

Policy 4003 - Attendance Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Upshur County Board of Education believes that regular attendance of students at school is a requirement for the delivery of a good formal education to its students. The intention of this attendance policy is to promote regular school attendance and to meet the individual needs of students to assist them in reaching their learning potential. Since instruction is planned so that each day's work builds on work that has been completed earlier, all students are expected to attend school regularly and to be prompt in arriving for classes. The Upshur County Board of Education affirms that a direct relationship exists between regular school attendance and effective learning. The Upshur County Board of Education further affirms that regular school attendance is a critical factor leading to high school graduation and the development of good work habits in the market place.

2. Policy Development

- 2.1. The Upshur County Board of Education will seek input from principals, attendance directors, teachers, parents/guardians/custodians, and community leaders when developing or revising the attendance policy. The Upshur County Board of Education will place revisions to the Attendance Policy on a period of public comment before passing said revisions into policy. The public comment period will be advertised in the local media.
- 2.2. Upshur County Schools will conduct an annual attendance policy evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the attendance policy. All revisions to the attendance policy will be submitted to the West Virginia Department of Education for their review and approval.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Absence** – Not being physically present in the school facility for any reason:
 - 3.1.1. **Allowable Deductions:**
 - 3.1.1.1. Absences that result from school-approved curricular/co-curricular activities.
 - 3.1.1.2. Failure of the bus to run/hazardous conditions.
 - 3.1.1.3. Students not in attendance due to disciplinary measures.
 - 3.1.1.4. School/county directed placements outside the traditional classroom environment included but not limited to homebound placement and in-school suspension.
- 3.2. **Attendance** - for statistical purposes, attendance will be reported as aggregated to the nearest half day according to the definitions below:
 - 3.2.1. Full-day attendance is being present at least .74 of the school day.
 - 3.2.2. Half-day attendance is being present at least .50 of the school day.
- 3.3. **Attendance Rate** - The number of days present divided by the number of days of membership, multiplied by one hundred, equals attendance rate for students on the attendance registers in classes K-12.
- 3.4. **Dropout** – A dropout is a student who:
 - 3.4.1. Was enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year and was not enrolled on October 1 of the current school year.
 - 3.4.2. Was not enrolled on October 1 of the previous school year although expected to be in membership (i.e., was not reported as a dropout the year before.)
 - 3.4.3. Has not graduated from high school, obtained a Test Assessing Secondary Completion (hereinafter, TASC) diploma, or completed a state or district-approved education program.

- 3.4.4. Does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:
 - 3.4.4.1. Transfer to another public school district, private school, home school, or state or district approved education program.
 - 3.4.4.2. Temporary school-recognized absence due to suspension or illness.
 - 3.4.4.3. Death.

- 3.5. **Dropout Date** The school day after the dropout’s last day of attendance.

- 3.6. **Enrollment** – A student is officially enrolled when one of the following conditions occurs:
 - 3.6.1. Student was enrolled the previous year.
 - 3.6.2. Student appears at school to enroll with or without a parent/guardian.
 - 3.6.3. Student and/or parent/guardian appears at school to enroll with or without records.

- 3.7. **Enrollment Count** – A status count that reports the number of students on the attendance register as required by the West Virginia Department of Education.

- 3.8. **Excused Student Absences** – Excused student absences include:
 - 3.8.1. Absences that result from school-approved curricular/co-curricular activities; Any absence from school listed on the “Excused Absence Chart (Appendix 1) shall be considered excused.
 - 3.8.2. Failure of the bus to run/hazardous conditions, SAT Plan, IEP or 504 Plan meetings and other county board approved excused absences.
 - 3.8.3. Personal illness or injury of the student.
 - 3.8.4. Personal illness or injury of the student’s parent, guardian, custodian, or family member, provided, that the excuse must provide a reasonable explanation for why the student’s absence was necessary and caused by the illness or injury in the family.
 - 3.8.5. Medical or dental appointment with written excuse from physician or dentist.
 - 3.8.6. “Documented chronic medical condition” that may require multiple or regular absences. These conditions must be documented annually with a valid physician’s note that explains the condition and anticipated impact on attendance. The necessity for the absences must be approved and reviewed quarterly by the SAT, IEP or 504 team (See §126-81-5.3.c.4).
 - 3.8.7. Participation in hospital or homebound instruction due to an illness or injury or other extraordinary circumstances that warrants home or hospital confinement.
 - 3.8.8. “Documented disability” means any mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities and is documented annually with a valid physician’s note that explains the disability and anticipated impact on attendance. The necessity for the absences must be approved and reviewed quarterly by the SAT, IEP or 504 team (See §126-81-5.3.c.4).
 - 3.8.9. Calamity such as fire or flood.
 - 3.8.10. Death in the family.
 - 3.8.11. Judicial obligation or court appearance involving the student.
 - 3.8.12. Military requirements for students enlisted or enlisting in the military.
 - 3.8.13. Personal or academic circumstances allowed by the principal.
 - 3.8.14. Such other situations as may be further determined by the county board: Provided that absences of students with disabilities shall be in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement act of 2004 and the federal and state regulations adopted in compliance therewith.

