

## SECTION 7

### Attendance Policies

The Nemo Vista School District supports the philosophy that the instructional program is the vital part of a formal education. Therefore, it is necessary to require a student to be in attendance for a minimum number of days each school year. Students have the right to attend school in the Nemo Vista School District per state law, Board of Education policies, and school procedures.

Legal References: A.C. A § 6-18-209,  
A.C.A § 6-18-220,  
A.C.A § 6-18-222,  
A.C.A § 27-16-701,  
A.C. A. § 7-4-116

#### Compulsory Attendance

##### School Board Policy 4.3 – COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT

Every parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the child, or person standing in loco parentis of any child **age five (5) through seventeen (17) years on or before August 1** of that year who resides, as defined by policy (4.1---RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS), within the District shall enroll the child and ensure the attendance of the child at a District school with the following exceptions.

- (1) The child is enrolled in private or parochial school.
- (2) The child is being home-schooled and the conditions of policy (4.6---HOME SCHOOLING) have been met.
- (3) The child will not be age six (6) on or before August 1 of that particular school year and the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the child, or person standing in loco parentis of the child elects not to have him/her attend kindergarten. A kindergarten waiver form prescribed by regulation of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education must be signed and on file with the District administrative office.
- (4) The child has received a high school diploma or its equivalent as determined by the State Board of Education.
- (5) The child is age sixteen (16) or above and is enrolled in a post-secondary vocational-technical institution, a community college, or a two-year or four-year institution of higher education.
- (6) The child is age sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) and has met the requirements to enroll in an adult Education program as defined by A.C.A. § 6-18-201 (b).

Legal Reference: A.C.A § 6-18-201  
A.C.A. § 6-18-207

Date Adopted: May 2011

Last Revised: June 2021

#### Absences

## **School Board Policy 4.7 ABSENCES**

If any student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan conflicts with this policy, the requirements of the student's IEP or 504 Plan take precedence.

Education is more than the grades students receive in their courses. Important as that is, students' regular attendance at school, whether in person or digitally is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them to accept responsibilities they will face as an adult. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom or on-line enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction which results in higher student achievement.

Absences for students enrolled in synchronous digital courses shall be determined in the same manner as for District students attending courses in person.

### **Excused Absences**

Nemo Vista will allow a maximum of eight (8) excused absences per semester. If the student's absences will exceed the maximum of the eight (8) allowed excused days, the parent/guardian must contact the principal for preapproval of the absences. This may be by phone or in person. If the parent/guardian does not seek preapproval or is not approved for the extended absences, these absences will be considered unexcused (see the paragraph concerning unexcused absences).

Excused absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons. Parents need to keep all documentation, just in case their child misses 8 days. This documentation will need to be presented to the principal to receive extended absences.

1. The student's illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students  
(with medical documentation)
2. Death or serious illness in their immediate family;
3. Observance or recognized holidays observed by the student's faith;
4. Attendance at an appointment with a government agency;
5. Attendance at the medical appointment: All Doctor's statements are required to be on the doctor's letterhead with an original signature (no stamps). (Nemo Vista: The district reserves the right to require confirmation of the medical documentation through direct communication with the medical personnel responsible for the documentation and if the district is unable to confirm or verify the absence or the reason for the absence, to consider the absence to be unexcused;
6. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal;
7. Participation in an FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activity;
8. Participate in the election poll workers program for high school students;
9. Absences granted to allow a student to visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and has been called to active duty, is on leave from active duty, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.
10. Absences granted, at the Superintendent's discretion, to seventeen (17) year-old students who join the Arkansas National Guard while in eleventh grade to complete basic combat training between grades 11 (11) and (12).
11. Absences for students excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak because the student has an immunization waiver or whose immunizations are not up to date.
12. Absences due to conditions related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation:
  - Labor, delivery, and recovery;

- Prenatal and postnatal medical appointments and other medically necessary, pregnancy-related absences;
- The illness or medical appointment of a child belonging to a parent who is enrolled at a District school;
- A legal appointment related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation:
  - Adoption;
  - Custody; and
  - Visitation;
- A reasonable amount of time to accommodate a lactating student's need to express breast milk or to breastfeed the student's child on the District's campus; and
- At least ten (10) school days of absences for both a parenting mother and a parenting father after the birth of a child.

In order for the absence to be considered excused, the student must:

- a. Bring a written statement to the principal or designee upon the student's return to school from the student's parent, legal guardian, or treating physician stating the reason for the student's absence;
- b. If the student is attending the District's courses digitally, upload a written statement from the student's parent, legal guardian, or treating physician stating the reason for the student's absence through the District's digital course management platform for review by the principal or designee; or
- c. Provide documentation as proof of a student's participation in an activity or program scheduled and approved by the 4-H program that is provided by a 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the 4-H activity or program.

A written statement presented or uploaded for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days before its presentation or upload will not be accepted.

