

WESTFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Westfield, New Jersey 07090

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Assignment of Pupils

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5120 ASSIGNMENT OF PUPILS

The Board of Education directs the assignment of pupils to the schools, programs, and classes of this district consistent with the best interests of pupils and the best uses of the resources of this district.

Pupils shall generally attend the school located in the attendance area of their residence. The Superintendent may assign a pupil to a school other than that designated by the attendance area when such an exception is justified by special circumstances. Every effort will be made to continue a pupil in the same school.

Pupils who start the year in one school in Westfield and during the year move into the attendance area of another school may, upon request of the parents to the Superintendent, be permitted to remain in the first school for the balance of the year only. This shall be confirmed in a letter to the parent.

The Board of Education may, whenever necessary, change boundaries for the school attendance areas of students at the several schools in the district in order to provide balanced enrollments.

Approved: September 25, 2001
First Reading: October 17, 2017
Second Reading:

5200 ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education requires that the pupils enrolled in the schools of the district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey. The educational program offered by the district is predicated on the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of pupils with one another in the classroom and their participation in a well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose.

The Superintendent shall calculate and monitor the daily attendance rate for each school and the district as a whole. Whenever the average daily attendance rate is below ninety percent for the district or below eighty-five percent in any one school, the Superintendent shall develop and implement an attendance improvement plan.

Absences

The State of New Jersey has changed pupil attendance reporting requirements. It is the policy of the Board that all pupils enrolled in district schools shall be expected to attend all classes/sessions, including homeroom, in which the pupil is registered. In accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey, all absences for all reasons are recorded.

, Absences from school for the following reasons are recorded but not counted towards a pupil's attendance record:

1. By the observance of the pupil's religion on a day approved by the New Jersey Department of Education as a religious holiday or observance,
2. College visit – limited to a maximum of 3 days for pupils in grades 11 and 12 only;
3. Take Your Child to Work Day

A pupil not present in school because of his or her participation in an approved school activity, such as a field trip, meeting, cooperative education assignment, or athletic competition will be considered to be in attendance. All other absences are chargeable and count towards a pupil's attendance record.

Wherever practicable, the parent or legal guardian of an absent pupil is expected to contact the school office before the start of the school day. Board regulations dictate procedures for when pupils return to school after an absence.

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Prolonged or repeated absences, excused or unexcused, from school or from class, deprive the pupil of the classroom experience deemed essential to learning and may result in retention at grade level or loss of credit toward the high school diploma in accordance with policies of this Board.

A warning notice shall be given to any pupil and to the parent or legal guardian of any minor pupil enrolled in elementary or intermediate school who has been absent eight days, consecutively or cumulatively in any one marking period.

A warning notice shall be given to any pupil and to the parent or legal guardian of any minor pupil, enrolled in high school who is approaching the attendance absentee limits of 18 days in a full year course, 9 days in a semester course and 5 days in a marking period course.

Truancy

Truancy is defined by the State of New Jersey as ten (10) or more cumulative unexcused absences.

Unexcused absences from school or from classes within the school day constitute truanies and shall be subject to the disciplinary rules of the Board. The Board recognizes the complexity of factors inherent in habitual truancy and class cutting. It will strive to devise and implement programs which would in effect significantly reduce the incidence of such acts, keeping the best interests of the pupils central to such programs.

Any unexcused absence from school shall be regarded as truancy. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, any absence from all, or part, of the school day, without a phone call or signed note of explanation from a parent or legal guardian. All undocumented absences, regardless of whether or not such absence would have been classified as an excused absence, had parental notification been presented in the manner provided for by Board regulations and/or school policy, shall be deemed unexcused.

Unauthorized absence from any class or activity during the day for which the pupil is scheduled is cutting. Class cutting is always an unexcused absence, and disciplinary action shall be taken in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Repeated truanies interfere with efforts of this Board and its staff in the maintenance of good order and the continuity of classroom instruction. Repeated truanies may result in the suspension or expulsion of any pupil from the course of study during which absences have occurred. However, before any such action is taken, every effort shall be made to identify the cause or causes of the behavior, and consider the modification of the pupil's educational program.

In all cases of truancy, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Continued violations of the attendance requirements will result in suspension and/or other penalties provided by district regulations and New Jersey law.

