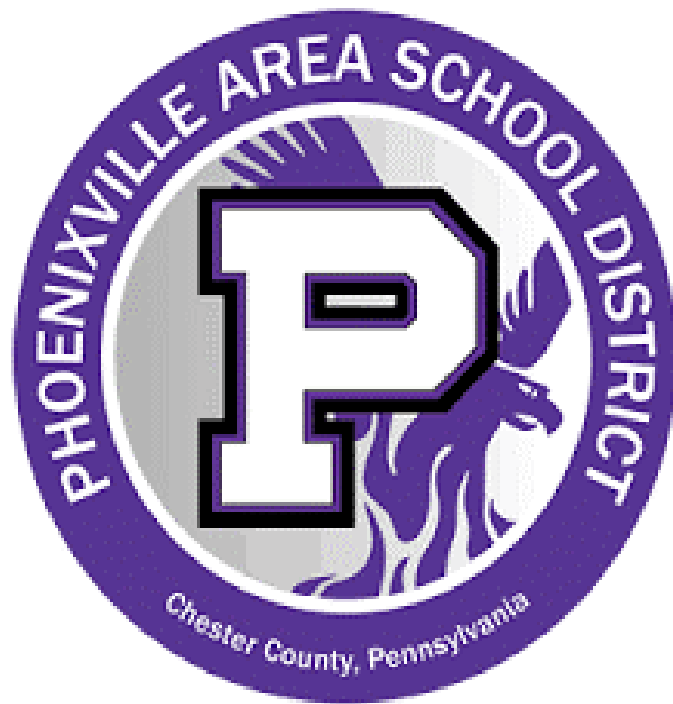


Phoenixville Area High School Attendance Policy
2018-2019



Attendance Policy

Since the continuity of the educational process is best served by regular classroom experiences, good attendance is an integral part of a student's education. Frequent student absenteeism prohibits instruction, which cannot be entirely regained. Consequently, irregular attendance is a frequent cause of student failure, in addition to being a violation of the state's compulsory attendance laws. Therefore, it is the policy of the Phoenixville Area School District (Policy 204) to promote student attendance and in accordance with this policy adopts the following measures:

1. In order to obtain academic credit for a course, students must be in attendance and have their attendance recorded at least 90% of the time that a class is scheduled. Failure to attend at least 90% of the scheduled classes of any one credit course or half-credit course may result in a denial of credit for that course. Absences that result from a student's involvement in any school authorized parallel program will not be held against the student in fulfilling the above requirement. Examples of such parallel programs include, but are not limited to, alternate educational programs such as homebound instruction and psychological/educational testing.
2. When a student accumulates nine (9) days of absence, the student and parent/guardian will be notified by phone of the number of class absences the student has accumulated from a regularly scheduled class and the district's attendance policy.
3. When a student accumulates eighteen (18) days of absence, a notification of absences will be mailed to the parent/guardian outlining the student's attendance record and the possibility that the student may be denied credit due to his/her absences. At this time, the parent/guardian will be required to schedule a due process hearing with the superintendent or designee concerning the denial of credit. For half credit courses, the above notices will be made by phone on the fourth (4th) day of absence, and a mailing will be sent on the ninth (9th) day of absence for the parent/guardian to schedule a due process hearing with the superintendent or designee concerning denial of credit.

Violation/Penalties

Absences due to school-imposed suspension, school-sponsored activities, college visits, religious obligations, funerals for members of the student's immediate family, and court appearances will not be included in the calculation of accumulated class absences. Discretion may be used for absences resulting from a medical doctor's care. All other absences will be included in the number of accumulated class absences, unless reasonably justified. If it is determined that no mitigating circumstances exist which reasonably justify eighteen (18) or more absences, the student may not be awarded credit for the course and will be required to repeat the course or make up credit hours. The school district may, in its reasonable discretion, exercise all or part of the following options:

1. Grant credit for absence(s) caused by legitimate medical reasons, provided the student has successfully met all other course requirements, or
2. Grant credit for absence(s) justified by other mitigating circumstances, or
3. Withhold course credit and/or promotion or graduation. If credit is withdrawn, a student will, under normal circumstances, be required to remain in and repeat the class(es) to which he or she is assigned.