- 3.9. **Homeless Children and Youth** – as defined in Subtitle B of the Title VII of McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et. seq.) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence and includes:
 - 3.9.1. Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals.

- 3.9.2. Children and youth who have a primary night time residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
 - 3.9.3. Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - 3.9.4. Migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children or youth are living in circumstances as described in the above descriptions.
 - 3.9.5. Children who meet the federal definition of “homeless” will be provided a free appropriate public education in the same manner as all other students of the County. To that end, homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as a homeless and will be assigned to the school serving those non-homeless students residing in the area in which the homeless child is actually living. The Board shall establish safeguards that protect homeless student from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.
- 3.10. **Membership Days** – The days present plus the days absent.
- 3.11. **School of Origin** – As defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act is the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.
- 3.12. **Transfer** – A process by which a student ends enrollment or attendance in one location and begins enrollment or attendance in a second location (i.e., within a county, between counties, or out of state). This can be evidenced through a transcript request or other documentation that the student is continuing elementary or secondary education.
- 3.13. **Unexcused Student Absences** — Shall be any absence not specifically included in the definition of “excused absence” from school (See Appendix 1).

4. Responsibility

4.1. Board of Education

- 4.1.1. The Upshur County Board of Education will employ a certified, full time county Social Services and Attendance Director as required in WV Code §18-8-3.
- 4.1.2. The Board shall support and require the principal of each school to implement and execute the duties as defined in WV Code Section 18-8-5.
- 4.1.3. The Board shall support and require the county attendance director to implement and execute the duties as defined in WV Code Section 18-8-4.

4.2. County Attendance Director

- 4.2.1. The county attendance director and his/her assistants shall diligently promote regular school attendance. They shall ascertain reasons for absences from school of students of compulsory school age and students who remain enrolled beyond the compulsory school age and take such steps as are, in their discretion, best calculated to encourage the attendance of students and to impart upon the parents and guardians the importance of attendance and the seriousness of failing to attend school regularly.
- 4.2.2. In the case of three (3) total unexcused absences of a student during a school year, the attendance director or assistant may serve written notice to the parent, guardian, or custodian of the student that the attendance of the student at school is required and that if the student has five (5) unexcused absences, a conference with the principal or other designated representative will be required.
- 4.2.3. In the case of five (5) total unexcused absences, the attendance director or assistant shall serve written notice to the parent, guardian or custodian of the student that within five (5) days of receipt of the notice the parent, guardian or custodian, accompanied by the student shall report in person to the school the student attends for a conference with the principal or other designated representative of the school in order to discuss and correct the circumstances causing the

unexcused absences of the student, including the adjustment of unexcused absences based upon such meeting.