Nemo Vista requires that all notes explaining reasons for excused absences be kept at home by parents. If the principal questions the number of days that a student is absent, the parent will be required to bring the notes to a meeting with the principal or their designee. The principal or their designee will discuss the notes with the parents and declare the total of excused absences.

Students who serve as pages for a member of the General Assembly shall be considered on instructional assignment and shall not be considered absent from school for the day the student is serving as a page.

Up to one (1) time during each scheduled election, a student shall not be considered absent from school for the time the student accompanies the student's parent when the parent is exercising the parent's right to vote in a scheduled election.

The Arkansas General Assembly intends that students having excessive absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Excessive absences may, however, be the basis for the denial of course credit, promotion, or graduation.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Absences not defined above; do not have an accompanying note from the parents, or legal guardian; a person having lawful control of the student; person standing loco parentis, the student's treating physician, or a 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the 4-H activity or program; or have an accompanying note that is not presented or uploaded in within the timeline required by this policy; shall be considered as unexcused absences. Students with more than eight (8) unexcused absences in a course in a semester may not receive credit for that course. Students in grades 9-12 who have more than eight (8) unexcused absences in a specific class period could potentially lose credit for that course at the administration's discretion. At the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons knowing the circumstances for the unexcused absences, the student may be denied promotion or graduation. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

When a student has 4 unexcused absences, his/her parents, legal guardians, persons with lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification shall be by telephone by the end of the school day in which such absence occurred or by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day.

When a student exceeds the eight (8) excused absences per semester and no conference has been held with the building level administrator, these days will be considered unexcused. The principal will contact the parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis to inform them of the policy and schedule a conference with the parent, guardian, or loco parentis and/or student. If the absences continue with no preapproved circumstances, the building principal will send a letter to the parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis and the prosecuting attorney will be notified. The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

At any time before when a student exceeds the number of unexcused absences permitted by this policy, the student or his/her parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis may petition the school or district's administration for special arrangements to address the student's unexcused absences. If formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement's requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student, the student's parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis, and the school or district administrator or designee.

The Arkansas General Assembly intends that students having excessive absences be assisted in obtaining credit for their courses. Therefore, at any time before when a student exceeds the number of unexcused absences permitted by this policy, the student, or his/her parent, legal guardian, person with lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis may petition the school or district's administration for special arrangements to address the student's unexcused absences. If the formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement's requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student; parent; and the school or district administrator or designee.

Students who attend in-school suspension shall not be counted absent for those days.

Days missed due to out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be unexcused absences.

The District shall notify the Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student fourteen (14) years of age or older is no longer in school. The Department of Finance and Administration is required to suspend the former student's operator's license unless he/she meets certain requirements specified in the statute.

#### **Other Attendance Policies**

A student must be in attendance for three (3) hours to be eligible to participate in any **school function** that day or night. The superintendent or principal may waive this rule in the event of extenuating circumstances.

When a student has been checked out from his/her school, the student must leave campus. A student **cannot** be checked out from one school to attend a function in another school without prior permission from the principal.

When students are not present at school, they may not attend a school event without prior permission from the building principal.

Cross References: 4.8 ---MAKE-UP WORK

4.57---IMMUNIZATIONS

5.11---DIGITAL LEARNING COURSES

5.29—WELLNESS POLICY

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-4-302

A.C.A. § 6-18-209

A.C.A. § 6-18-213  
A.C.A. § 6-18-220  
A.C.A. § 6-18-222  
A.C.A. § 6-18-229  
A.C.A. § 6-18-231  
A.C.A. § 6-18-234  
A.C.A. § 6-18-236  
A.C.A. § 6-18-507(g)  
A.C.A. § 6-18-702  
A.C.A. § 6-28-114  
A.C.A. § 9-28-113(f)  
A.C.A. § 7-4-116  
A.C.A. § 27-16-701

Date Adopted: Oct. 2010

Last Revised: February 2024

**Definition of a Full Day (Elementary Only)**

A full day of school is defined by the State Department of Education as six (6) hours of instruction time for the student. This excludes lunch and recess time. To be counted in attendance for a full day, a student must arrive before 8:30 A.M. and stay the remainder of the day. If a student checks out early he must not leave before 2:30 P.M. to be considered in full attendance.

**Definition of a Half Day (Elementary Only)**

With the definition of a full day being six (6) hours of instruction, a half day will be 2 instructional hours before lunch/recess or 2 instructional hours after lunch/recess

**Definition of Half Day (Middle School/High School)**

In Middle School and High School, attendance is taken on a period-by-period basis. Once a student has missed 5 more class periods, they will be considered a full day absence. Students missing 3 class periods will be considered as a ½ day absence.

**Tardy**

**School Board Policy 4.9- Tardies**

Promptness is an important character trait that District staff is to encourage to model and help develop in our schools' students. At the same time, promptness is the responsibility of each student. Students who are late to class show a disregard for both the teacher and their classmates which compromises potential student achievement.

