

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student Attendance Policy

The Board of Trustees of the Foxborough Regional Charter School believes that students realize greater benefits from their schooling when they attend regularly. The school director, or his designee, shall be charged with developing attendance procedures which encourage students to attend regularly, be punctual, and to actively participate in their classes. Such procedures shall include, but not be limited to, (1) establishing a procedure that allows parents to notify the school in the case of a student absence, (2) enabling the school to contact the parent if a student is absent and the parent has not notified the school, (3) keeping accurate attendance records and making such records available for inspection by the DOE, and (4) developing appropriate consequences for absences and tardiness. Such information shall be provided to parents annually.

Students under the age of sixteen must comply with the state's compulsory attendance law (G.L.c.76 section 2). All children must attend school beginning in September of the calendar year in which he or she attains the age of six. Children who reach age 5 on or before August 31 are eligible to enroll in kindergarten in September of that school year (603 CMR 8.02). Students who reach age 6 on or before August 31 are eligible to enroll in first grade in September of that school year.

If a student fails to attend school for seven days within a six month period, he/she shall be referred to the school's supervisor of attendance who may report such student to the appropriate legal jurisdiction as defined in G.L.c.76 section 2.

School Attendance Procedures

Foxborough Regional Charter School believes that regular and punctual attendance is essential for success in school activities. Learning needs to be valued as an ongoing process that requires the daily interaction of students with their peers and teachers. Student absences affect this learning process. While a student may make-up the paperwork missed, he/she can rarely duplicate the learning experiences lost by that day's absence. Absence from a class for any reason is academically detrimental to students. Since education is a cooperative effort and students gain from their interactive discussion with one another, their absences also hinder the class.

Foxborough Regional Charter School firmly believes that the development of desired habits of punctuality and satisfactory attendance is a shared responsibility of the school, the parents, and most importantly, the students. In order to achieve our shared goals, the school has developed the following procedures:

- Students are expected to attend school regularly, on time, ready to learn, with appropriate instructional materials, and completed assignments.
- Parents or legal guardians shall be responsible for insuring that each child within the compulsory ages as defined by policy and law shall attend school regularly.
- The parents or guardians of each pupil shall, annually, at the beginning of the school year, be notified of a telephone number (or website) where parents must notify the school of the absence and reason. Such notification shall be made prior to the official starting time of the homeroom period.

- Parents shall be required to furnish the school with a telephone number where they can be reached during the school day. If the pupil is absent and the school has not been notified by the established time, the school shall call the number(s).
- Each school (lower and upper) shall keep accurate attendance records. Attendance lists shall be produced daily and shall include the names of students who are absent or tardy. Such list shall also include the names of students who have an early dismissal for health or other legal or excused reasons.

Daily Attendance Records

The successful progress of students depends on prompt and regular attendance. We expect students to attend school every day to receive the maximum benefit of instruction.

- The school opens at 7:00 a.m. for students to enter the building, although students are only allowed in the gym prior to the start of homeroom at 7:30 a.m.
- Daily attendance is taken in homeroom. Any student that fails to report to homeroom will be marked absent.
- All students arriving after 7:45 a.m. will be listed as tardy. Tardy students must report to the Main Office to obtain a "late pass" before entering their classroom. Excessive tardiness will result in detention.
- Any student in grades 6-12 who are tardy more than three times in one term will be required to serve a two hour detention for each tardiness in excess of three each term.
- If a student is kept home from school because of illness or if the student will be arriving late to school, parents must call the school at (508) 543-2508 and follow the voice mail prompts.

Early Dismissal Procedure

- Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds at any time during the school day without a note from a parent or guardian and approval from the school office.
- Requests for dismissal must be in writing except in the case of emergency.
- Dismissal notes must indicate the reason for dismissal; time of dismissal, the parent's signature, and a telephone number a parent/guardian can be reached to confirm the request for dismissal.
- Dismissal notes must be turned into the homeroom teacher prior to first period.
- All students being dismissed must report to the main office at the time of their dismissal and be signed out by a parent/guardian or an authorized person listed in the student's emergency contact file.
- Dismissals for illness are issued by the school nurse.
- Students who possess a valid driver's license, have written permission from his/her parents/guardians, and are eligible for student parking at the school may dismiss themselves without the presence of a parent or guardian by signing out per the appropriate dismissal procedures in the front office.

Eighteen-Year-Old Students

Eighteen-year-old students are subject to school regulations in all areas. In order to write his/her own absence, tardy, or dismissal notes, the student MUST have a parental permission form letter on file in the office. Students should remember that the Administration has the final right of

acceptance or denial of all notes. All notes must contain a clear and concise reason in order to be accepted. Students wishing to be dismissed must have the approval of the Administrator before leaving the school building.

