Effective 2026-2027

EASTERN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Eastern Local School District Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is essential to student achievement, graduation readiness, career and college preparedness, and responsible citizenship. Students who attend school consistently are more likely to experience academic success, develop positive relationships, and participate fully in educational opportunities.

The Board is committed to promoting a culture that values attendance, identifies and removes barriers to student participation, and reduces chronic absenteeism through proactive, supportive, and collaborative practices involving students, families, staff, and community partners.

Definitions

The Board adopts the following definitions for attendance monitoring, reporting, and intervention efforts.

Compulsory School Age

A child between six (6) and eighteen (18) years of age is of compulsory school age and must attend school each day school is in session. A child under six years of age who is enrolled in kindergarten shall also be considered of compulsory school age.

Chronic Absence

A student is considered chronically absent when they miss ten percent (10%) or more of instructional time during a school year for any reason, including excused absences, unexcused absences, medical absences, and out-of-school suspensions.

Excused Absence

The Board recognizes that certain circumstances may prevent a student from attending school. Excused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Personal illness of the student, which may require physician verification;
- Illness of a family member requiring the student's presence;
- Quarantine of the home;
- Death of a relative;
- Medical, dental, behavioral health, or counseling appointments;
- Religious observances not covered under Religious Expression provisions;
- Pre-enlistment military processing activities;
- Foster care placement changes or related court proceedings;
- Circumstances related to student homelessness;
- Military deployment-related activities involving a parent, guardian, or custodian;
- Attendance at a driver’s education course for up to two (2) hours on no more than four (4) days (limited to a total of eight (8) hours during the school year), provided that the absence does not occur during a core curriculum subject course
- Emergencies or other situations determined by the Principal to constitute good and sufficient cause for absence

Parents, guardians, or custodians must provide an explanation for the absence according to District procedures.

State law requires school personnel to notify parents of student absences. Parents are required to telephone the school by 10:00 A.M. when their son/daughter is absent. According to state law, the student must present a note from the parent or guardian upon the return to school. If the student does not have a note upon his/her return, the student has two (2) school days to bring the note from the parent or guardian in order to have an excused absence. The note must state:

1. Date of absence
2. Reason for absence
3. Signature of parent or guardian

Religious Expression

Students may receive up to three (3) excused absences annually for religious expression activities. Written notification must be provided to the building principal within fourteen (14) days of the start of the school year or within fourteen (14) days of enrollment.

Students shall be provided reasonable accommodations for missed assignments, assessments, and instructional activities and may participate in extracurricular activities on those days.

Postsecondary Visitation

Students are encouraged to explore postsecondary opportunities, including colleges, universities, technical schools, military service, and career training programs. With prior approval from the building principal or designee, students may be counted present for up to two (2) school days per year while participating in approved postsecondary visitation activities.

Habitual Truancy

A student is habitually truant when absent without legitimate excuse for:

- Thirty (30) or more consecutive hours;
- Forty-two (42) or more hours in one school month; or
- Seventy-two (72) or more hours during a school year.

The Eastern Local School District shall follow Ohio law regarding attendance intervention, family engagement, and court referral procedures when required.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out-of-school suspension is a disciplinary action that removes a student from the regular educational setting. Such absences contribute to chronic absenteeism calculations.

Truancy alone shall not serve as the sole basis for suspension or expulsion.

Attendance Expectations and Interventions

Students are expected to maintain regular attendance. Excessive absences may result in required attendance interventions, attendance recovery opportunities (i.e., Friday/Saturday schools, summer school/credit recovery, etc.), parent conferences, and referral to an attendance intervention team as required by Ohio law

Absences due to family vacation

Vacations must be pre-approved and will be based on the student's academic standing, attendance history and prior vacation request history. If granted attendance will still be counted against the state threshold and such absences are considered unexcused by the law of the State of Ohio. Eastern Local Schools discourage the loss of school time for these purposes but they are allowed.

