

Hingham High School Attendance Policy Amended for the 2020-2021 School Year

Attendance at school is mandated by state law and school policy.

The school recognizes that there are valid reasons for occasional tardiness, dismissals or absence from class; however, the importance of attendance in learning must be emphasized. A parent note explaining the absence, tardiness or dismissal is required. All notes should be submitted to the assistant principals' administrative assistant, Marilyn Player, via email: mplayer@hinghamschools.org or hhsattendance@hinghamschools.org. Determinations relative to the appropriateness of the note will be made by the assistant principals: Jennifer Henriksen (for students whose last names begin with the letters A-K) and Nicole Piantes (L-Z).

Daily attendance is taken during the first period of the day for all students, regardless of whether they are attending school remotely or in-person. Telephone calls will be made to verify absence, tardiness and dismissals as needed. Attendance is also taken during each class period, whether the student is attending remotely or in-person.

Attendance Policy

Students are allowed five non-exempt absences (whether remote or in-person) per term. A sixth non-exempt absence will result in a loss of credit.

The following absences will be exempt:

- Medical (with a note from the student's doctor or parent)
- Religious holidays
- Funerals
- Bereavement for the death of an immediate family member
- Legal (with documentation from a court, lawyer, etc.)
- College visits - 3 days during a student's junior year and 3 days during a student's senior year (advance consultation with the HHS counselor is necessary and documentation from the college on school stationery after the visit is required - emails are not acceptable).

Notes are required for all absences. Note or documentation of exempt absences must be received within one week of the absence or the absence will not be considered exempt. All notes should be submitted to the assistant principals' administrative assistant.

Determination of Credit

1. Six absences in a course in one term will lead to no credit (N) in that course for the term. For second-semester seniors, four absences in a course in the fourth term will lead to no credit (N) in that course for the term.
2. For courses that meet every other day, students will lose credit on the fourth absence. For second-semester seniors, two absences in a course in the fourth term will lead to no credit (N) in that course for the term.
3. For courses that meet for double or triple periods for every class meeting, a student's absence will be counted as only one per day.
4. For courses that meet eight periods per cycle, a student's absence on a lab day will be counted. Since there are approximately one-third more classes, eight (8) absences in the course in one term will cause no credit (N) in that course for the term. For second-semester seniors, five absences in the fourth term will lead to no credit (N) in that course for the term.

The principal may decide upon written appeal by a student that an absence may be excluded from the total. Application for a principal's excusal may be made only after a student has exceeded their five allowed absences.

Students removed from school by parents for vacation trips will have those days counted against their total. On the third absence in a term, a notice is emailed home indicating the number of absences and the possible consequences. On the sixth absence in a term, the teacher will send home a letter indicating that the student will receive a no credit (N) grade for the period of time indicated. The failure of a classroom teacher to send the letter home may result in the rescission of the no credit grade. However, such a decision shall be at the sole discretion of the principal. Copies will be given to the school counselor and the assistant principal for further action and intervention.

NOTE: A "no credit" (N) in a course does not indicate a failing academic grade in the course. The academic grade for the period of "no credit" will be recorded in the comment area of the report card and will be used appropriately in averaging the final grade for the course.

Special Considerations During Hybrid and Remote Learning

Regular attendance is critical for student success. It is the shared responsibility of students, families, and school staff to ensure that students are present and engaged during hybrid and remote learning. All students, regardless of learning model, are expected to make up any work missed due to absence, whether excused or unexcused. In cases of extended absences, accommodations may be made at the discretion of the teacher and the principal.

1. Students who have selected the hybrid learning model are expected to be physically present in school on their cohort's assigned days, and to sign in remotely on their remote learning days. If a hybrid student is unable to physically attend school on an assigned day for any reason OTHER than for a medical reason which would normally be excused, they should notify the school as soon as possible, preferably 24 hours prior to the anticipated absence. In such instances, when physical attendance is not possible, students may participate in class remotely.
2. If a hybrid student is unable to physically attend for a medical reason, they should provide a parent or doctor's note as soon as possible and no later than within one week of the absence. Students experiencing symptoms which may be linked to COVID-19, regardless of whether or not they have been tested, are required to stay home. Students who are well enough may attend class remotely during this time. Students may also attend remote classes during a required quarantine period due to COVID-19 exposure if they are well enough to do so.
3. Students should not attend school if experiencing any of the following symptoms:
 - Fever (100.0 F or higher) without the use of fever reducing medication
 - Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - Chills or shaking chills
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore Throat
 - Headache, when in combination with other symptoms
 - Muscle or body ache
 - Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea

- Fatigue when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

Students kept home while experiencing any of the above symptoms may access instruction remotely if they are feeling well enough to do so. Students who have experienced any of the COVID-19-like symptoms listed above may return to school after they have met the following criteria:

- Have tested negative for COVID-19 AND
- Have improvement in symptoms AND
- Have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications

OR

If a health care provider makes an alternative diagnosis for the COVID-19-like symptoms, the individual may return to school based on the recommendations for that alternative diagnosis (e.g. influenza or strep pharyngitis)

If a student is too ill for remote instruction, a note from a parent or doctor will excuse the absence.

4. Attendance is required for students attending school remotely. They are expected to sign in to the remote classroom at their assigned time. Attendance will be taken by the teacher during each period of the school day. If a teacher determines that a student is not appropriately engaged for more than 15 minutes of a class period (e.g. student is not at their computer although computer is logged in, student does not respond to questions when asked, student does not turn on video when asked to do so, etc.), the student will be marked absent for the class period. An absence of this nature may also be considered a “class cut” and could result in disciplinary action.
5. Students attending school in person will also be marked absent if they miss 15 minutes or more of instructional time.
6. Students who are unable to access remote learning because of a technical issue (e.g., device failure, internet failure, etc.) should contact their teacher as soon as possible to

report the reason for the absence. Technical issues alone do not constitute grounds for an exempt absence. It is the responsibility of the student and family to seek out help to resolve technical issues in a timely manner, and it is the responsibility of the school to provide a device for students who do not have their own functioning device.