Make-up Work, Quizzes, Exams

In the case of any absence, it is the responsibility of the student/parent to contact the teacher(s) as soon as the student's return to school to obtain the missed assignments. Exams are made up according to designated times scheduled by the administrators. No make-up exams will be scheduled prior to the regular scheduled date of that exam.

School and Class Absences

Students who are absent from school 20 or more days in the school year without authorization or approval will not be promoted to the next grade, or in the case of seniors, will not graduate from Foxborough Regional Charter School. Students who are not in school for a minimum of four class periods will be considered absent for the day.

Students who are absent from a class 7 or more days in a term or 20 or more days in the school year without authorization or approval will be denied credit for that course. Missing more than 15 minutes from a class without approval from administration, guidance, or nursing will be considered an unexcused absence for that class.

Authorized or approved reasons which constitute excused absences include:

- Health-related absences. Health-related absences of more than one day due to a single medical event will be treated as one absence with documentation from a parent. If the student is absent 3 or more days due to the single medical event, the parent/guardian must submit a doctor's note to the nurse upon the student's return to school.
- Death in the immediate family or family crisis, when confirmed by a parent or guardian
- Court subpoenas
- Observance of religious holidays
- Approved field trips or school-related and administration approved class meetings, student workshops or functions.
- Juniors are granted a total of three (3) days and seniors are granted a total of five (5) days excused absences for college/career planning purposes. These absences will only be excused if the student presents documentation from the admissions office of the school that they visited.

Note on family travel: Parents are requested to schedule family trips when school is not in session. Vacations and family trips are not excused absences. If it becomes necessary for a student to be absent because of a family trip, it is the student's responsibility to obtain, prior to travel, a list of assignments. Upon the student's return, he/she are expected to submit the completed assignments. Failure to complete the work will result in a failing grade for those assignments.

Truancy/Class Cuts

Truancy is an unexcused absence. Truancy is a violation of the compulsory attendance law and may be referred to local authorities such as the local police department, truancy officers or the

Department of Social Services. The consequence for truancy is seven hours of detention for each full day of truancy. Such detention shall be served in (2) Saturday morning sessions or at an alternative time when school is not in session.

Students not present in class and not known to be absent for the day, will be considered truant from class. Class or homework missed during this time may not be made up. Students will receive a zero (0) for class work missed due to cutting class. Class cuts are considered unexcused absences and will be addressed accordingly. In addition, students who cut class will receive a two-hour administrative detention for the first offense. Additional offenses will be addressed as stated within the school's Disciplinary Guidelines.

Denial of Course Credit

Students who have 7 or more unexcused absences in a term in a specific class will lose credit in that course for that term.

In keeping with the school's commitment to due process, the following steps will occur before denying any student academic credit:

An attempt will be made to phone the parents/guardians of absent students every day.

- After 5 unexcused term absences parents/guardians will be notified in writing of their child's attendance status and its threat to academic credit.
- Upon the 7th unexcused term absence from any class, a letter will be sent home which formally denies credit.
- The student and parent/guardian may appeal the credit denial to the Attendance Review Board.

Attendance Review Board/Credit Appeals

If a student loses credit, he/she may appeal to the Attendance Review Board to have the credit restored. Students who appeal should present any relevant documentation. The Attendance Review Board will either restore credit, allow the student the opportunity to earn back the credit, or deny the student the lost credit.

The student and parent or guardian will be provided with an opportunity for a hearing when credit will not be earned due to excessive absences.

1. Upon notification by the school that credit for a course or courses will not be earned due to excessive absences, the parent(s), or guardian(s), or student (if 18) may request a hearing on the matter. The request must be made to the Deputy Director within fifteen (15) calendar days of notification. For seniors in their third term, the request must be made by the last day of senior final exams.
2. The Deputy Director will convene the hearing and collect data from the teacher(s) in the course(s) where loss of credit is imminent (the student's attendance files, nurse, etc.) and review the student's complete attendance record in that course. Any absence from the class resulting from cutting or truancy will preclude the reinstatement of credit.
3. The Attendance Review Board may consist of the Deputy Director, the appropriate school building administrator, guidance counselor, a teacher, and the school nurse.

4. The initial appeal hearing will be held during school working hours.
5. The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and student will have the opportunity to present information in support of their appeal.
6. Under extraordinary circumstances, a contract may be written between an administrator and a student to improve attendance and reinstate credit.
7. The Deputy Director will render a decision within three (3) school days after the conclusion of the hearing and will notify the parent(s) and guardian(s) and student of the decision.
8. If the matter is not resolved by the Deputy Director's decision, a parent or guardian may then appeal to the Executive Director. This appeal must be made in writing within three (3) days of receiving notification of the decision.
9. The Executive Director will render a decision within three (3) school days after officially receiving the further appeal.
10. Students whose credit has been reinstated in a full year course, and who continue to accumulate absences in that course, may lose credit during subsequent terms.