Missed Assignments

Pupils absent from school, for any reason, shall be responsible for the timely completion of all assignments, assessments and examinations missed because of their absence.

The material covered in each class session is an integral part of the course. Therefore, each pupil is required to complete make-up assignments for all absences. Assignments, classwork and tests are to be made-up by the pupils within a reasonable length of time. Arrangements to make up work must be initiated by the pupil in grade 6 and above and approved by the teacher.

The regular time for make-up work is immediately following an absence. Teachers will then be able to assist pupils with whatever needs to be made up. Teachers shall retain discretion in determining deadlines for submitting missed assignments. Teachers are encouraged, but not required, to provide advance work for pupils in the case of extended absences and with prior notice of an anticipated excusable absence.

No pupil excused for a religious holiday or observance shall be deprived of an award or eligibility to compete for an award or the opportunity to make up a test given on the religious holiday or observance, or be otherwise penalized, provided notice is given to the teacher prior to such absence.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14.; 18A:38-25
N.J.S.A. 34:2-21.1 et seq.
N.J.A.C. 6A:16- 7.6; 6A32-8.3

Approved: October 16, 2001
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R 5200 ATTENDANCE

Definitions

- A. "Attendance" is a pupil's presence in school and in the classroom to which he or she is assigned at the times scheduled for instruction or other school activities.
1. A pupil in grades 1-12 will be considered to have attended school if he or she has been present at least two (2) hours during the school day (one hour in the morning session and one hour in the afternoon session).
 2. A kindergarten pupil will be considered to have attended school if he or she has been present at least one (1) hour during the kindergarten session to which the pupil is assigned.
 3. A pupil not present in school because of his or her participation in an approved school activity, such as a field trip, meeting, cooperative education assignment, or athletic competition will be considered to be in attendance.
- B. "Excused Absence" is a pupil's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for one or more of the reasons listed below. The absence is recorded but not counted towards a pupil's attendance record.
1. By the observance of the pupil's religion on a day approved by the New Jersey Department of Education as a religious holiday or observance;
 2. College visit – limited to a maximum of three (3) days for pupils in grades 11 and 12 only;
 3. Take Your Child to Work Day
- C. "Chargeable absence" is a pupil's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for one or more of the reasons listed below. The absence is recorded and counted towards a pupil's attendance record.
1. When the demonstrated mental or physical condition of the pupil is such as to interfere with learning or prevent attendance;
 2. Where appropriate, when consistent with Individualized Education Programs, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. § 794 and 705(20), and individualized health care plans

3. By such circumstances as the building principal may determine constitute good cause, which may include:
 - a. exposure to a communicable disease or condition that poses a health risk to pupils and staff, as determined by the district medical inspector;
 - b. a death or critical illness in the pupil's immediate family;
 - c. the pupil's required attendance in court or other legal obligation;*
 - d. interviews with a prospective employer or with an admissions officer of an institution of higher education;*
 - e. examination for a driver's license;*
 - f. necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day;*
 - g. family visitation;
 - h. senior project obligations; or
 - i. an absence for a reason not listed above, but deemed excused by the Building Principal, upon a written request by the pupil's parent or legal guardian to the Building Principal or designee stating the reason for the absence and requesting permission for the absence to be an excused absence.

Excuses marked with an asterisk (*) will be considered legitimate only when a note or email is presented in advance of the absence. Any absence due to school suspension also will be recorded and counted towards a pupils attendance record.

With the exception of illness, all notes for the excuses listed above will be confirmed by an office staff member.

- D. "Unexcused absence that counts towards truancy" is a pupil's absence for all or part of a school day for any reason other than those listed above. Absence is expressly not excused for any of the following purposes (this list is intended to be illustrative and is not inclusive):
 1. family travel, and
 2. performance of household or baby-sitting duties.