- 4.2.4. In the case of ten (10) total unexcused absences of a student during a school year, the attendance director or assistant may make complaint against the parent, guardian, or custodian before a magistrate of the county. If it appears from the complaint that there is a probable cause to believe that an offense has been committed and that the accused has committed it, a summons or a warrant for the arrest of the accused shall issue to any officer authorized by law to serve the summons or to arrest persons charged with offenses against the state. More than one parent, guardian or custodian may be charged in a complaint. Initial service of the summons or warrant issued pursuant to the provisions of WV Code §18-8-4 shall be attempted within ten (10) days of the receipt of the summons or warrant and subsequent attempts at service shall continue until the summons or warrant is executed or until the end of the school term during which the complaint is made, whichever is later.
- 4.2.5. When calculating unexcused absences for the purpose of making complaints against a parent, guardian, or custodian before a magistrate, unexcused absences resulting from suspensions or expulsions from school shall not be considered.
- 4.2.6. The magistrate court clerk, or the clerk of the circuit court performing the duties of the magistrate court as authorized in (WV Code §50-1-8), shall assign the case to a magistrate within ten (10) days of execution of the summons or warrant. The hearing shall be held within twenty (20) days of the assignment to the magistrate, subject to lawful continuance. The magistrate shall provide to the accused at least ten (10) days advance notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing.
- 4.2.7. When any doubt exists as to the age of a student absent from school, the attendance director has authority to require a properly attested birth certificate or an affidavit from the parent, guardian, or custodian of the student, stating age of the student. In the performance of his or her duties, the county attendance director has authority to take without warrant any student absent from school in violation of the provisions of this article and to place the student in the school in which he or she is or should be enrolled.
- 4.2.8. All attendance directors hired for more than two-hundred days (200) may be assigned other duties determined by the superintendent during the period in excess of two-hundred (200) days. The county attendance director is responsible under direction of the county superintendent for efficiently administering school attendance in the county.
- 4.2.9. In addition to those duties directly relating to the administration of attendance, the county attendance director and assistant director also shall perform the following duties: 1) Assist in directing the taking of the school census to see that it is taken at the time and in the manner provided by law; 2) Confer with principals and teachers on the comparison of school census and enrollment for the detection of possible non-enrollees; 3) Cooperate with existing state and federal agencies charged with enforcing child labor laws; 4) Promote attendance in the county by compiling data for schools and by furnishing suggestions and recommendations for publication through school bulletins and the press, or in such manner as the county superintendent may direct; 5) Participate in school teachers' conferences with parents and students; 6) Assist in such other ways as the county superintendent may direct for improving school attendance; and 7) Make home visits of students who have excessive unexcused absences, as provided above, or if requested by the chief administrator, principal, or assistant principal.
- 4.2.10. The attendance director shall serve as the liaison for homeless children and youth as defined in W. Va. Code §18-8-4. As defined in McKinney-Vento Act, as the liaison for homeless children and youth, the attendance director is required to:
 - 4.2.10.1. Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of students in homeless situations is disseminated where children and youths receive services.
 - 4.2.10.2. Ensure that parents or guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children, and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
 - 4.2.10.3. Ensure that parents or guardians are informed of, and assisted in accessing, all transportation services for their children, including to the school of origin.

- 4.2.10.4. Help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school, after considering the youth's wishes, and provide the youth with notice of his or her right to appeal the school district's decision.
- 4.2.10.5. Immediately assist in obtaining immunizations or record of immunizations or other medical records for those students who do not have them, and assure that students are enrolled in school while the records are being obtained.
- 4.2.10.6. Ensure that homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
- 4.2.10.7. Ensure that homeless children and youths enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools of that local educational agency.
- 4.2.10.8. Ensure that homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which such families, children, and youths are eligible; including Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the local educational agency, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.
- 4.2.10.9. Ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated as outlined in Paragraph (3)(E) of the McKinney-Vento Act.

- 4.2.11. The attendance director shall file with the county superintendent and county board of education, at the close of each month, a report showing activities of the school attendance office and the status of attendance in the county at the time due to provisions in W. Va. Code §18-8-4.
- 4.2.12. The attendance director shall support and require the school principal to implement and execute the duties as defined in W. Va. Code §18-8-5:
- 4.2.13. Each parent, guardian, or custodian be responsible for fully cooperating in and completing the enrollment process by providing: immunization documentation (W. Va. Code §16-3-4), copy of a certified birth certificate or affidavit (W. Va. Code §18-2-5c), signed suspension and expulsion document (W. Va. Code §18-5-15), and any other documents required by federal, state, and/or local policies or code.

- 4.2.14. **Penalties**
 - 4.2.14.1. Continued absence may result in a fine of Fifty to One Hundred Dollars for each violation, or the possibility of a jail sentence of not less than five nor more than twenty days as prescribed by §18-8-2 of the School Laws of West Virginia.
 - 4.2.14.2. The parent, guardian, or custodian may be required to accompany the child to school.
 - 4.2.14.3. When any doubt exists as to the age of a student absent from school, the attendance director or assistant has the authority to require a properly attested birth certificate or affidavit from the parent, guardian, or custodian of the student, stating age of the student.
 - 4.2.14.4. In the performance of his or her duties, the county attendance director or assistant shall have the authority to take without warrant any child absent from school in violation of the heretofore stated attendance provisions and to place such child in the school in which such child should be enrolled.
 - 4.2.14.5. Jurisdiction to enforce compulsory school attendance law lies in the county in which a student resides and in the county where the school at which the student is enrolled is located. When the county of residence and enrollment are different, an action to enforce compulsory school attendance may be brought in either county, and the magistrates and circuit courts of either county have noncurrent jurisdiction for the trial of offenses arising under this section (WV Code §18-8-4).
 - 4.2.14.6. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit the ability of a person having knowledge of a student's habitual absence from school from filing a petition with the circuit court pursuant to WV Code §49-4-704.

