

SMSD ATTENDANCE POLICY

A child residing in the Shawnee Mission School District who has reached the age of 7 years and is under the age of 18 years is required by law to be enrolled in school. Parents whose students are 16 or 17 years of age may, after a conference with a school administrator, file a written release for exemptions as outlined in state law. The students enrolled in Shawnee Mission Public Schools shall be required to attend school on a regular basis. These students are subject to board of education policy (Policy JE) concerning attendance.

Regular attendance is an important part of education. Only by attending classes can a student receive the full benefit of instruction. Class participation is one of the areas of student performance used to determine grades. Students are expected to attend all classes every day. Families are urged to schedule vacations and appointments for students when school is not in session.

General Attendance Procedures (Policy JE-R)

Attendance will be reported every period of the day. All unaccountably absent students will be placed on the daily telephone call list and reasonable effort will be made to contact their parents/legal guardians. Parents who do not desire this service must make their wishes known in writing to the school administration. All absences will be recorded on the student's permanent record with the exception that district procedures indicate that a student should not be counted absent while on authorized homebound instruction. Although they are recorded, absences for school-sponsored activities and in-school suspension will be waived when reviewing the total number of absences for the semester.

A student returning from an absence must present a note from his/her parent/guardian specifying one of the six (6) reasons for granting an excused absence. In exceptional cases, the student living totally independent of a parent/guardian may be given administrative approval to write his/her own excuse.

Students who have been absent because of injuries or communicable disease must be admitted by the school nurse before returning to classes and school activities.

Excessive Absences (Policy IKF/JH)

Except in circumstances clearly beyond control of the student, the failure of a student to attend at least 85 percent of all days per quarter (9 weeks) at the elementary level, and at the middle school level, or class periods at the high school level in each academic semester, shall be considered excessive absences and may result in a failing grade and/or loss of credit for the course. When it appears that absences are becoming excessive and/or student performance is being adversely affected, the principal or building administrators will investigate the cause of the absences and determine if a parent/guardian

conference is advisable and/or written notification of the concerns should be given. If a conference is necessary, an agreement will be worked out indicating positive actions to be taken by the student, the parent/guardian, the teacher, and other support staff to correct the attendance problem.

If the student's attendance does not improve, the building administrator may: (1) refer the case to the proper statutory authorities or (2) issue an "N" grade (no credit) for the semester. Procedural due process should be followed and a parent conference will be held before #2 is followed.

The student individually, or by the parent/guardian, shall be entitled to procedural due process before the denial of a passing grade or credit shall be final. At the high school the following steps will be followed:

A. After a student has been absent nine days or periods, the student and parent/guardian shall be made aware in writing of the attendance policy.

B. After a student has been absent more than 15 percent of any class, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing by the school administrator of the potential loss of credit due to absences. The loss of credit may be waived by the school appeal committee.

The parent/guardian and/or student may request in writing an appeal to the building appeal committee. The committee shall be comprised of a minimum of one administrator, one counselor, and one teacher. The committee shall be empowered to grant an exception provided the parent supplies adequate documentation. This may be in the form of medical records, court records, or other pertinent information explaining why the student was unable to attend school for the number of days under appeal.

Excused Absences (Policy JH)

An excused absence is one which has been classified by the school administration. An absence which falls under one of the six (6) board of education approved reasons for absence will be classified excused if the school attendance procedure is followed by the student and the parent/guardian. In-school suspensions are considered excused under current board of education policies. Make-up privileges are allowed for excused absences. Absences shall be excused for the following reasons:

A. Personal illness. The school administration may, with due notice to the student parent and or guardian, require verification from a physician of absences due to reasons of health.

B. Serious illness or death of a member of the family.

C. Obligatory religious observances of the student's own faith. Whenever, possible and reasonable, administrators and teachers shall avoid scheduling tests, project deadlines, and wherever possible, extra-curricular activities on religious holidays. Students shall not be penalized for these absences from school.