Date Adopted: Oct. 2010

**Elementary Tardies:** If a student arrives at school after 8:05 A.M. he/she will be considered tardy and must check in through the principal's office.

Students will not be counted tardy in the event of bus delays.

Parents who drop off children should make every effort to get their children to school in time to have breakfast and get to their classrooms before 8:05. There is a considerable amount of work involved in correcting records for students who come in late.

Parents of students who are tardy are asked to come to the office and sign their child/children in before they will be allowed to attend class.

5 (five) unexcused tardies within a semester will be accumulated and considered full-day unexcused absences. Parents will receive a phone call or have a conference with the principal upon 3 (three) unexcused tardies in a semester. (The definition of unexcused tardy will follow the same guidelines as unexcused absences.)

Last Revised: June 2014

#### **Elementary Early Sign-out:**

Students may be signed out between 2:30 and 3:00 without it being counted as a half-day absence. Five (5) early sign-outs within a semester will be accumulated and considered full-day unexcused absences. Parents may receive a phone call or have a conference with the principal upon three (3) early sign-outs in a semester.

#### **Middle School/High School Tardies:**

A student will be prompt on arriving at school and to class. Teachers will tell students when they are tardy, and the tardy will be turned in to the office. Students are expected to be in their designated rooms in their seats when the tardy bell rings. If a teacher holds a student between classes, the student should obtain an excused tardy slip from that teacher. Excessive unexcused tardies will result in disciplinary action.

Unexcused tardies:

1. 3<sup>rd</sup> Tardy (semester only) – Conference with student and warning (Minimal)
2. 4<sup>th</sup> Tardy (semester only) – Corporal punishment/In-school isolation

Five (5) unexcused tardies within a semester will be accumulated and considered a full-day unexcused absence.

#### **Middle School/High School Sign-out:**

Students may be signed out between 2:30 and 3:10 without it being counted as a half-day absence. Five (5) early sign-outs within a semester will be accumulated and considered full-day unexcused absences. Parents may receive a phone call or have a conference with the principal upon three (3) early sign-outs in a semester.

Last Revised: June 2021

### **Make-up Work**

#### **School Board Policy 4.8 – Make-up Work**

Students who miss school due to an absence shall be allowed to make up the work they missed during their absence under the following rules.

1. Students are responsible for asking the teachers of the classes they missed what assignments they need to make up.
2. Teachers are responsible for providing the missed assignments when asked by a returning student.
3. Students are required to ask for their assignments on their first day back at school or their first class day after their return.
4. Make-up tests are to be rescheduled at the discretion of the teacher, but must be aligned with the schedule of the missed work to be made up.
5. Students shall have one class day to make up their work for each class day they are absent.
6. Make-up work which is not turned in within the make-up schedule for that assignment shall receive a zero.
7. Students are responsible for turning in their make-up work without the teacher having to ask for it.
8. Students who are absent on the day their make-up work is due must turn in their work the day they return to school whether or not the class for which the work is due meets the day of their return.

9. As required/permitted by the student's Individual Education Program or 504 Plan.

Work may not be made up for credit for unexcused absences **unless** the unexcused absences are part of a signed agreement as permitted by policy 4.7---ABSENCES.

Work for students serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be per the District's programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during the student's period of suspension or expulsion.

Instead of the timeline above, assignments for students who are excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak are to be made up as outlined in Policy 4.57---IMMUNIZATION.

Parents who wish to pick up a child's work for the day(s) missed should notify the child's teacher early in the morning so the teacher will have ample time to get the work together.

In addition to the make-up work process above, after a pregnancy-related or parenting-related period of absence, a student may choose from various options to make up missed work, including without limitation:

- a. Retaking a semester at the District school where the student is enrolled;
- b. Participating in an online course credit recovery program;
- c. Being granted six (6) weeks to continue at the same pace and finish the semester at a later date, provided that the student may:
  - Complete the student's coursework within the current school year; or
  - Attend previously scheduled summer school classes made available by the District Where the student is enrolled; and
- d. Receiving home-based instruction services.

Cross Reference: 4.7---ABSENCES

4.30---SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

4.31---EXPULSION

4.57---IMMUNIZATIONS

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-502

A.C.A. § 6-18-234

DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

Date Adopted: Oct. 2010

Last Revised: February 2024

### **Check-out Policy**

Whenever parents check a child out of school early, they must sign the child out through the office. Only adults that the parent(s) have designated on their child's call sheet can pick up a student. If other arrangements need to be made, a note or a phone call must be received in the office.

The child must have a note giving written permission or the parent may call to give phone permission if a child is to take an alternative way home. A note will be taken to the child's teacher from the office.

When a student is checked out early, they may not attend a function at another school or Nemo Vista without prior permission from the principal where they are enrolled.

Students who are eighteen (18) years of age are able to check themselves in and out of the school.