4.3. Principal

- 4.3.1. The county attendance director shall support and require the school principal to implement and execute the duties as defined in WV Code §18-8-5:
 - 4.3.1.1. The Principal or Designee shall insure that copies of this policy are provided to all students and parents.
 - 4.3.1.2. The principal shall compare school numbers with school enrollment monthly.
 - 4.3.1.3. Each school principal, or designee will, as the school attendance coordinator who collects classroom attendance data, make appropriate referrals to the county attendance director.
 - 4.3.1.4. Each school principal, or designee, will report student attendance information which reflects the allowable deductions as defined by the WVDE.
 - 4.3.1.5. If a child accrues five unexcused absences during a semester, the principal shall contact the parent/guardian/custodian of the pupil and shall hold a meeting with that person, the pupil and any other person that the principal deems a relevant participant in such a meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to inform the parent/guardian and the pupil concerning the necessity for regular school attendance and the legal requirements thereof.
 - 4.3.1.6. It shall be the duty of the principal, administrative head, or other chief administrator of each school, whether public or private, to make prompt reports to the county attendance director of all cases of unexcused absences arising within the school which require the services of the attendance director. Such report shall be on the form prescribed for such purposes, by telephone, by WVEIS, or in person, and shall include essential information about the child and the name and residence of any parent, guardian, or custodian of the child. When such reports are made by telephone or in person, the principal shall document the transmission of such reports on the prescribed form.
 - 4.3.1.7. Principals shall be responsible for coordinating school attendance.
 - 4.3.1.8. A student whose educational services are guided by an existing SAT plan, IEP or 504 plan may warrant special consideration when a pattern of multiple, single or chronic absences exist. The child's current status should be reviewed by the SAT, IEP or 504 team as deemed appropriate and in accordance with state and federal laws.

4.4. Parent and Student/Guardian/Custodian/Adult Student

- 4.4.1. Foremost, it is the legal responsibility of the parent, guardian, or custodian to make sure their child attends school regularly and on time while enrolled in school.
- 4.4.2. Each parent, guardian, or custodian is to be responsible for fully cooperating in and completing the enrollment process by providing: immunization documentation (WV Code §16-3-4), copy of a certified birth certificate or affidavit (WV Code §18-2-5c), signed suspension and expulsion document (WV Code §18-5-15), and any other documents required by federal, state and/or local policies or code.
- 4.4.3. Each building principal shall require from the parent/guardian/or custodian of each student of compulsory school age or from an adult student who has been absent from school or from class for any reason a written statement within two days of the student's return to school.
- 4.4.4. It shall be the responsibility of each parent, guardian, or custodian to fully cooperate in completing the enrollment process by providing:
 - 4.4.4.1. Immunization documentation (WV Code §16-3-4),
 - 4.4.4.2. A copy of a certified birth certificate or affidavit (WV Code §18-2-5c),
 - 4.4.4.3. Signed suspension and expulsion document (WV Code §18-5-15),
 - 4.4.4.4. And any other documents required by federal, state, and/or local policies or code.

5. Upshur County Attendance Policy Components

5.1. Philosophy

- 5.1.1. The Upshur County Board of Education hereby declares its intention to improve school attendance for students at all levels from kindergarten through grade twelve. To accomplish this goal, every employee in the Upshur County schools must assume responsibility for creating in all grades, with all students, a positive safe environment conducive to learning; must assist students in developing responsibility for their own actions, a high degree of self-discipline and good work habits, recognizing that studying is, in fact, the student's job and that such job has both extrinsic and intrinsic value. In addition to preparing a young person for his/her life's work, study, enhanced by regular school attendance, helps to develop young adults who are better human beings.
- 5.1.2. A nurturing, orderly, safe and stimulating educational environment preparing students with 21st century skills, will promote student attendance and parent involvement through the child's educational career. Establishing such an environment requires a comprehensive program supported by everyone in the school system, parents/guardians, students and the community. This type of environment must exist in all places and activities, which are a direct and indirect activity of the school system.
- 5.1.3. The Upshur County Board of Education recognizes the necessity of working effectively with parents in the accomplishment of regular school attendance.