****Excessive absences may lead to denial of participation in Commencement. Activities.****

Attendance Procedures

Illness is an acceptable reason for being absent. **Parents/guardians are to call the attendance office the evening before or morning of the day the student will be absent or late: 484-927-5115.** Please state the student's full name, grade, reason for the absence or tardiness, date, who is reporting the absence or tardiness, relationship to the student, and a phone number where you can be reached.

Upon returning to school after an absence, each pupil must present a **written excuse within three school days** giving the reason for the absence. E-mails are an acceptable form for a written excuse; however, **calling the attendance line does not eliminate the need for a hard-copy or emailed note**. Each excuse note that is presented must have the following information:

- Date of return to school
- Full name of student as used in Skyward
- Date of absence
- Grade of student
- Reason for absence
- Signature of parent/guardian
- Phone number (home & work) for verification of the note

Excuse Notes

Excuse notes are to be turned in to the Attendance Office. Failure to provide a written note within three school days of the absence will result in an unexcused absence. Policy 204: SC 24 PS 13-327 Sec II C.

1. After 6 cumulative absences, a student is required to present a doctor's note in order to excuse an absence.
2. For students who miss three or more consecutive days due to illness, a doctor's note must be presented to return to school. If this requirement is not met the absence will be treated as an unlawful absence. Policy 204: SC 24 PS 13-327 Sec II D
3. If a proper written excuse is not presented within three school days after an absence, the absence is marked unexcused. For those students below 17 years of age, this is an unlawful absence. Policy 204: SC 24 PS 13-327 Sec II C
4. A student who was absent or excluded because of a communicable or infectious disease shall be re-admitted to school by presenting a certificate signed by a physician or the school nurse to the effect that the child is free of such suspected communicable or infectious disease.
5. Upon returning to school, students are responsible for making arrangements with their teachers to make up the work which they missed as a result of their absence. For every one day of absence students have two days to make up work assigned during the day of absence. The students are responsible to make up all pre-assigned work and tests on the day they return.
6. Work will be marked late when it is not made up in the time determined by your teacher. Assignments other than homework will receive a 10% penalty for each day of lateness beyond the due date. Assignments more than five days late will receive a grade of 20%. Homework may not be accepted late for credit.

Request for Absence from School

The school recognizes that there are times when it becomes necessary for a parent or guardian to request that his/her child(ren) be absent from school for reasons other than illness.

Upon receipt of a written request from the parents of the pupils involved, pupils may be excused from school attendance to participate in a family trip or educational tour provided during the school term at the expense of the parents when such activity is evaluated by the District Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee(s). Pupil participants therein are subject to direction and supervision by an adult acceptable to the District Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee(s) and to the parents of the pupils concerned.

Early Dismissals

The staff at PAHS are aware and understand there will be times when a student needs to have an early dismissal from school. For this to occur without any issues, a student **must present a note before the start of the 1st period (no later than 7:34 or upon their arrival to school)**. If the note is presented after the start of the **1st period (7:34)**, a

phone call will be placed to the parent or guardian to verify the early dismissal is scheduled. If we are unable to contact a parent or guardian, the student will not be permitted to leave the building. If you choose to email a note for your child requesting an early dismissal, please be sure to include the following information;

- Student's full name and grade
- Specific reason for the early dismissal (name of the person/place to whom/which the student is going)
- Time at which the student is to be dismissed
- Parent or guardian's name and signature
- Phone number where the parent or guardian may be reached for verification of the note.

Students must sign out at the front desk prior to leaving the building. Parents and guardians are urged to keep requests for early dismissals at a minimum. After five (5) early dismissals are accumulated each semester, a doctor's note or other corroboration that the dismissal is excusable will be required. Undocumented absences due to children leaving school early will be considered unlawful or unexcused.

Early dismissal notes requested by a parent after the start of the school day must be brought into the main office or attendance office by the parent. Administrative approval is required for any other emergency situation that may arise during the course of the school day necessitating a student leaving early. Students must secure administrative approval prior to leaving for any other reason.

Eighteen-year-old students are not permitted to sign themselves in or out of school for any reason or write their own absence notes.

Any student who leaves after 12:20 is eligible to return to participate in after-school activities.