D. Participation in a Kansas State High School Activities Association activity, a district approved function, or a school-sponsored activity.

E. Emergency situation requiring immediate action.

F. An absence which has been requested in writing and approved in advance by the building administration. Activities of an educational nature or involving the student's family may fall in this category.* *Since this absence is approved in advance, make-up work is to be requested by the student before the student leaves. Tests may be taken when the student returns.

Make-Up Work After Excused Absences

Students whose absences are excused are given an opportunity to make up missed work. However, no amount of make-up activity can completely duplicate the classroom participation missed during an absence. The importance of daily participation will vary according to the nature of the class. Individual teachers will enforce standards in their subject areas.

After any excused absence, it is the student's responsibility to make the initial contact with his/her teacher(s) to determine make-up assignments and schedule times for taking any tests missed. Students absent one week or less will be allowed double the amount of time they are absent in which to make up missed work. For absences longer than one week, the time allowed will be one week plus the number of days absent. Students are expected to fulfill long-term assignments as originally scheduled. Students whose absences extend longer than three weeks may qualify for off-campus educational instruction.

Unexcused Absences (Policy JH)

An unexcused absence is one that has been classified as such by the school administration. An absence will be classified unexcused if it does not fit one of the board of education's six (6) stated reasons for excusable absence or if the school attendance procedure is not followed by the student and the parent/guardian. Students will not receive credit for work missed due to an unexcused absence. Teachers shall inform students of assignments missed. Students are encouraged to maintain the continuity of learning by obtaining the knowledge necessary for further study by completing the assignments missed during a period of unexcused absence even though no daily credit will be given.

A student is inexcusably absent if (a) such absence is not excusable under the rules of the board of education, (b) he/she leaves school during school hours without permission, (c) he/she does not attend class, (d) he/she does not attend a required conference or detention period, or (e) he/she fails to comply with school attendance procedures.

If a student is unexcusably absent for more than four (4) times during any 9 week grade period, he/she will not qualify for a passing grade in the class and will receive no credit for that class for the grading period.

Truancies (Policy JHB)

Unexcused absences may evolve into truancy under the Statutes of the State of Kansas. With certain limited exceptions, every child between the ages of 7 to 18 is required by law to attend school. Parents whose students are 16 or 17 years of age may, after a conference with the school administrator, file a written release exempting state law regarding high school attendance requirements. If a child is absent from school without a valid excuse, either all, or a significant part of a day, three consecutive days, or five or more days in any one semester, or seven days in a school year, he/she is truant. "A significant part of the day" is defined as four or more class periods. All cases of truancy must be reported to the appropriate statutory authorities. Kansas Law 72-1113 allows police officers to take a student found off school grounds during the school day into custody and directs the officer to deliver the student to the school. In such occurrences, the school administrator will personally contact the parent.

Administrative Authority (Policy JH)

School administration has the authority to establish school procedures which promote good attendance and the use of after school detentions, in-school suspension, and Saturday school as a response to unexcused absences.

Permits to Leave During School Day (Policy JE)

When parents/guardians request that students leave the campus during the school day, a note from home will be required, and a permit to leave must be secured. During the school day, students must secure administrative permission BEFORE missing a class or leaving the campus. Failure to comply with attendance procedures may result in disciplinary action, since the absence will be considered unexcused. Parents/guardians will be notified of infractions and a conference may be required prior to the student returning to school.

Tardies

A student is tardy when he/she enters the classroom after the appointed time for the class to begin. Interpretation of student tardiness shall be made by the teacher responsible for the class and by the school administration.

The school administration will determine whether tardiness carries a detention period or other corrective measures for students who are frequently tardy. A follow-up on excessive tardiness will be initiated by the teacher who will contact the parent/guardian of the student involved notifying them of the problem. If this action does not produce positive results, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken.

Students must follow procedures for re-admission to class following tardiness.