5.2. Principles of Operation

- 5.2.1. Dropouts shall be reported on the WVEIS computer system.
- 5.2.2. All children of mandatory school age will be expected to attend school each day that school is in session.
- 5.2.3. Handicapped student's absences should be addressed in accordance with policy 2419, Regulations for the Education of Exceptional Students, Section 1.10 Home-Hospital Instruction.
- 5.2.4. Students who are enrolled in a private school or who are receiving home instruction, in accordance with provisions of the West Virginia Code and policies of the West Virginia Board of Education, are, by the nature of their instruction, exempt from attendance at public school.
- 5.2.5. Compulsory school attendance shall begin with the school year in which the sixth birthday is reached prior to September 1 of such year or upon enrolling in a publicly-supported or approved private kindergarten program and continue to the seventeenth birthday or for as long as the student is enrolled in a public school after the seventeenth birthday. Beginning with the 2011-2012 high school cohort class of students, compulsory school attendance begins with the school year in which the sixth birthday is reached prior to September 1 of such year or upon enrolling in a publicly supported kindergarten program and continues to the seventeenth birthday or for as long as the student continues to be enrolled in a school system after the seventeenth birthday. A child may be removed from a kindergarten program when the principal or guardian concurs that continued attendance in such kindergarten program is not in the best interest of the child. In the event that the principal, teacher and parent do not concur regarding the feasibility of the child's continued attendance in the kindergarten program, the principal, following consultation with the county supervisor in charge of the kindergarten program, shall make the final determination with regard to continued attendance.
- 5.2.6. As long as a person eighteen years of age or older continues to be enrolled in a school system, attendance laws, rules and regulations shall be enforced against that person directly rather than the parent, guardian or custodian of such person. When doubt exists concerning the age of a child who is absent from school, the attendance director shall have authority to require a properly attested birth certificate or affidavit certifying the child's age from the parent, guardian or custodian of the child.
- 5.2.7. The Upshur County Board of Education affirms the following exceptions to the unexcused absences: Students who are eleventh or twelfth graders may be excused from school to visit postsecondary institutions provided that, upon their return, they present to the high school principal a letter from the institution visited, signed by an appropriate official of that institution, affirming the student's visit and the date thereof.
- 5.2.8. Students leaving school after their initial arrival must have a written note from their parents and/or must be signed out in the office by their parents. Every effort will be made to inform students and

their parents that students should not be taken from school for any reason other than an emergency situation.

- 5.2.9. Persons charged with reporting students' attendance information shall provide information that reflects allowable deductions as defined by the West Virginia Board of Education.
- 5.2.10. Students may not be suspended solely for failure to attend class.
- 5.2.11. If one parent has been awarded custody of the student by the courts, the parent of custody shall provide the school with a copy of the custody order and inform the school in writing of any limitations in the rights of the non-custodial parent. In the absence of such notice, the school will presume that the student may be released into the care of either parent.
- 5.2.12. All documentation relating to absences shall be provided to the school not later than three (3) instructional days after the first day the student returns to school.

5.3. Instructional Day/Exception To Four Year Attendance Requirement

5.3.1. The following rules shall govern student attendance in grades 9-12:

- 5.3.1.1. Attendance for the school day for all four years during grades 9-12 is important so that students obtain the full benefit from the educational programs offered in the schools of West Virginia. Therefore, all students shall be scheduled in the defined high school curriculum, college courses, career and technical programs, credit recovery, Option Pathway, experiential learning, or virtual school courses for the full instructional day for all four years.
- 5.3.1.2. Exceptions may be made by the Upshur County Board of Education to accommodate placement into college courses, advanced career /technical programs, participation in the WV Virtual School, or for other compelling circumstances.
- 5.3.1.3. The Upshur County Board of Education establishes the following regulations and guidelines for parents and students who are seeking an exception to the four-year attendance requirement. Requests for exceptions must be presented to the Superintendent.

5.3.2. Exceptions for Educational Reasons

- 5.3.2.1. A student may be granted an educational exception during his/her senior year for one or more of the required daily instructional periods in order to enroll in college courses that are the equivalent or in excess of the content of high school courses or to attend a post-secondary technical program. Evidence of enrollment will be required. Three college/post-secondary hours will equal one high school unit. The following conditions must be met:
 - 5.3.2.1.1. The principal and high school counselor must recommend the student for an educational exception.
 - 5.3.2.1.2. The student must establish a planned high school program by the end of his/her sophomore year, although exceptions can be made for new transfer students, and current students during the policy phase-in period. Changes can also be made to the plan when warranted.
 - 5.3.2.1.3. The student's high school record must show the potential for success. Information to be reviewed shall include grades (3.0 GPA), achievement test scores, ability test scores, etc.
 - 5.3.2.1.4. The student must have an average daily attendance rate of 95% or above during his/her high school career, unless extraordinary circumstances exist (i.e. long-term illness or injury).
 - 5.3.2.1.5. The student will meet or has met the county graduation requirements.
 - 5.3.2.1.6. The student must present evidence of enrollment and continued attendance at a college or post-secondary technical school as either a full or part-time student.

