

## General Information

### **EKCS Attendance Regulations**

Every student has a right to educational opportunities that will enable the student to develop his or her full potential. Attendance regulations are based on the principle that regular school attendance maximizes the student's interaction with his or her teachers and is a major component of academic success. Improved school attendance generally increases student achievement. Therefore, attendance regulations that provide for early identification of attendance problems and effective methods to address them will allow students to be more successful. Implementation of attendance regulations requires cooperation among all members of the educational community, including parents, students, teachers, administrators, and support staff.

An amendment of section 104.1 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education concerning pupil attendance allows school districts to develop a comprehensive attendance policy that will establish and manage student attendance in relation to receiving course credit. These attendance regulations will make it clear to students and their families that the Edwards-Knox Jr./ Sr. High School now has a zero tolerance for truancy. Attendance in school is the responsibility of the students and their parents. Any student absent from a class more than 15% of the time, for any reason (including legal and illegal absences), will not receive credit for the course.

The objectives of the regulations are to:

- A. Keep records for the use of verification and compliance with compulsory education.
- B. Know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons.
- C. Identify attendance patterns to design improvement efforts.
- D. Close gaps in student performance.
- E. Stress the importance of the interaction that occurs in the classroom between students and teachers.

### **Letters to Students and Parents**

Attendance warning letters will be sent home when students have accumulated absences that meet various thresholds:

Stage one - 7 accumulated absences for full credit class, 4 accumulated absences for half credit courses.

Stage two - 14 accumulated absences for full credit class, 7 accumulated absences for half credit courses.

Stage three - 21 accumulated absences for full credit class, 11 accumulated absences for half credit courses.

Stage four - 28 accumulated absences for full credit class, 14 accumulated absences for half credit courses.

### **Legal Absences**

The Edwards-Knox School District has defined the following reasons to be legal absences: school sponsored activities, illness of pupil, severe storm or impassable roads, sickness or death in the family, requiring student's presence at home (this does not provide for continual absences), religious observance, quarantine, required presence in court, music lessons, clinic and health treatment, and road test. Collegiate visits must be pre-approved through the Guidance Department. Students are responsible to make up any course work that has been missed immediately upon their return.

Students must bring a written excuse explaining the reason for their absence signed by a parent and/or guardian upon their return to school when a student has been absent for less than four days. Students who are out for more than three days must have a doctor's note. Students who leave early or arrive late due to a medical reason must bring verification from the medical office confirming their appointment. All absences will remain recorded as illegal absences if the student has not brought a written excuse in within 48 hours of returning to school. Except for illegal absences, students should be

provided one day per legal absence to make up work unless the teacher has specifically stated in their grading policies a different expectation, i.e., three days legally absent means three days to make up work.

### **Determination for Class Credit**

- I. Half credit classes – credit will be denied if a student misses fourteen classes or higher.
- II. Full credit classes – credit will be denied if a student misses twenty-eight classes or higher.
- III. If a student is legally absent, teachers at their design and discretion may allow students to make up the class.
- IV. Students who make up the actual class at another time will be credited with attending and will not be charged with an absence. The 85% attendance requirement must be achieved one week prior to the first date of that course's final examination. Transfers and students re-enrolling after having dropped out will be expected to attend 85% of the scheduled class meetings during their time of enrollment. The procedures followed will be prorated according to their possible number of class meetings.

### **Tardiness**

Students who are tardy to school or class three times will be given an afterschool detention unless an approved excuse is given (a hall pass signed by another teacher or staff member). Students who are tardy and miss 50% of class for unexcused reasons shall be marked absent for that class.

### **Illegal Absences**

All illegal absences from class will be reported to the Main Office. A notice will be sent home notifying parents of absences. A letter will be sent to the parents explaining the number of days and the school policy regarding attendance. For full credit courses, parents will be notified in writing at the 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> absence. For half credit courses, parents will be notified in writing at the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> absence.

If a student and/or parent feel that there are extenuating circumstances regarding an absence(s), an appeal can be made to the Building Principal. An attendance review committee may be set up, made up of respective attendance officer, a guidance counselor, two teachers, two parents and two students to review extenuating circumstances related to a student's absence from school. The Attendance Review Committee will meet to make a recommendation to the Building Principal. The Building Principal will make the final decision. Illegal absences may not be turned into legal absences when a parent asks for their child's records to be reviewed. Legal documentation must have been supplied throughout the year.

In cases of habitual truancy, the Building Principal is mandated by law to hotline the parent to New York State for Educational Neglect. To assure due process, the implementation of this general attendance policy will be in accordance with rules and regulations as developed by the administration. Further, the District shall vigorously publicize and disseminate this policy in order to ensure faculty, student and parental awareness.