Dover-Sherborn High School
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DSHS Attendance Procedures and Guidelines

Regular attendance is an important part of student success in high school. Being in school consistently and on time gives students more opportunities to learn, participate, build relationships, and stay connected to their school community.

The legal standard interprets "reasonable absences" as no more than seven full school days, or fourteen half-days, within a six-month period (see MGL Chapter 76, Section 2). A minimum of one hundred and eighty days of student school attendance is required for each year. We understand that certain circumstances may occasionally prevent a student from attending school. Accommodations may be made for reasons related to health, religion, emergencies, disabilities and special education.

Our district and school's attendance guidelines reflect our belief that every day in school matters. Parents/caregivers and school administrators have an obligation to be sure that students are in attendance each day. The school will monitor attendance and notify home when students' attendance is of concern. We are committed to partnering with families to support strong attendance habits and address any barriers that may make getting to school difficult.

An Excused Absence/Tardy/Dismissal includes:

- Documented illness, injury, or medical visit
- Bereavement/family funeral
- Major religious observations
- Extraordinary family circumstances (excused at the discretion of the principal)
- Students in grades 11 and 12 are given two excused absences for college visits

An Unexcused Absence/Tardy/Dismissal is any absence, tardy, or dismissal that is not covered by the aforementioned definition of "Excused Absence/Tardy/Dismissal." Examples of an unexcused absence may include, but may not be limited to:

- Repetitive or chronic absence, tardiness, or dismissals due to illness or injury not documented by a doctor or other medical professional
- Cutting class (suspendable offense)
- Truancy
- Family vacations
- Undocumented absences/tardies/dismissals
- Non-emergency family situations

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Communication with the School Nurse:
We understand that there are times when a student may be too sick to attend school but it does not rise to the level of needing to go to the doctor's office. In these situations, please contact the high school nurse, Arlene Driscoll (driscolla@doversherborn.org), to communicate with the school. A student will not receive an academic consequence for an absence due to illness when the nurse has been notified.

Missing Class Due to an Unexcused Absence, Dismissal, or Tardy:
When a student has repeated instances or misuses attendance procedures, missed work due to an unexcused absence, tardy, or dismissal, they may be eligible for make-up credit at **80% of the original credit**. For example, if a student earns 90% on an assignment or assessment but misses the class in which it was due or administered because of an unexcused absence, tardy, or dismissal, the student may receive 72% (80% of the original 90%).

Completion of a Missed Assessment:
When a student arrives late to class and misses an assessment, or is dismissed and subsequently misses an assessment, **the student may be required to complete the missed assessment during their next available DR block or Flex, regardless of other plans they may have for that block.** Completion of a missed assessment takes priority over other plans for the DR block.

Examples:

- A student arrives late to school and misses a Period 1 assessment. If the student has a DR later that same day, the student should expect to complete the assessment during that DR block.
- A student is dismissed without appropriate documentation and misses an assessment later that day. If the student has a DR block when they return to school, the student should expect to complete the assessment during that DR block.

If a student misses 14 classes for a year-long class or 7 classes for a semester-based class, the student and their parent/guardian will meet with a member of the administration. At that time, the student's attendance will be reviewed, and loss of course credit may be considered. If attendance remains a concern, the student may also receive consequences for attendance at social activities such as prom, sporting events, parking and senior privileges.

Tardies:
Chronic tardiness is defined as being late on more than 10% of school days within a quarter—this amounts to 5 or more unexcused tardies in a 47-day quarter. Students are expected to be in their classroom by 8:30am and ready to begin by 8:35 a.m. Students are required to make up missed work within 24 hours of missed class due to a tardy. This includes any

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assessments given on that day. If a student misses an assessment due to a tardy, and has a DR later the same day, they should expect to complete the assessment during that DR block.

***Note**: A late bus will be available at 4:00 p.m. to accommodate students who need transportation. These policies are intended to emphasize the importance of attendance and to help address any recurring issues that may be contributing to missing school.*

Dismissals:
Dismissals will be treated the same as tardies. Students are required to make up missed work the day following a dismissal. This includes any assessments given at the time of the dismissal.

Absences:
If a student under the age of 16 is absent (unexcused) for 8 or more days, school officials may file a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition which could result in a hearing before a Juvenile Court Judge.

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