Family Vacation

Absences for non-school trips shall not be excused unless a written request by the parent has been approved by the building principal. Such requests are to be submitted five (5) days prior to the date of the trip using the Non-School Sponsored Travel form. This form is available in the attendance office and online.

Absences due to a family trip/vacation, (consecutive or cumulative) in excess of 5 days are unexcused absences.

Absences for non-school sponsored tours or trips may not be approved for students who are failing two (2) or more subjects, for students who are identified as chronic truants and/or, for students for whom a physician's excuse is required.

If a student will be away for more than 10 consecutive days, the student must withdraw from school and reenroll upon return from vacation.

Religious Observation

All absences from school for religious holidays or for religious instruction shall be excused, and no student so excused shall be deprived of an award or eligibility to compete for an award or the opportunity to make up a test given on the religious holiday. Such instruction shall not require the child's absence from school for more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year.

College Visitation or Employment Interview

A senior who is being considered by a college for admission or a senior who has made application for permanent employment may need to be excused from classes for a personal interview. All considerations of this kind must be processed through the attendance office. **Prior to the date of the visitation or interview, the student must submit a Non-School Sponsored Travel Form, found in the attendance office.** If the procedure is not properly followed, the absences will be unexcused. Requests of this nature will be granted on a limited basis in accordance with the student's

achievement and attendance record. Such requests by students other than seniors must have administrative approval. Upon the approval of the principal, this absence will be excused.

Late to School

Students and parents are encouraged to recognize the importance of being punctual and support the necessity to report to school on time each day. Tardiness will be classified as excused or unexcused by the school administrator (Tardiness is absence from part of a school session). When tardiness is unexcused, such time may be considered cumulative and translated into equivalent days. Accumulated unexcused tardiness can result in detention or suspension.

Any student who enters the school after 7:24 a.m. (the beginning of homeroom) will be considered tardy. The student is responsible for going directly to the attendance office. Students who are unexcused late after first period will be considered to have cut the class(es) that were missed.

**** A student will be given a detention by their homeroom teacher after 5 lateness to homeroom. For students who fail to report to the teacher assigned detention, they will be assigned to an administrative detention. **Missed detentions will be considered obligations and may lead to ineligibility.**

Any student who reports to school after 9:10 a.m. (the end of second period) will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activity scheduled for that day unless permission from a building administrator is given.

Furthermore, students are required to produce a written excuse for their tardiness in order for a determination to be made as to whether they will be considered excused or unexcused. **This written excuse must be presented at the time of arrival to school on the day the student is tardy.** Lateness that results from oversleeping, missing the bus, or transportation problems occurring as a result of using a private vehicle will be unexcused.

Excused lateness may be granted for the same reason excused absences may be granted. After five (5) excused tardies in a semester, the school will require a doctor's note or other corroboration beyond a note from the parent or guardian. Failure to provide corroboration beyond the allotment for each semester will result in them being classified as unexcused or unlawful. The failure of a student to report to homeroom/school on time will warrant the following disciplinary action.

Per semester lateness to school:

- lateness 1-2: Warning
- lateness 3-4: Administrative Detention (Before or After School)
- lateness 5-6: Extended Time Detention (2:40 p.m. to 5 p.m.)
- lateness 7-8: Saturday Detention or part-time ISS
- lateness 9-10: ISS (parent/guardian will be notified by mail.)
- Continued lateness beyond the tenth (10th) unexcused lateness will result in an administrative conference and disciplinary action at the administrator's discretion.

****Missed detentions will be considered obligations and may lead to ineligibility.**

Late to Class

It is important that students get to class on time. If a student is more than fifteen (15) minutes late to class, it will be considered a class cut. The failure of a student to report to class on time will warrant the following disciplinary action:

Per semester for year-long courses: Lateness to class

- lateness 1-2: Warning
 - lateness 3-4: Teacher Detention
 - lateness 5-6: Administrative Detention (Before or After School)
 - lateness 7: Extended Time Detention (2:40 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
 - lateness 8: Saturday Detention
 - lateness 9-10: 2 Saturday Detentions (parent/guardian will be notified by mail.)
 - Continued lateness beyond the tenth (10th) unexcused lateness will result in administrative conference and disciplinary action at the administrator's discretion.
- **Missed detentions will be considered obligations and may lead to ineligibility.**

When a student is absent from school without authorization:

- 1st offense – Warning (Student Conference)
- 2nd offense – Administrative Detention.
- 3rd offense – Extended Detention; students of compulsory school age will receive a letter of first notice which indicates the sixth unexcused absence will warrant the initiation of legal proceedings. *
- 4th offense – Saturday Detention or part-time ISS (parent/guardian will be notified by mail.)
- 5th offense – 2 Saturday Detentions
- Continued absences beyond the sixth (6th) unexcused absence will result in administrative conference and disciplinary action at the administrator's discretion.