- 5.3.2.1.7. Seniors may be excused for an entire semester or school year if they provide evidence that they have been accepted and are enrolled as full-time college or post-secondary students. A minimum of four high school units must be taken to qualify as a full-time student.
- 5.3.2.1.8. Students may substitute college credit for the senior year of high school including courses required for graduation provided the substitution fulfills state requirements and has prior approval of the high school principal.
- 5.3.2.1.9. Only those college and post-secondary programs recognized by the State of West Virginia, and those granting a recognized degree and/or certification shall be considered by the Board for approved placement.
- 5.3.2.1.10. Students are required to submit a copy of their grades to the high school counselor at the end of each semester.
- 5.3.2.1.11. Diplomas shall be awarded to students who complete the graduation requirements in the manner described above.

5.3.3. Exceptions for Compelling Circumstances:

- 5.3.3.1. Sometimes students find themselves faced with circumstances beyond their control that make it impossible for them to attend school for a full instructional day for four years; therefore, students who can demonstrate a compelling circumstance may be excused from part or all of the requirement.
- 5.3.3.2. Students must present documentation verifying the uniqueness of their case.
- 5.3.3.3. The principal and high school counselor must recommend the exemption
- 5.3.3.4. The school attendance coordinator and/or other appropriate personnel will investigate all requests for such exemptions.

5.3.4. Compelling circumstances include:

- 5.3.4.1. Parenthood—Students who are also parents may be granted an exception if their parental responsibilities are such that they cannot fulfill the high school attendance requirements in the prescribed manner.
- 5.3.4.2. Family responsibilities—Students who are married and must work to support a family; or students, who because of disability to their parents, must be available to assist in the home.
- 5.3.4.3. Financial need—Students must work to support themselves or assist their parents in meeting the family’s financial obligations.
- 5.3.4.4. Health reasons—Students who have to modify their educational program upon the recommendation of an attending physician.
- 5.3.4.5. Travel abroad as an exchange student.
- 5.3.4.6. Option Pathway –Students who have completed the Option Pathway Program.
- 5.3.4.7. Other compelling circumstances. In the event of a request for early graduation based on compelling circumstances that are not listed above, the Upshur County Board of Education shall make their decision based upon the recommendation of the superintendent after careful investigation by the superintendent and/or his/her designee.

5.3.5. Special Circumstances That Do Not Require Exceptions:

- 5.3.5.1. Students receiving homebound instruction as prescribed by Board Policy.
- 5.3.5.2. Students participating in supervised work study programs for one or more of their instructional periods.
- 5.3.5.3. Students who have already attended four years in grades 9-12 may be allowed to enroll in only those classes needed to meet graduation requirements.

5.4. Make-Up Work for Unexcused Absences

- 5.4.1. **Make-up work is not optional. Teachers shall be required to make assignments that are relevant to the material covered for all classes missed.**

5.4.2. **Make-Up Work**

5.4.2.1. **GRADES K – 12**

- 5.4.2.1.1. It is the parental responsibility to request make-up work for students in grades K– 5.
- 5.4.2.1.2. It is the students' responsibility to request make-up work for grades 6-12.
- 5.4.2.1.3. Any student absent from school shall be given the opportunity to complete or make up all work missed. The student will be given a day for each day absent to make up assignments, unless the student had prior knowledge of a test, quiz, report, homework, etc., due date prior to the absence. In that event, the student would be required to fulfill those obligations on the day of his/her return to school.

5.5. **Maintenance of Records**

- 5.5.1. The principal and/or teachers, as the case may be, will maintain accurate records of attendance at school and in every class. Students who are physically absent from school must be documented as absent. This record may become a legal document.
- 5.5.2. The automated calling system will make daily phone calls to parents/ guardians of students who are absent. A phone log will be kept. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached by telephone, a letter or note may be sent home.
- 5.5.3. Every school will maintain a daily attendance record for every enrolled student using the West Virginia Educational Information System (hereinafter WVEIS) Attendance System-
- 5.5.4. A student's attendance record is a legal document. Any student who is not physically in school, whether absent or on a school sponsored activity off school grounds, must be appropriately accounted for on the WVEIS Attendance System using the correct absence code.