- E. "Truancy" is a pupil's absence from all or a part of the school day for ten (10) or more cumulative unexcused absences without the knowledge of the pupil's parent or legal guardian. A pupil will also be considered truant if he or she:
1. leaves school at lunch time without approval,
 2. leaves school without permission when school is still in session,
 3. leaves class because of illness and does not report to the school nurse as directed, or
 4. is present in school but is absent from class without approval. Such truancy from class is a "class cut."
- F. School District Response to Unexcused Absences During the School Year That Count Toward Truancy
1. For up to four cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, the Principal or designee shall:
 - a. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day;
 - b. Make a reasonable attempt to determine the cause of the unexcused absence, including through contact with the student's parent;
 - c. Identify, in consultation with the student's parents, needed action designed to address patterns of unexcused absences, if any, and to have the child return to school and maintain regular attendance;
 - d. Proceed in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 9:6-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10, if a potentially missing or abused child situation is detected; and
 - e. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.
 2. For between five and nine cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, the Principal or designee shall:
 - a. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day;
 - b. Make a reasonable attempt to determine the cause of the unexcused absence, including through contact with the student's parent;
 - c. Evaluate the appropriateness of action taken pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.i.(3) and H.1.c. above;

- d. Develop an action plan to establish outcomes based upon the student's patterns of unexcused absences and to specify the interventions for supporting the student's return to school and regular attendance, which may include any or all of the following:
 - (1) Refer or consult with the building's Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8;
 - (2) Conduct testing, assessments, or evaluations of the student's academic, behavioral, and health needs;
 - (3) Consider an alternate educational placement;
 - (4) Make a referral to or coordinate with a community-based social and health provider agency or other community resource;
 - (5) Refer to a court or court program pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.iv. and H.4. below;
 - (6) Proceed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 9:6-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10, if a potential missing or abused child situation is detected; and
 - (7) Engage the student's family.
 - e. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate.
3. For ten or more cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy, a student between the ages of six and sixteen is truant, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, and the Principal or designee shall:
 - a. Make a determination regarding the need for a court referral for the truancy, per N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.iv. and H.4. below;
 - b. Continue to consult with the parent and the involved agencies to support the student's return to school and regular attendance;
 - c. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate; and
 - d. Proceed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:38-28 through 31, Article 3B, Compelling Attendance at School, and other applicable State and Federal statutes, as required.
 4. A court referral may be made as follows:
 - a. When unexcused absences that count toward truancy are determined by school officials to be violations of the compulsory education law, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, and the Board of Education's policies,

in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a), the parent may be referred to Municipal Court.

- (1) A written report of the actions the school has taken regarding the student's attendance shall be forwarded to the Municipal Court; or
- b. When there is evidence of a juvenile-family crisis, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:4A-22.g, the student may be referred to Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part.
 - (1) A written report of the actions the school has taken regarding the student's attendance shall be forwarded to the Juvenile-Family Crisis Intervention Unit.
5. For a student with a disability, the attendance plan and its punitive and remedial procedures shall be applied, where applicable, in accordance with the student's IEP, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 et seq., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; the procedural protections set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:14; accommodation plan under 29 U.S.C. §§794 and 705(20); and individualized health care plan and individualized emergency healthcare plan pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.3(b)5.xii.

Elementary and Intermediate Schools

A. Notice to School of a Pupil's Absence

1. A parent or legal guardian or adult pupil is requested to call the school office before 8:40 a.m. of the morning of the pupil's absence. If the parent does not call the school, the school will contact the parent/guardian.
2. The parent or legal guardian of a pupil who attended morning session but will not attend afternoon session should call the school office before 12:30 p.m. to give notice of the pupil's absence.
3. A parent or legal guardian who anticipates a future absence or anticipates that an absence will be prolonged should notify the school office, which will assist in the arrangement of make-up work. If the absence is to be a long-term absence (ten (10) consecutive school days), home instruction may be arranged where requested by the pupil's parent or legal guardian and deemed appropriate by the district.

B. Readmission to School After an Absence

1. A pupil returning from an absence of any length must present to the teacher a written statement, dated and signed by the parent or legal guardian or adult pupil, of the reasons for the absence.
2. A note explaining a pupil's absence for non-communicable illness for a period of more than five (5) consecutive days must be accompanied by a physician's statement of the pupil's illness.
3. A pupil who has been absent by reason of having or being suspected of having a communicable disease must present to the nurse written evidence of being free of communicable disease, in accordance with Policy No. 8451.

