

## **B. ATTENDANCE**

### **Philosophy**

The philosophy of Epping Middle School is that regular school attendance is an integral part of a meaningful educational program. Absences deprive students of critical classroom experiences such as teacher presentations and interactions with other students. However, young adolescents do experience “normal” absences and teachers will assist students in making up work. In fact, we strongly encourage students who are ill to stay home!

Excessive absences disrupt the day to day continuity of instruction and create a monitoring burden for the school, which distracts teachers and administrators from the pursuit of other educational goals. Thus, our purpose in implementing the following procedures is to maintain a high rate of daily attendance, to minimize day to day disruptions in the instructional process, and to maximize the time our students are engaged in learning.

- a. Students, you are welcome to school any time after 7:10 am, when supervision begins.
- b. Attendance will be taken each morning. Announcements will also be made at this time.
- c. At the end of the school day you should board afternoon buses for home unless you are a walker or if you are under adult supervision after school.

### **Absences**

Parents, if your student is going to be absent for any reason please notify the school by calling the office at **679-2544** or by sending a note with a sibling or another person. As a courtesy, office personnel will attempt to contact parents when a student is absent and no telephone call or note has been received to notify us of the absence. This is considered a student safety check. A student will be recorded as truant if parents fail to contact us.

When a pupil is absent from school and has not notified the office, the Dean of Students shall require a written excuse stating the reason for the absence. Valid reasons for absences include sickness, death of a family member or sickness in the immediate family. In most instances, an outside appointment is not sufficient reason for loss of a full day of school.

#### **If a student is absent:**

- for three (3) days in any quarter: a letter will be sent home to parents. Parents will have the opportunity to send in documented medical evidence such as doctor’s notes to explain the absences.
- for six (6) days in a single quarter without documented evidence of a medical condition: there will be a mandatory meeting between parents, student, teacher, and administrator to develop a plan to address the attendance problem.
- for eight (8) days in a single quarter without documented evidence of a medical condition: referral will be made to the Student/Teacher Assistance Team. There will be a second meeting between the parent, student, teacher, and school administrator. The Epping Police will be contacted concerning truancy issues.
- for fifteen (15) or more days during the school year without continuous documented evidence of a medical condition: a mandatory meeting between parents, school nurse, administrator, and Epping Police will take place. Referrals to outside agencies such as the NH Division of Child and Youth Services will be discussed at this time.

## **Tardiness**

You are expected to be in your homeroom by 7:25 a.m. every day. If you arrive after this time, you will be considered tardy and must report to the office to be issued a pass to class.

You may be late for school three times per quarter without specific consequences and a letter will be sent home as notification of the three tardies. Every tardy after the third (unless documented by your parents) will result in an after-school detention. The accumulation of tardies begins with each new quarter.

## **Dismissals**

If you need to be dismissed from school, you must bring a note signed by a parent/guardian to the office at the beginning of the school day and receive a dismissal slip from the office staff. Show this slip to your classroom teacher at the time of dismissal and come to the office to sign out. If you are returning to school after a dismissal, please check in with the office and receive a pass to class. Parents, please note that you must come and sign your child out at the office. We will ask you to show appropriate identification in order to dismiss your child.

## **Extended Absence Policy**

Families going on vacation while school is in session must notify the principal and all teachers in writing three weeks in advance. Parents should recognize that students will miss valuable classroom activities and interactions that cannot be duplicated outside school or after the student's return.

Prior to the absence, teachers will provide a brief synopsis of topics to be covered in class during the student's absence. It will be the responsibility of the parents and the student to keep current in curricular topics presented in the school during a discretionary absence. Students, you are responsible for turning in your work! Teachers are not required to provide assignments, design a separate program and will not be able to recreate classroom activities for students who are absent for reasons other than illness or emergency.