip Advisory or are absent without an "excused" reason will receive an absence for ALL periods of the day towards Quality Attendance in addition to regular disciplinary actions.

TRANSFER STUDENTS (Students who transfer in during the course of the semester) do not qualify for the Quality Attendance Program.

Late Arrivals and tardies (three (3) of any combination of the (LA or T) will be counted as (1) absence for the class period for the calculation of Quality Attendance.

ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

Immediately upon arrival at school all students will enter the building and will not leave at any time thereafter without first reporting to their principal's office.

RE-ENTRY AFTER AN ABSENCE OR LATE TO SCHOOL

When a student is absent or late to school, the parent should call the principal's office by 9:00 a.m. as to the reason for the absence and the absence will be documented (in some cases additional documentation may be required, Drs. notes, counseling appointments, etc). Failure to do so could result in a check by the attendance office.

If a parent doesn't call the school the day of the absence, with a verified reason for the absence, the student will need to bring in a signed note (by the parent) for school records when the student returns to school the following day after the absence. The attendance office will open 30 minutes before the school day begins to allow students to bring in documentation to verify the previous day's absence.

Five minutes after the school day begins, students must go to their principal's office to get "a pass" to attend classes if the student was absent the previous day. If a student leaves school during school hours, he/she will need to sign out in the principal's office with a verified reason. Upon return to school during regular school hours, students will need to sign in the principal's office for proper verification.