*If the student is under seventeen (17) years of age and accumulates three unlawful absences, a Final Notice of Unlawful Absence will be sent to the parents/guardians of the student. If absences persist beyond five (5) unlawful absences, a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) will be developed. Any student who is habitually truant is subject to disciplinary and legal interventions including the filing of a citation with the Magisterial District Justice and a possible referral to the county Children and Youth agency.

For any student who is seventeen (17) years of age and older, the unexcused day is calculated towards the ten (10) day count for unexcused absences. If a student accumulates ten (10) or more consecutive unexcused absences the student may be dropped from school rolls. Policy 204 Sec 11.24

Unauthorized Absences/Truancy

Continued unexcused absences may result in an administrative conference and disciplinary action at the administrator's discretion.

*If the student is under seventeen (17) years of age, each day of truancy (unlawful absence) is calculated towards the three-day count for unlawful absences. Upon reaching a third truancy, a Notice of Truancy will be sent to the parents/guardians of the student. Once parents have been sent a Notice of Truancy and another unlawful absence occurs at least 4 days after the receipt of the notice; a citation will be issued for truancy. This may result in a fine up to \$300.00 plus court costs.

For any student who is seventeen (17) years of age and older, the unexcused day is calculated towards the ten (10) day count for unexcused absences. If a student accumulates ten (10) or more consecutive unexcused absences, the student may be dropped from school rolls.

Cutting Class

Cutting class is defined as any unexcused, illegal, or illegitimate absence from class. Students who enter school after the end of the first period without a legitimate excuse will be marked unexcused and the absence will be treated as a

class cut. When a student cuts a class, he or she forfeits the right to make up missed class assignments and will receive a zero (0) for the day of the class he/she cuts. If a student cuts class on the day of a summative assessment, these summative assessments are subject to academic penalty.

If a student expects to miss one or more classes due to a school-related activity, the student MUST secure permission from the teacher(s) of the class(s) he/she expects to miss BEFORE the scheduled activity begins.

The following disciplinary measures will be taken for cuts in a particular class:

- 1st cut - will result in being assigned administrative detention.
- 2nd cut - will result in being assigned a Saturday detention or ½ day ISS
- 3rd cut - will result in parent/guardian contact, ISS, or additional disciplinary consequences.
- Continued cutting will result in OSS, parental conference, a referral for an alternative placement, and/or a referral for a due process hearing before the school board for expulsion.

Unauthorized Leaving of School

Students are not permitted to leave school or the school ground for any reason without permission.

Permission to leave school before the regular dismissal time MUST be obtained from an administrator or designee. Permission will only be granted if the school calls the parent or guardian and receives permission from the parent or guardian to allow the student to leave.

Leaving school without securing proper authorization to do so will result in one or more of the following: assignment to Saturday detention, a parental conference, ISS, OSS, a referral for an alternative placement, or a referral for a due process hearing before the school board for expulsion.

Senior Privilege

Seniors who have a 1st or 8th period study hall on their schedule will have the privilege, once approved, to arrive to school at the end of period 1 or leave school at the beginning of period 8. Students arriving at the end of period 1 will sign in at the attendance office; those students leaving early will sign out at the main desk located in the cafeteria lobby.

Seniors must fill out an application and be approved by administration to qualify for senior privilege. A parent/guardian permission form must be on file in the attendance office to allow seniors to arrive or leave during their approved time providing there is not an activity that would require seniors to be in attendance, such as a senior class meeting, etc.

School administrators reserve the right to revoke senior privilege for reasons based upon poor grades, excessive lateness to school, excessive unexcused absences, discipline concerns and/or financial obligations.