C. Instruction

1. Teachers are required to provide advance work for pupils in cases of extended illness. Teachers are encouraged but not required to provide advance work for other excused absences.
2. A pupil who anticipates an excused absence of more than ten (10) consecutive school days may be eligible for home instruction in accordance with Policy No. 2412. The parent or legal guardian or adult pupil must request home instruction.
3. Pupils absent for any reason are expected to make up the work missed. In grade six (6) and above, the pupil is responsible for requesting missed assignments and any assistance required. Teachers will provide make-up assignments as necessary.
4. Teachers shall make reasonable accommodations to extend time for pupils to make up missed assignments.
5. A pupil who missed a test because of an excused absence shall be offered an opportunity to take the test or an alternate test; in no case will a pupil who missed a test because of his or her observance of a religious holiday be denied an opportunity to make up the test.

D. Denial of Course Credit

1. The teacher will determine the credit to be awarded a pupil for make-up work, subject to the rules set forth in this section. Where class participation is a factor in the learning process, the teacher may not consider a pupil's excused absence in determining a final grade. The teacher may record an incomplete grade, in accordance with Regulation No. 2624, for a pupil who has not had full opportunity to make up missed work.

An elementary or intermediate pupil may be retained at grade level, in accordance with Policy No. 5410, when he or she has been absent 20 or more school days, excluding absences for the observance of religious holidays and during a pupil's

suspension will not count toward the total. Pupils will be advanced to the next grade if they can demonstrate, through completion of home assignments and/or home instruction, that they have mastered the proficiencies established for the assigned courses of study.

E. Notice to Pupils and Parents or Legal Guardians

1. When a pupil has been absent eight (8) days, consecutively or cumulatively, in any one marking period the nurse will notify the pupil's parent or legal guardian in writing of the number and dates of the absences. A copy of the notice will be given to the student support counselor/guidance counselor for follow-up.
2. Whenever a pupil is absent and the parent/guardian has failed to notify the school about the reason of the absence, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian.

F. Discipline

1. Pupils may be denied participation in co-curricular activities if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth in Policy No. 2430.
2. Pupils may be denied participation in athletic competition if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth in Policy No. 2431.
3. No pupil who is absent from school for observance of a religious holiday may be deprived of any award or of eligibility for or opportunity to compete for any award because of the absence.
4. Truancies will be handled as follows:
 - a. Whenever a pupil is truant, the parents will be immediately notified. The principal will meet with the truant child's parents immediately upon return to school to insure regular attendance.
 - b. Pupils who are chronically truant will be subject to suspension and/or other disciplinary action.
5. When a pupil under the age of sixteen is absent without excuse more than twenty (20) days in any one school year, the principal shall inform the Superintendent for possible prosecution in municipal court pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-27 et seq.
6. The absence of a pupil missing from school for unexplained reasons will be handled in accordance with Regulation No. 8464.

G. Recording Attendance

1. Teachers must accurately record the pupils present, tardy, and absent each day in each session or each class. Attendance records must also record pupils' attendance at out-of-school curricular events such as field trips.

2. Teachers must classify and record each absence as excused, unexcused, or truant.
3. A report card will record the number of times the pupil was absent and tardy in each marking period.
4. The attendance roster will be inputted each day, no later than 8:30 a.m. for intermediate schools and 9:30 a.m. for elementary schools, for the attendance secretary, who will verify pupil absences.

H. Appeal

1. A pupil who has been suspended or expelled for truancies may appeal that action in accordance with Policy No. 5610 (Suspension).
2. A pupil who has been retained at grade level for excessive absences may appeal that action in accordance with Policy No. 5410.
3. The pupil may appeal an adverse decision to the Superintendent, the Board of Education, and the Commissioner of Education, in that order and in accordance with Policy No. 5710.

High School

In accordance with guidelines established by the Board of Education of the State of New Jersey, Westfield High School has set a 90 percent attendance requirement for pupils. All absences for all reasons, inclusive of full-day and individual class absences, are recorded and charged toward a pupil's attendance record. Absences occasioned by religious holiday observance, school sponsored activities, college visits (limited to a maximum of three (3) days for students in grades 11 and 12 only) and Take Your Child to Work Day are recorded but are not charged toward a pupil's attendance record.

A. Chargeable Absences and Unexcused Absences

A written note signed by a parent or guardian, or a phone call-specifying a legitimate reason must be received by the Attendance Office within 48 hours of the absence. Chargeable absences are recorded and count towards a pupil's attendance record.

