

ATTENDANCE MANUAL

This Manual is enacted to implement the requirements of New Mexico State Statutes 22-12A-1 et. Seq. NMSA for “Attendance for School Success Act.”

- A “school-age person” means a person who is at least five (5) years of age prior to 12:01 a.m. on September 1 of the current school year and who has not received a high school diploma or its equivalent and who has not reached the person’s twenty-second (22) on the first day of the school year.
- Any parent, guardian or person having custody and control of a person subject to the provisions of the Attendance for Success Act is responsible for the school attendance of that person until that person has reached at least eighteen (18) years of age unless the person has graduated from high school, received a school equivalency credential or withdrawn on a hardship waiver.
- Each local school board and governing authority of a private school shall enforce the provisions of the Attendance for School Success Act for students enrolled in their respective schools.
- The regular school attendance of a child is required by state law. Regular school attendance is essential for success in school; therefore absences shall be excused only for necessary and important reasons. Such reasons include but are not limited to-illness, injury, bereavement of a family member, other family emergencies and observance of major religious holidays of the family’s faith or religious instruction and tribal obligations.
- Absent means not in attendance for a class or school day for any reason, excused or nor excused except for interscholastic extracurricular activities.
- An unexcused absence means an absence from a class or a school day (half of the students approved program) for which the student does not have an allowable excuses.
- In the event of a necessary absence known in advance, parents/guardians are asked to inform the school
- For religious instruction and tribal obligations written consent of a parent and approval of the principal are required.
- A student may be excused for authorized reasons and time shall be provided for the student to make up work.

Each school district or charter school shall maintain an attendance Manual that:

- Provides for the early identification of students with unexcused absences, habitual truants and chronic absences and provides intervention strategies that focus on keeping truants in an educational setting and prohibit out-of-school suspension and expulsion as the punishments for truancy (22-12A-8, 11, 12, 13 NMSA).
- Uses withdrawal as provides in 22-12A-8, 11, 12, 13 NMSA only after exhausting efforts to keep student in an educational setting; and
- Requires that attendance be taken for every instructional day in every public school or school program in the district.

School District and Charter Schools shall report truancy, habitual truancy and chronic absence rates to the department in a form and at such times as the department determines and shall document efforts to keep truants and habitual truants in educational settings. Locally chartered schools shall provide copies of their reports to the school district.

Resolution of the Navajo Nation Council

Section Enactment of the Navajo Sovereignty in Education Act of 2005.

- School Attendance
 - Every person who has a Navajo child or Navajo children under his or her care between the ages of five and eighteen years shall assure the attendance of the child or children in school. Local school governing boards shall develop programs to improve regular school attendance in compliance with this Manual.
 - Any child residing in the Navajo Nation who violates the provisions of this section shall be subject to penalties prescribed in 17 N.N.C. 222 and 223 for petty misdemeanors. Any Navajo minor residing in the Navajo Nation who violates the provisions of this section shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Family Courts of the Navajo Nation.

Definitions:

- **School Day** means a portion of the school day that is at least one-half of a students approved program
- **Absent** means not in attendance for a class or school day for any reason, whether excused or not, provided that “absent” does not apply to participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities
- **Student Assistance Team Plan** means a tiered data-informed system for public schools and school districts to identify students who are chronically or excessively absent and to aid public schools in developing whole-school prevention strategies and targeted interventions.
- **Chronically absent rate** means the percentage of students, in the aggregate and disaggregated by the subgroups, required for reporting pursuant to the federal Every Child Succeeds Act, in the public school and a school district who have been enrolled for at least ten days and who have missed ten percent or more of the school days since the beginning of the school year.
- **Chronically absent or chronic absenteeism** means that a student has been absent for ten percent or more of the classes or school days for any reason, whether excused or not, when enrolled for more than ten days.
- **Excessively absent or excessive absenteeism** means a student who is identified as needing intensive support and has not responded to the intervention efforts implemented by the public school.
- **Excused absence** means an absence from a class or school day for a death in the family, medical absence, religious instruction or tribal obligations or any other allowable excuse pursuant to the policies of the local school board.
 - **The following criteria are to be used for documenting an Excused absence:**
 - **Illness**
 - **Emergencies as approved by the principal**
 - **Family Emergencies such as**

- **Court Hearings**
- **Funerals of Immediate Family Members**

- **Medical Absence or medically absent** means that a student is not in attendance for class or school day for a parent or doctor-authorized medical reason or the student is pregnant or parenting student.
- **Unexcused absence** means an absence from a class or school day for which the student does not have an allowable excuse pursuant to the Attendance for Success Act or policies of the local school board.

