



# NEWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **Newton Community School District Board Policy 501.09: Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy**

*The district believes that traditional, in-person school attendance leads to the greatest learning opportunities for students. Students who are present in school and engaged active learners take greater ownership over their educational outcomes. For this reason, it is the priority of the district to foster regular student attendance throughout the school year and reduce barriers to regular attendance for students in the district.*

*Chronic Absenteeism / absences means any absence from school for more than ten percent of the days in the grading period established by the district.*

*Truant / Truancy means a child of compulsory attendance age who is absent from school for any reason for at least twenty percent of the days in the grading period.*

*Chronic Absenteeism and truancy do not apply to the following students who:*

- Have completed the requirements for graduation in an accredited school or has obtained a high school equivalency diploma;*
- Are excused for sufficient reason by any court of record or judge;*
- Are unable to attend school due to legitimate medical reasons;*
- Have an individualized education program that affects the student's attendance;*
- Have a plan under section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. § that affects the child's attendance;*
- Are attending a private college preparatory school accredited or probationary accredited;*
- Are excused under Iowa Code §299.22; and*
- Are exempt under Iowa Code §299.24.*

*Students are subject to disciplinary action for truancy including suspension and expulsion. It is within the discretion of the principal to determine, in light of the circumstances, whether a student may make up work missed because of truancy. Students receiving special education services will not be assigned to supervised study hall, in-school suspension unless the goals and objectives of the student's Individualized Education Program are capable of being met.*

*It is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the designated school officials, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy. The administrative regulations will indicate the disciplinary action to be taken for truancy.*



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For implementation of this updated policy the Newton Community School District will use the following guidelines:

- Absences related to any medical appointment, where a doctor's note is received verifying that the student was seen by a medical professional, will be exempt;
- Absences resulting from the student being sent home by a school official (such as the school nurse) due to a legitimate medical reason will be exempt; and
- Absences resulting from a student choosing to go home due to not feeling well will not be exempt unless they return to school with a doctor's note.

The Newton Community School District Board of Directors approved the second reading of the policy on February 10, 2025 at the regular school board meeting. All absences, which were called in by parents for illness prior to the newly approved board policy, will be changed to exempt. This will take a little time to ensure that the attendance records accurately match the policy. Moving forward, the above criteria and board policy 501.09 will be used to determine the exempt status of an absence.