The following procedure shall be used:

1. Parents must notify the principal, in writing, one week prior to the date of the vacation.
2. The student must notify his/her teachers one week prior to the absence in order to arrange for make-up work.
3. Completed assignments must be turned in to the appropriate teachers upon the student's return to school.
4. Students who fail to get assignments in advance will not be permitted to make up the work missed during their absence.
5. Vacation absences will be recorded as unexcused; however, students who comply with the above procedures will be permitted to turn in their assignments for credit.

Class work missed due to absence

Students will have the opportunity to make up missed work whether the absence is excused or unexcused. This make up work may be done after school and/or at Friday/Saturday school. Upon a student's absence, the student has a maximum of one (1) day for an unexcused absence or two (2) school days for an absence that meets the excused absence criteria; to make up work missed in order to receive credit, with a limit not to exceed five (5) days for unexcused absences and ten (10) school days total for making up work. Any homework assigned prior to the absence will be due when the student returns to school. Also, if the student is aware of a test or quiz prior to the absence, he/she may be required to take that test or quiz on the day he/she returns to school. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for work to be sent home during an extended period of absence.

A student who is suspended shall be permitted to complete any classroom assignments missed because of the suspension. (Board Adopted NEOLA Policy 5610). The guidelines above do apply.

Perfect Attendance

Students not physically present in the building will be counted as absent (or tardy/early dismissal) either excused or unexcused unless on a school sanctioned field trip or activity. If there is a question as to what is "school sanctioned", check with the principal prior to the absence. College or job interviews, 4-H activities, etc. will be counted as absent.

Tardiness to school/early dismissal

Eastern Middle School and High School:

Students who arrive at school after the first bell and until 8:45 a.m. are classified as "tardy". Those leaving after 12:45 p.m., but before the regular dismissal time are classified as "early dismissal." Any student missing 76 minutes or more of school will be counted as half-day absence. This also applies to students with modified schedules.

Russellville and Sardinia Elementary:

Students who arrive at school after the first homeroom bell (8:30) and until 9:45 a.m. are classified as "tardy". Those leaving after 2:15 p.m., but before the regular dismissal time are classified as "early dismissal". Any student missing 76 minutes or more of school will be counted as a half-day absence.

Students must sign in and sign out through the office and provide proper documentation. Unexcused tardies and early dismissals will be dealt with throughout the district in the following manner or at the principal's discretion:

Grades K-5

- 1st through 3rd unexcused tardy or early dismissal—warning
- 4th through 9th unexcused tardy or early dismissal—noon detention
- 10 or more unexcused tardy or early dismissal—noon or after school detention or principal will decide

Grades 6-12

- 1st -3rd unexcused tardy or early dismissal—warning
- 4th – 6th unexcused tardy or early dismissal –Noon Detention ● 7th – 9th unexcused tardy or early dismissal – Friday/Saturday School
- 10 or more unexcused tardy(s) or early dismissals – may result in Friday/Saturday School or alternative school or principal will decide 15 | Page Eastern Local School District Student Handbook
    - On the 10th unexcused tardy, the student will lose ALL driving privileges for the year.

ATTENDANCE ELIGIBILITY

In order to keep the emphasis of the school on academics, the following regulations will be enforced regarding absence, tardiness and/or early dismissals. Please become familiar with this policy.

Middle School/High School Students who are absent either for a full day, arrive after 8:45 a.m. or leave before 12:45 p.m. shall not be permitted to participate in any extra-curricular activity, including school dances, after school on that day. Exceptions will be rare and no exceptions will be considered unless:

A. Approval has been given in advance of the beginning of the absence by the principal or his/her designee.
B. Written documentation of the absence is presented upon returning to school.
C. Extenuating circumstances may be appealed through the building principal for consideration. Each appeal will be considered on an individual basis.

Exceptions that may be considered are doctor or dental appointments, funerals, court appearances. etc. Saturday and Sunday activities are not affected by this policy.