CULTURAL CEREMONIES APPROVED AS EXCUSED ABSENCES:

Zuni Student involvement in Cultural Activities

- These ceremonies will involve student help with certain chores
 - **Mudhead giveaway**—Month of October (no specific date) usually held on a weekend but requires and involves extended family members as well as whole community
 - **Sha'lak'o**—Late November through mid-part of December involves extended family members as well as whole community with Night Dances performed during Sha'lak'o and following weeks which start around 11:00 pm and last until 3:00 am/ Host families are required to feed all guests
 - **Night Dances**—February through May, usually held on weekends involving young men participating in religious dances. Extended family members and community involved in preparation of food.
- These ceremonies will most likely involve student as participant
 - **Deshkwi(Zuni Fasting)**—Mid December to First part of January (ten days). Students are restricted in touching others, spending money, throwing trash, building fires and eating fatty (greasy) food. It involves the whole community, especially those involved in medicine fraternities and other religious organizations

Navajo Student Involvement in Cultural Activities

- Here is a list of ceremonies that would require students to be out of school. Most ceremonies require 4 days of reverence and sacredness after the actual ceremony. At that time students cannot be cutting items or touching other people (students). Sometimes during these four days, it is easier for parent/guardian to keep the child at home.
- The only way a student cannot go to school is if they are the immediate participant. They may be asked to help with the certain chores involving a ceremony.
- These ceremonies will most likely involve student helping with certain chores
 - **Night Way**—Winter Beginning of October to end of March: 9 day/night ceremony involving extended family members and community people
 - **Wind Way**—All Seasons: a 5 day/night ceremony involving extended family members and community people
 - **Lightning Way**—All seasons: a 5 day/night ceremony involving extended family members and community people

These ceremonies will most likely involve student as participant.

- **Enemy Way(Nida', Squaw Dance)**—Beginning of May to end of September: a 5 day/night ceremony and once in a while a one night ceremony. Extended family members and community people are involved
- **Blackening Ceremony**—All seasons: a three day/night ceremony involving immediate family members
- **Blessing Way/Beauty Way**—All seasons: a 3 day/night ceremony involving immediate family members
- **Kinaalda**—All seasons: a 4 day/night ceremony involving extended family members and community people

****If there are questions regarding the determination of absences, the Principal will make the final determination.

PROGRAM FOR PREGNANT/PARENTING STUDENTS (22-12A-9 NMSA)

- Pregnant and Parent Students should have the same educational opportunities as their peers. Such students may also need additional counseling and health services that are available through public schools.
- Pregnant students may elect to remain in the regular school program and shall not be involuntarily excluded from any part of the school program, provided, however, that reasonable safeguards are maintained both for the school's and the student's best interest.
- Pregnant students shall notify school authorities of their status as soon as it is ascertained. At least ten (10) days of medical absence may be approved for a student who provides documentation of the birth of the student's child and time shall be provided for the student to make up the work.
- Parenting Student means the father of the child.
- Pregnant and parent students of children under thirteen (13) shall be permitted four (4) days of excused absences for a child needing care upon proper documentation in accord with Manual and statute. Time shall be provided for the student to makeup school work missed during the absence. The Superintendent will establish procedures as necessary to implement this Manual.
- Parent students shall not bring their children to school during the regular school day. Student's children will only be permitted in specific classes when requested by the instructor with the approval of the building administrator. They are not to be in any other area of the school campus.

INTERVENTION STEPS:

