

## RSU #63

- a. **NEPN/NSBA Code:** JEA-R
- b. **Title:** Student Attendance, Absences, Home Instruction, and Truancy – Administrative Procedures  
Superintendent/Board of Directors
- c. **Author:**
- d. **Replaces Policy:**
- e. **Date Approved:** 01/24/2022
- f. **Previously Approved:** 12/02/2019
- g. **Policy Expiration:** Review as Needed
- h. **Responsible for Review:** Policy Committee/Superintendent
- i. **Date Reviewed:** 01/10/2022 Policy Committee  
12/19/2021 Superintendent
- j. **References:** JFC - Student Withdrawal from School/Dropout Prevention  
JEA - Student Attendance, Absences, Home Instruction, and Truancy  
20-A MRSA Sections 5001-A, 5104-A; 5051-A; 22 MRSA § 4002
- k. **Narrative:**
  - I. Procedures for dealing with unexcused absences:
    - A. A telephone call from a school administrator (Superintendent, Principal, or School Counselor) will be made to the parent/guardian of any student when an unexcused absence occurs (20-A MRSA Sections 5001-A).
    - B. Disciplinary actions and/or student supports for excessive absences, excessive tardiness, and/or early departures include:
      - 1. A letter alerting the parent/guardian of any student who is absent/tardy at least seven (7) times within the school year,
      - 2. A letter to the parent/guardian from a school administrator expressing grave concerns any time during a school year when a student accumulates ten (10) or more absences/tardies,
      - 3. A meeting with the parent/guardian and a school administrator will occur if a student accumulates fifteen (15) or more absences/tardies within a school year. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the students' attendance and to develop a performance contract to encourage improved attendance for the remainder of the school year,
      - 4. The school administration will involve other agencies if the student violates the terms of the performance contract, referenced in

Section VII.A.2.c. above and an additional five (5) days of absences/tardies accrue for a total of twenty (20) days. Absences for health or extenuating circumstances may be approved, if substantiated.

5. Any student missing twenty-five (25) or more days of school will meet with the Superintendent along with the student's parent/guardian to consider the following alternatives: retention, non-promotion, court action, etc.

**II.** A student is considered truant if the student is subject to 5001-A and:

- A. Has completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of ten (10) full days of unexcused absences or seven (7) consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year; or
- B. Is at least six (6) years of age or five (5) years of age enrolled in school and has not completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of seven (7) full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year;
- C. Procedures outlined in Section VII.A. above have failed to correct the problem of unexcused absences.

**III.** Procedures for dealing with truancy:

- A. The school principal will notify the superintendent of any student determined to be truant, as defined in Section VII.B. above.
- B. The superintendent will develop procedures to refer the student who is truant to the Student Assistance Team (SAT) or school personnel designated by the superintendent in accordance with the school district's intervention system under MRSA section 4710 pertinent to this section.
- C. Under MRSA section 4710 (K-12 interventions), to determine the cause of the truancy, the SAT will assess the effect of the student's absences, as well as the potential of any future absences. The SAT will develop an intervention plan to address the student's absences and their negative effect. An intervention plan may include, but is not limited to:
  1. Frequent communication between the teacher and the family,
  2. Changes in the learning environment,
  3. Mentoring,

4. Student counseling,
5. Tutoring, including peer tutoring,
6. Placement into different classes,
7. Consideration of multiple pathways as described under MSRA section 4703,
8. Attendance contracts, referral to other agencies for family services, and
9. Other interventions, including, but not limited to, referral to the school attendance coordinator, SAT, and the dropout prevention committee.

Failure of the student or the student's parent/legal guardian to appear at scheduled meetings does not preclude the school administrators from implementing an intervention plan to address the student's truancy.

- D.** If the intervention plan developed pursuant to paragraph VII.C.3. is unable to correct the student's truancy, the superintendent will serve or cause to be served upon the parent by hand or by registered mail a written notice that attendance at school is required by law. The notice must:

1. State that the student is required to attend school pursuant to MRSA section 5001-A,
2. Explain the parent's right to inspect the student's attendance records, attendance coordinator's reports, and principal's reports,
3. Explain that the failure to send the student to school and maintain the student in regular attendance is a civil violation in accordance with MRSA section 5053-A and will jeopardize the student's status in the grade that the student is in,
4. State that the superintendent may notify the local law enforcement department of a violation under MRSA 5053-A and the Department of Health and Human Services of a violation resulting in truancy and/or educational neglect.
5. Outline the plan developed to address the student's truancy and the steps that have been taken to implement that plan.

- IV. Prior to notifying the local law enforcement department under paragraph VII.C.4. the superintendent will schedule at least one meeting as required in paragraph C above and may invite a local prosecutor.
- V. If after three (3) school days following service of the notice referenced in section VII.C.4. above, the student remains truant and the parent and student refuse to attend the meeting referenced in section D above, the superintendent will report the facts of the unlawful absence, a) resulting in truancy to the local law enforcement department, which may proceed with an action to enforce MRSA section 5053-A against the parent unless the student is at once placed in an appropriate school or otherwise meets the requirements under MRSA section 5051-A and b) resulting in educational neglect to DHHS (22 MRSA § 4002)
- VI. When a student is determined to be truant and in violation of MRSA section 5001-A, and the SAT or the school personnel designated by the superintendent in accordance with the school district's intervention system under MRSA section 4710 and the superintendent have made a good faith attempt to meet the requirements of section VII.C., the superintendent will notify the Board of Directors of the student's truancy.