5.6. **Preventive/Corrective Measures**

- 5.6.1. Tardiness and early dismissals are considered as absences. Tardiness is the act of being late for the beginning of instruction in any given class.
- 5.6.2. A tardy may be excused or unexcused dependent upon the reason for the tardiness. At the beginning of each school year and throughout, each principal will communicate to the parents the importance of the students arriving at school on a punctual basis. Each teacher will periodically explain to the students and parents, when possible, the inconvenience and disruption that a late student causes. This disruptive factor will also be explained in each student's school handbook/planner. As deterrents to tardiness, schools may use, but are not limited to, before/after school detention, in school detention and loss of certain privileges, etc. Principals are encouraged to conference with parents regarding the negative implications of the student being tardy.
- 5.6.3. Since students with excessive absences are known to be good candidates for school dropouts, intervention strategies need to be provided. Such intervention could include encouraging students to participate in extracurricular and community activities, referral to the Student Assistance Team for excessive absences, involvement of parents and other community members to transport students to such activities, the development of highly positive school environment, and awarding personalized certificates for good attendance at each school. Students with attendance problems shall be referred to school counselors. Students with attendance problems may also be referred to the Student Assistance Program at each school. The Student Assistance Team shall discuss and implement intervention strategies. Other corrective measures as outlined in the Principles of Operation section of this policy will also be effected.

5.7. **Contagious Parasites**

- 5.7.1. Contagious parasite conditions, such as lice, shall be excused absences not to exceed two (2) days per incident. If student's absences exceed two days, they will then be counted as unexcused unless physician verification is received to support the extended time period.

5.8. Homebound/Hospital Services regarding sport/extracurricular activities (Please reference Policy 2510 for complete policy information).

5.8.1. Homebound/Hospital Services.

- 5.8.1.1. Students who, due to injury or for any other reason as certified in writing by a licensed physician or other licensed health care provider, are temporarily confined to home or hospital for a period that has lasted or will last more than three consecutive weeks shall receive home/hospital services. The written statement must include:
 - 5.8.1.1.1. The specific reasons the student must remain at home or in the hospital.
 - 5.8.1.1.2. The criteria or conditions under which the student can return to school.
 - 5.8.1.1.3. The expected date of such return.
- 5.8.1.2. A written statement by a licensed physician or other licensed health care provider must be resubmitted every six months if a student's temporary home/hospital instruction is prolonged.
- 5.8.1.3. The county board of education may require that the parent/guardian obtain an opinion from a second health care provider at the expense of the county board.
- 5.8.1.4. Home/hospital services must be designed to provide the student adequate opportunity to continue learning toward mastery of grade level content standards and objectives. The schedule for home/hospital services must include adequate instructional time and be provided at a location when a responsible adult in addition to the teacher is present.
- 5.8.1.5. Home/hospital teachers are responsible for facilitating instruction on the core courses' content standards and objectives as guided by the student's classroom teacher(s); consequently, the home/hospital teacher must be in regular contact with the classroom teacher(s) to:
 - 5.8.1.5.1. Secure and understand units/lessons, instructional plans and instructional resources.
 - 5.8.1.5.2. Establish procedures for the collection and return of student work to the classroom teacher(s) for assessment.
- 5.8.1.6. Home/hospital services, provided for an exceptional student who is unable to attend school temporarily because of an injury, illness or health condition requires a change in the student's placement to Out-of-School Environment (hereinafter OSE) as defined by W. Va. 125CSR16, WVBE Policy 2419, Regulations for the Education of Exceptional Students (hereinafter Policy 2419), Section 5.1.5.g.E. The change of placement to OSE must be addressed by the student's IEP team and implemented in accordance with the requirements of Policy 2419.
- 5.8.1.7. Home/hospital services may also be provided temporarily at the direction of the County superintendent for students who have not met the immunization requirements of W.Va. Code §16-3-4.

5.9. Home School Services Regarding Sport/Extracurricular Activities

- 5.9.1. Homeschool students are not allowed to participate in sports or extracurricular activities. Reference Policy 4007 – Instruction in the Home or Other Approved Location

5.10. Student/Parent Appeal of Unexcused Absences

- 5.10.1. Students or the parents of students have the right to appeal the identification of unexcused absences. The student must turn in excuses for absences the day they return to school from an absence. If an excuse is not received by the school within three days of the student's return, the absence, unless there are extenuating circumstances, will be considered as an unexcused absence.
- 5.10.2. If a student/parent feels that an absence has been wrongly marked as an unexcused absence, the following procedure should be observed:
 - 5.10.2.1. A conference with the school principal/designee should be scheduled to ascertain the reasons for the absence and the reason for the designation of the absence being marked

as unexcused. The conference should be scheduled within five days of the principal/designee being notified. At that conference the student, parent and school principal/designee should be present. Each party would be able to present evidence supporting their position. The principal/designee shall, at the end of the meeting or no later than 48 hours after the meeting, render a decision.

5.10.2.2. The student/parent may appeal the decision of the principal. That appeal will be directed to the Upshur County Schools, Attendance Director. The attendance director will be obligated to the same timelines that are in the above appeal process.