Indicators	Intervention Steps to Address Absences
<p>Early Warning— (<5%) 3-7 absences within a school year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call is made to parent or guardian • Parent/Guardian is to meet with School Counselor/Student Success Advisor (SSA) to investigate reasons for absenteeism • School Counselor/SSA will review the Attendance Manual with parent/guardian and have them sign that the Attendance Manual was reviewed with them.
<p>Individual Prevention— (5-9%) 9 absences or missed classes within a school year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power School Letter is Generated and hand delivered by the School Liaison (2 copies are made with one for parents and the other for parents to sign and this is returned to the school attendance clerk) • Student is placed within the Student Assistance Team (SAT) Process for Attendance Issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ---student’s attendance history, grades and behavior are reviewed ---student and family needs to be assessed to make necessary referrals to appropriate private or public agencies for support ---consequences of further absences reviewed with parents
<p>Early Intervention— (10-19%) 18 absences or missed classes within a school year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power School Generated Letter is hand delivered by School Liaison (2 copies are made with one for parents and the other for parents to sign and this is returned to the school attendance clerk) • Meeting to take place with the parent/guardian, student and SAT Team to establish non-punitive consequences for student. • SAT Team established the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ---a specific intervention plan for the student ---weekly progress monitoring ---a contract for attendance is put in place and signed by student, parent/guardian and SAT Team members
<p>Intensive Support— (>20%) 36 absences or missed classes within a school year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power School Generated Letter is hand delivered by School Liaison (2 copies are made with one for parents and the other for parents to sign and this is returned to the school attendance clerk) • Meeting to take place with the parent/guardian, student and SAT Team to establish non-punitive consequences for student. • SAT Team to establish the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ---non-punitive consequences for the student at the school level ---identify appropriate specialized supports needed to help the student address the underlying causes of excessive absenteeism ---apprise the student and parent/guardian of the consequences for further absences
<p>Failure to Respond to Intensive Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power School Generated Letter is hand delivered by School Liaison (2 copies are made with one for parents and the other for parents to sign and this is returned to the school attendance clerk) • Superintendent is notified of student’s failure to respond to Intensive Support. • Superintendent notifies the School Board of the Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ---student will referred to probation services office (JPO) of the appropriate judicial district for the purpose of investigation ---the office of JPO will determine whether the student should be considered a neglected child or a family in need of services ---judgement is based upon Children’s Code

Definition of Interventions for Student Absences:

Early Warning is called for if a student misses between 3 and 7 classes or days of school.

Individual Prevention is called for if a student missed between 9 and 17 (5% or less than 10%) classes or days of school.

Early Intervention is called for if a student misses 18 (10% or less than 20%) classes or school days.

Intensive Support is called for if a student misses 36 (20%) of the classes or school days.

Failure to respond to Intensive Support is called for if a student misses more than 36 (>20%) of the classes or school days.

Consequences for excessive absences shall not include out-of-school suspension or expulsion, but should focus on intervention and fostering retention of students in the educational setting.

Only after exhaustion of intervention will Gallup McKinley County School District consider withdrawal of student from membership in the school. Consulting Juvenile Probation Services (JPO) or the caseworker for child services should be accomplished before such action.

ATTENDANCE for SUCCESS ACT CHECKLIST

The following is a checklist of all documents to submit for a ATTENDANCE FOR SUCCESS ACT Referral to the Juvenile Probation Office (JPO)

_____ 1. Copy of First Notification Letter to parents/guardians regarding 9 days (5-9%) absences and notice of verification that student has been placed in the Student Assistance Team (SAT) Process.

_____ 2. Copy of Second Notification Letter to parents/guardians regarding 18 days (10-19%) absences and Notice of verification that student has been placed in SAT Process. Must include documentation, including Attendance Contract that Notification Letter and Notification of SAT Meeting has been hand delivered to parents/guardians

_____ 3. Copy of the Third Notification Letter sent home to parents/guardians regarding 36 days (20%) of absences and SAT Documentation.

_____ 4. Copy of the Fourth Notification Letter to parents/guardians regarding 40 days of absences.

_____ 5A. Complete ATTENDANCE for SUCCESS ACT Referral Form with the principal signature. The reporting must include all documents in order to submit to:

Juvenile Probation Supervisor

1720 E. Aztec Ave. Suite B

Gallup, NM 87301

Phone: 505-722-7857 ext. 1203 FAX: 505-722-3167

_____ 5B. Copy of all documents to be sent to Superintendent's Office for Notification to Board of Education

Attendance for Success Act 22-12A-1 et. Sq. NMSA

Gallup McKinley County School District

Instructions: please respond to each item even if the reply is "unknown," "none" or "non-applicable."

Student First Name: _____ Middle: _____ Last: _____

Student ID _____ Date of Birth _____

Mailing Address:

Physical Home

Location: _____

(Provide map, if appropriate)

School: _____ Grade: _____

Name of Principal: _____ Phone Number: _____

Dates of Unexcused Absences: Attach PowerSchool attendance report.

Name of Parents/guardians:

Parent/Guardian Contact phone number:

PRINCIPAL NAME

PRINCIPAL SIGNATURE

DATE