Unexcused absences (class cutting) are penalized and are also recorded and charged toward a pupil's attendance record. At any step in the attendance procedure the pupil and/or parent may appeal on the appropriate form any charged absence.

B. Course Credit

1. More than eighteen chargeable absences from a full-year course, more than nine chargeable absences from a semester course, more than five chargeable absences from health or physical education marking period courses, or the sixth absence in any course during the fourth quarter, may result in denial of credit for the course. On the eighth and fifteenth chargeable absence from a full-year course, on the third and sixth chargeable

absence from a semester course, and on the third chargeable absence in health or physical education marking period courses, a warning or notice to parents/guardians indicating the attendance status and the potential consequences of continued absences will be sent home. At the tenth absence in a full year course and the sixth absence in a semester course, parents and pupil will be required to meet with their Assistant Principal to review the attendance policy. Failure to do so will make the pupil ineligible for the appeal process.

2. The Attendance Review Committee will consider requests for appeals of the policy when absences are occasioned by cases of extended illness or extenuating family circumstances. The presence of unexcused class absences (class cuts) in an attendance record under appeal/review will adversely affect the committee's decision. It is strongly recommended that medical-dental appointments, college visitations, or other non-school-sponsored matters be arranged in such a way as to avoid absence from class.

C. Unexcused Class Absences

1. An absence from class (including homeroom) will be recorded as unexcused (cut) and charged toward the pupil's attendance record when:
 - a. parents/guardians have not been aware of such an absence or understand the absence to be unexcused;
 - b. a note is presented which is not acceptable to the administration;
 - c. a pupil arrives twenty minutes late to class.
2. Unexcused and chargeable absences (cuts) will activate the following SARC (Student Attendance Review Committee) procedures:
 - a. 1st Cut:
 - 1) Two hours of central detention will be assigned by the teacher of the class which has been cut.
 - 2) Parents/guardians will be notified by telephone or in writing of the class cut.
 - b. 2nd Cut:
 - 1) Pupil will be referred to SARC for assignment of Saturday Detention.
 - 2) Parents/guardians and counselor will be notified by SARC.
 - c. 3rd Cut:
 - 1) Pupil referred to SARC for two Saturday Detentions.
 - 2) Denial of credit in semester courses.
 - 3) Parents/guardians and counselor will be notified by SARC.
 - d. 4th Cut:
 - 1) Pupil referred to SARC for discipline process.

- 2) Confirmation letter sent to parents that fourth cut has occurred and warning that a fifth cut will result in denial of credit for the entire course.

e. 5th Cut:

- 1) Denial of credit for full year course will occur.
- 2) Pupil referred to SARC for discipline process.
- 3) Options for the balance of course:
 - i. Remain in class and meet all course requirements to be eligible for summer school, provided pupil has no additional cuts in the class and does not exceed 90 percent class attendance requirements;
 - ii. Be scheduled for a semester course for the next semester if the master schedule permits;
 - iii. Written appeal exclusively through the Assistant Principal on the appropriate form.

D. Student Attendance Review Committee

1. When a pupil misses a class for other than a legal reason, he/she will be asked to explain his/her absence to a faculty-administration committee. He/she will then be counseled, made aware of the seriousness of his/her offense, given detention, sent to his/her guidance counselor to have his/her schedule adjusted, or in the case of repeated offenses, suspended.
2. Pupils denied credit by the Attendance Review Committee and the high school administration will have the right to appeal that decision to the Superintendent, the Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education, in that order and in accordance with Policy 5710.

In Effect: October 16, 2001
Revised: December 10, 2013
Revised:

5240 TARDINESS

A student who arrives after the scheduled start of the school day will be considered tardy.

Students tardy to school or class will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Policy 5500 Conduct/Discipline Code of Conduct and at the discretion of the building Principal.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14; 18A:36-15;
18A:36-25 et seq.

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5308 PUPIL HEALTH RECORDS

The school district shall maintain mandated pupil health records for each pupil pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.4. The district will document pupil health records using a form approved by the Commissioner of Education.

The maintenance and security of pupil health records shall be in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7.4 and 6A:16-2.4. Pupil health records may be stored electronically or in paper format and shall be maintained separately from other pupil records in a secure location, accessible to authorized personnel while school is in session. The health history and immunization record shall be removed from the pupil's health record and placed in the pupil's mandated record upon graduation or termination and kept according to the schedule set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7.8.