5.10.2.3. The student/parent may appeal the decision of the attendance director to the Upshur County Schools Superintendent. The Superintendent will be obligated to the same timelines in the above appeal process.

6. Authority: West Virginia Constitution, Article XII, §2; W.Va. Code §§16-3-14, 17B-2-3, 18-2-5, 18-5-15, 18-8-1, 18-8-2, 18-8-3, 18-8-4, 18-8-5, 18-8-11 and Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act (42U.S.C. 11431 et. seq.) and 18A-5-1 and West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 4110, 2510, 1520, 2419; Board of Education Minutes January 26, 2010 and August 10, 2010.

7. Adopted: 08/17/83

8. Revised: 11/28/17; 07/19/16; 11/12/14; 9/23/14; 3/11/14; 8/21/12; 4/24/12; 8/10/10; 1/26/10; 10/14/08; 8/26/08; 12/19/06; 4/20/04; 9/11/01; 5/10/00

The following defined excused and unexcused absence reason codes are state standards in compliance with WV Code §18-8-1, Code §18-8-2 and attendance in WV 126CSR42, WVDE Policy 2510, Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Educations Programs (hereinafter Policy 1520).

ABSENCE REASON CODES

(Attendance Code Interpretations by the State Attendance Director)

ABSENT TYPE	EXCUSED ABSENCES		
	CODES	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
E	A1, full day A2, half day	In Alternative Setting	Absences that could be due to in school suspension or an out of school placement
E	B1, full day B2, half day	Bus, Failure to run	Failure of the bus to run/ hazardous conditions
A	C1, full day C2, half day	Calamity (Fire, Flood, etc.)	Calamity, such as fire in the home, flood, or family emergency
A	C3, full day C4, half day	Health Exclusion (Example: Lice)	Contagious parasite conditions, such as lice, shall be excused absences not to exceed two (2) days per incident
A	D1, full day D2, half day	Death in Family	Death in family
E	H1, full day H2, half day	Homebound Instruction	Participation in home/hospital instruction due to an illness/injury or other extraordinary circumstance that warrants home or hospital confinement
A	I1, full day I2, half day	Illness in Family	Illness or injury in the family
A	I3, full day I4, half day	Illness Verified by Physician	Illness verified by a physician's note
A	I5, full day I6, half day	Illness of student	Illness verified by parent or guardian
E	L1, full day L2, half day	Leave of Educational Value may include: college visits, other sites of learning, family educational trips, 4-H educational activities, etc.	Leaves of educational value in accordance with these stipulations: <input type="checkbox"/> Prior approval by principal or designee <input type="checkbox"/> Prior submission and approval of educational plan detailing objectives and activities (Leave of Educational Value Form available from school administration) <input type="checkbox"/> Leave not to exceed ten (10) days -verification of implementation of the educational plan immediately upon student's return <input type="checkbox"/> Leave exceeding ten (10) days -requires prior county board approval
A	L3, full day L4, half day	Judicial Obligation	Judicial obligation or court appearance involving the student
A	M1, full day M2, half day	Medical or Dental Appointment	Medical or dental appointment with written excuse from physician or dentist
A	M3, full day M4, half day	Military	Military could include requirements for students enlisted or enlisting into the military
A	M5, full day M6, half day	Chronic Medical Condition	Any documented chronic medical condition or documented disability that may require multiple or regular absences. These conditions MUST be documented annually with a valid physician note that explains the condition and anticipated impact of attendance (see section...3.9.5 for complete definition) contact BOE for chronic medical form
A	R1, full day R2, half day	Religious Holiday	Observance of religious holidays may include verification
E	X1, full day X2, half day	School Approved Curricular/ Extra-Curricular Activities, SAT, IEP, 504 Meetings or County Board approved excused absences	School, county or state approved curricular or extra-curricular activities, SAT, IEP, 504 meetings, personal or academic circumstances approved by the principal and other situations as may be further approved by the County Board as excused absences.
T	TE	Tardy	Student was tardy for school or class and it was excused
T	EE	Early Dismissal	Student checked out early for school or class and it was excused

Any absence from school other than for those causes listed above shall be considered as an unexcused, illegal absence and shall be dealt with accordingly.

ABSENT TYPE	UNEXCUSED ABSENCES		
	CODES	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
A	U1, full day U2, half day	Unexcused	Any absence not meeting the excused absence reason codes
A	P1, full day P2, half day	Parent Notes in Excess of Policy	Absence notes presented by parent that exceed the allotted amount (See 15 and 16 codes)
A	P3, full day P4, half day	Pursuing Judicial Remedies	Absences after the attendance director has pursued judicial remedies
T	TU	Tardy	Student was tardy for school or class and it was unexcused