

School Attendance – Snapshot*

CCS Attendance Policy (Code 4400)

NC Compulsory Attendance Law (115C-378)

CCS Attendance Policy (4400)

Excused Absences

When a student must miss school, a **written excuse from a parent or guardian must be presented to the teacher within two school days of the student's return after an absence. Written excuses submitted beyond two school days will be subject to principal approval. An absence may be excused for the following reasons:**

1. Personal illness or injury which makes the student physically unable to attend school
2. Isolation ordered by the State Board of Health
3. Death in the immediate family
4. Medical or dental appointment
5. Participation under subpoena as a witness in a court proceeding
6. Observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent's
7. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, including but not limited to college visitation, or service as a legislative or Governor's page, with prior approval (based on the student's current and previous attendance history) from the principal or designee and with demonstration of learning by the student
8. Pregnancy and related conditions or parenting, when medically necessary
9. Any exam exemption(s) approved in accordance with the provisions of Policy 3405.

In addition, a student whose parent or legal guardian (a) is an active duty member of the uniformed services as defined by Policy 4050, Children of Military Families, and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the superintendent or designee to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian.

Absences due to extended illnesses or after accumulating more than ten (10) absences require a statement from a physician. Notes/statements from a physician may require verification by school staff.

The principal will notify parents and take all other steps required by the compulsory attendance law, G.S. 115C-378, for excessive absences. Students may not be suspended for truancy.

To receive credit for courses, students must not have excessive absences. At the **elementary level**, more than ten (10) absences a semester or 20 absences a year are considered excessive. At the **middle school level**, more than ten (10) absences in a course per semester or 20 absences a year are considered excessive. At the **high school level**, more than eight (8) absences in a course during each 90-day session are considered excessive. The principal or a committee established by the principal will review other measures of academic achievement, the circumstances of the absences (excused or unexcused), the number of absences and the extent to which the student completed missed work.

The principal shall notify the parent/guardian in writing of a decision to retain the student or deny course credit.

Students with Special Needs

In applying this policy, teachers and administrators shall make reasonable accommodations for students who are absent or tardy because of the student's disabilities or special needs. Students with excused absences due to **documented chronic health problems** will be exempted from this policy.

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NC Compulsory Attendance Law (115C-378)

Every parent, guardian or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child between the ages of seven and 16 years shall cause the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned shall be in session. Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is enrolled in a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school.

No person shall encourage, entice or counsel any child of compulsory school age to be unlawfully absent from school. The parent, guardian, or custodian of a child shall notify the school of the reason for each known absence of the child, in accordance with local school board policy.

After not more than **six unexcused absences**, the principal or the principal's designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian by mail that he or she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the State and local boards of education.

After **10 accumulated unexcused absences** in a school year, the principal or the principal's designee shall review any report or investigation prepared under G.S. 115C-381 and shall confer with the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian, if possible, to determine whether the parent, guardian, or custodian has received notification pursuant to this section and made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If the principal or the principal's designee determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the principal shall notify the district attorney and the director of social services of the county where the child resides. If the principal or the principal's designee determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the principal may file a complaint with the juvenile court counselor pursuant to Chapter 7B of the General Statutes that the child is habitually absent from school without a valid excuse. Upon receiving notification by the principal or the principal's designee, the director of social services shall determine whether to undertake an investigation under G.S. 7B-302.

115C – 380 Penalty for Violation

Except as otherwise provided in G.S. 115C-379, any parent, guardian or other person violating the provisions of this Part shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. (1955, c. 1372, art. 20, s. 4; 1969, c. 799, s. 2; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 888; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2005-318, s. 1.)

*Excerpts from CCS Policy 4400(revised Nov. 2017) and NC Compulsory Attendance Law (115C-378)