The transfer of pupil health records when a pupil transfers to or from a school district shall be in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1 et seq.

Any Board of Education employee with knowledge of, or access to, information that identifies a pupil as having HIV infection or AIDS; information obtained by the school's alcohol or drug program which would identify the pupil as an alcohol or drug user; or information provided by a secondary school pupil while participating in a school-based alcohol or drug counseling program that indicates a parent, guardian, or other person residing in the pupil's household is dependent upon or illegally using a substance shall comply with restrictions for sharing such information in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.4(b) through (e) and as required by Federal and State statutes and regulations.

Access to and disclosure of information in a pupil's health record shall meet the requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99 incorporated herein by reference, as amended and supplemented, and N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7, Student Records.

The school district shall provide access to the pupil's health record to licensed medical personnel not holding educational certification who are working under contract with or as employees of the school district only to the extent necessary to enable the licensed medical personnel to perform their duties. Secretarial or clerical personnel under the supervision of the certified school nurse shall be permitted access to those portions of the pupil health records necessary for entry and recording of data and for conducting routine clerical tasks as outlined in N.J.S.A. 18A:40-3.4 and N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7.5.

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Nothing in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.4 or in Policy and Regulation 5308 shall be construed to prohibit school personnel from disclosing to pupils or adults in connection with an emergency the information contained in the student health record if the release is necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of a pupil or other persons pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7.5.

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.4 et seq.; 6A:32-7.4 et seq.; 6A:32-7.5 et seq.

First Reading: January 3, 2013
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R5308 PUPIL HEALTH RECORDS

Pupil health records shall be maintained for each pupil pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.4. Maintenance and security of pupil health records shall be in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7.4.

A. Mandated Pupil Health Records

1. The following mandated pupil health records shall be maintained:
 - a. Findings of health histories, medical examinations, and health screenings pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.2 and 4.3; and
 - b. Documentation of immunizations against communicable diseases or exemption from these immunizations pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.1, 4.3, and 4.4.
2. The district will document the findings of pupil health histories, health screenings, and required medical examinations that are relevant to school participation on the pupil's health record using a form approved by the Commissioner of Education.

B. Maintenance of Pupil Health Records

1. The school district shall maintain pupil health records in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7.4 as follows:
 - a. Pupil health records may be stored electronically or in paper format. When records are stored electronically, proper security and backup procedures shall be administered;
 - b. Pupil health records, whether stored on paper or electronically, shall be maintained separately from other pupil records, until such time as graduation or termination whereupon the health history and immunization record shall be removed from the pupil's health record and placed in the pupil's mandated record; and
 - c. Pupil health records shall be accessible during the hours in which the school program is in operation.

C. Transferring Pupil Health Records

The school district shall ensure compliance with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7 – Student Records and Policy and Regulation 8330 (Pupil Records) when transferring pupil health records.

D. Restrictions for Sharing Pupil Health Information

1. Any Board of Education employee with knowledge of, or access to, the following health information shall comply with restrictions for sharing that information as required by Federal and State statutes and regulations.
 - a. Information that identifies a pupil as having HIV infection or AIDS shall be shared only with prior written informed consent of the pupil age twelve or greater, or of the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) as required by N.J.S.A. 26:5C-1 et seq. and only for the purpose of determining an appropriate educational program for the pupil.
 - b. Information obtained by the school's alcohol and other drug program which would identify the pupil as an alcohol or other drug user may be disclosed only for those purposes and under those conditions permitted by 42 CFR Part 2.
 - c. Information provided by a secondary school pupil while participating in a school-based alcohol or other drug counseling program that indicates a parent, guardian, or other person residing in the pupil's household is dependent upon or illegally using a substance shall be shared only for those purposes and conditions permitted by N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-7.1.

E. Access to Pupil Health Records

1. Access to and disclosure of information in the pupil's health record shall meet the requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99, incorporated herein by reference, as amended and supplemented, and N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7 et seq., Student Records.
2. The school district shall provide access to the pupil health records to licensed medical personnel, not holding educational certification who are working under contract with or as employees of the school district only to the extent necessary to enable the licensed medical personnel to perform their duties.

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3. Secretarial or clerical personnel under the supervision of the certified school nurse shall be permitted access to those portions of the pupil's health record necessary for entry and recording of data and for conducting routine clerical tasks as outlined in N.J.S.A. 18A:40-3.4 and N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7.5.

Nothing in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.4 or in Policy and Regulation 5308 shall be construed to prohibit school personnel from disclosing to pupils or adults in connection with an emergency the information contained in the health record if the release is necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of the pupil or other persons pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7.4.

In Effect: February 19, 2013
Revised:

5350 PUPIL SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Board of Education recognizes that depression and self-destruction are problems of increasing severity among children and adolescents. A pupil under severe stress cannot benefit fully from the educational program and may pose a threat to himself/herself or others.

All school personnel should be alert to the pupil who exhibits self-destructive behavior or actually threatens or attempts suicide. All such signs of pupil self-destructiveness should be taken seriously and reported immediately to the building principal. The building principal shall notify the pupil's parents/guardians and other professional staff in accordance with policy regulations.

A potentially suicidal pupil shall be referred to an appropriately trained professional within the schools for evaluation or to an independent psychiatric service. Appropriately trained professionals may include the pupil assistance counselor, guidance counselor, school nurse or members of the child study team. A pupil who actually attempts or threatens suicide will not be readmitted to school until a psychiatric evaluation is completed and it is determined that the pupil poses no threat to himself/herself or others. In the event that the parent objects to the recommended evaluation or indicates an unwillingness to cooperate in the best interests of the pupil, the Child Study Team may contact the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency to request that agency's intervention on the pupil's behalf.

The Superintendent shall prepare and disseminate regulations for the guidance of staff members in recognizing the pupil who contemplates suicide, how to respond when a pupil threatens or attempts suicide, and how to prevent contagion among other pupils when a pupil commits suicide.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-111 and 18A:6-112, as part of the required professional development for teachers as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3 et seq., every teaching staff member must complete at least two hours of instruction in suicide prevention, to be provided by a licensed health care professional with experience in mental health issues, in each professional development period. The instruction in suicide prevention shall include information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying and information on reducing the risk of suicide in students who are members of communities identified as having members at high risk of suicide.

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The Superintendent shall prepare and disseminate regulations for the guidance of staff members in recognizing the student who contemplates suicide, in responding to threatened or attempted suicide, and in preventing contagion when a student commits suicide.

N.J.S.A. 18A: 6-111; 18A:6-112

N.J.A.C. 6A: 9C-3 et seq.

First Reading: June 18, 2002

Approved: June 25, 2002

First Reading: October 17, 2017

Second Reading:

R 5350 PUPIL SUICIDE PREVENTION

The following regulations are established for guidance of staff members in recognizing the pupil who contemplates suicide, in responding to threatened or attempted suicide, and in preventing contagion when a pupil commits suicide. Because a prompt response may be essential to a pupil's life, the designation of a district position in these regulations includes the person who holds that position and, if the position holder is absent or unavailable, the person temporarily charged with the responsibilities of the position.

A. Recognition of Potential Suicide

All school personnel, both teaching staff members and support staff members, shall be alert to any sign that a pupil may be contemplating suicide. Such signs include, but are not necessarily limited to, a pupil's:

1. Overt suggestion, regardless of its context, that he or she is considering or has considered suicide or has worked out the details of a suicide attempt;
2. Evidence of preparation of a will, intention to dispose of his or her effects and belongings, or otherwise get life "in order";
3. Obsession with death or afterlife;
4. Possession of a weapon or other means of suicide or obsession with such means;
5. Sense of hopelessness or unrelieved sadness;
6. Lethargy or despondency, or, conversely, a tendency to become more impulsive or aggressive than usual;
7. Drop in academic achievement, slacking off of energy and effort, or inability to focus on studies;
8. Isolation from others by loss of friends, withdrawal from friends, lack of companionship, or family disintegration;
9. Preoccupation with nonexistent physical ills;
10. Loss of weight, appetite, and/or sleep;
11. Substance abuse; and
12. Loss of economic resources.

B. Response to Potential Suicide

1. Any indication of a potential suicide, whether personally witnessed or received by report from another, must be taken seriously and must be reported to the Principal immediately.
2. The Principal shall immediately inform the appropriately trained health professionals, who will investigate the matter promptly and conduct such evaluations as may be appropriate.
3. The Principal or his/her designee will inform the pupil's parents or legal guardians, in a conference if possible, of the signs demonstrated by the pupil and of the district's concern and seek parental approval of the pupil's evaluation. In the event parental abuse or neglect is suspected, the Principal or the employee who forms the suspicion will immediately so inform the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency in accordance with Policy No. 8462.
4. If the threat of suicide is immediate and serious, the Principal may appoint teaching staff members and/or Child Study Team members to a suicide intervention team, which shall determine the potential of the threat by directly questioning the pupil, without mincing words, about:
 - a. Whether any suicide plans have been made, how detailed the plans are, and whether any preliminary actions have been taken,
 - b. The pupil's feelings of hopelessness and the length of time the pupil has had such feelings,
 - c. The pupil's thoughts of suicide and how persistent and strong those thoughts are, and
 - d. Whether the pupil has considered alternative courses of action to resolve his or her problems.
5. After gathering information, the suicide intervention team shall determine the life-threatening risk of the situation based on the pupil's signs of possible suicide (¶A1) and the pupil's responses to questioning.

6. If it is determined that a substantial risk of suicide exists, the Suicide Intervention Team shall:
 - a. Assign staff members as required to assure that the pupil is never out of the presence of an adult who has been fully informed that the pupil may be in danger of self-destruction,
 - b. Refer the pupil to the Child Study Team for consultation,
 - c. Notify the pupil's parent or legal guardian immediately and strongly recommend consultation with a licensed mental health professional or agency,
 - d. Request the parent or legal guardian to sign a release of information form authorizing the chosen mental health professional or agency to share with appropriate district personnel such relevant information as premature termination of treatment, additional threats and/or attempts of suicide, and continuing warning signs.
 - e. If a parent/guardian cannot afford an appropriate psychiatric evaluation, the child study team may schedule one.
 7. A member of the Suicide Intervention Team will be appointed to follow up on the pupil's progress and to determine whether the pupil's parent or legal guardian has consulted a mental health professional or agency. Follow up reports will be made to the Principal.
 8. If the pupil's parent or legal guardian does not sign the release of information form or does not permit a Child Study Team evaluation or does not seek treatment for the pupil, the Principal shall inform the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency.
- C. Response to Suicide Attempt
1. Any attempted suicide, whether or not on school premises or during the school day, must be reported immediately to the Principal.
 2. The staff member who witnesses a suicide attempt on school premises or at a school sponsored event or in the course of school-related travel shall render first aid in accordance with Policy No. 8441 and summon medical assistance as appropriate.
 3. Procedures outlined at ¶B2 through ¶B8 above will be followed.

D. Prevention of Suicide Contagion

1. All district Principals will be promptly informed when a pupil of this district commits suicide.
2. Each Principal will assemble teaching staff members prior to the opening of school to provide them with accurate information, plans for the school day, and guidelines for handling the concerns of pupils.
3. The Principal of the school or building that the victim attended will assign a crisis team from the pupil personnel staff to assist the staff in dealing with the general school situation and any individual problems that may arise.
4. The suicide will not be given prominence by public announcement or a school-wide assembly. School will not be closed in order to permit pupils and staff members to attend the victim's funeral.
5. Teachers will respond to the needs of pupils with as little interruption of the educational program as possible.
6. Pupils will be provided with accurate information and will be given the opportunity to discuss their feelings of loss and their memories of the victim, both good and bad, without penalty.
7. All school personnel shall be especially alert to signs of contemplated suicide among the victim's peers.
8. Teaching staff members, under the direction of the Principal, shall attempt to prevent social contagion by:
 - a. Preventing glorification or romanticization of the suicide,
 - b. Helping pupils recognize that suicide is irreversible and permanent and does not truly resolve problems,
 - c. Encouraging pupils to ask probing questions when a fellow pupil suggests suicide and to report such suggestions to a teaching staff member, and
 - d. Discussing ways of handling depression and anxiety without resort to self-destruction.

9. Pupils who were close to the victim, as well as any other pupil in need, and their parents or legal guardians, as well as any other pupil in need of counseling, shall be offered special counseling services and notified of available community mental health services.

In Effect: June 25, 2002
Revised: