

Dr. Kathleen Davis

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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UTICA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT / 929 YORK STREET / UTICA, NY 13502

Dear Parents,

The District has an obligation to review updates on attendance. We see attendance in school as a partnership with parents and guardians.

Research indicates that regular and punctual student attendance is the foundation of academic achievement and is essential to the educational process. Successful student attendance requires cooperation among all members of the school community including students, parents, teachers, and principals. The school district has high expectations for all members of the school community to achieve this, including the following:

- Students are expected to attend school daily and be on time.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and on time.
- Parents/guardians are required to contact the school to report an absence and to provide a written note explaining the reason for the absence upon return to school.
- Teachers are responsible for maintaining accurate attendance records and for referring chronic cases of absenteeism/tardiness to parents and to the building principal.
- Support staff are responsible for developing student attendance support plans when needed.
- School administration is responsible for the implementation of an effective and efficient attendance system.

In addition, each public school district is required to adopt a comprehensive attendance policy (8 NYCRR 104.1) in an effort to support school attendance and is required to provide parents or guardians with a summary of the policy each year. Attached is the Board of Education approved *Utica City School District Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy Summary*. A complete copy of the Student Attendance Policy 7006 is available from each building principal and can also be found online at the link below.

<https://web2.moboces.org/districtpolicies>.

The Utica City School District is committed to the success of every child. Regular school attendance establishes the foundation for academic achievement in school, as well as supports the development of life-long habits that lead to personal and professional growth. We appreciate the collaboration and support of parents and guardians in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Kathleen Davis', is positioned above the printed name.

Dr. Kathleen Davis

Interim Superintendent of Schools

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer which fully and actively supports equal access for all regardless of Race, Color, Weight, National Origin, Ethnic Group, Religion, Religious Practice, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Gender, Age, Veteran Status or Genetic Information.



Regulation

STUDENTS

7006.2

COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY SUMMARY

The Utica City School District recognizes that regular classroom attendance is an essential part of an educational program and there exists a critical relationship between student performance and attendance.

Consistent with the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Section 104.1(c), the district has established a comprehensive student attendance policy. The Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy will establish a mechanism to identify patterns of pupil absence and develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance.

Students are expected to attend scheduled classes as outlined under the Utica City School District's Student Attendance Policy. Successful implementation of the policy requires cooperation among students, teachers, administrators and, most important, parents who are ultimately responsible for the regular attendance of their children under Education Law Section 3205.

Students are expected to attend school (classes) daily and be on time. Teachers are responsible for maintaining accurate attendance reports and for referring chronic cases of absenteeism/tardiness to the building principal.

School administration is responsible for the implementation of an effective and efficient attendance system. The building principal shall identify the causes of absenteeism or tardiness with other professional staff members for the purpose of implementing effective intervention strategies. Such strategies may include communication, counseling, mentoring, community services and/or progressive discipline.

Disciplinary action may be imposed when other forms of intervention fail. Sanctions such as loss of privileges, detentions and in-school suspensions as authorized by the Utica City School District's Code of Conduct may be used.

This brief summary outlines the expectations for acceptable attendance by all students in the Utica City School District. A complete copy of the Student Attendance Policy is available from the Office of the Building Principals.



Keep Your Child On Track in Middle and High School: Pay Attention to Attendance

Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students access learning opportunities and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and on the job. Families can also advocate for resources to help students learn if they cannot attend in-person.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Students should miss no more than 9 days of school each year to stay engaged, successful and on track to graduation.
- Frequent absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other difficulty.
- By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- By 9th grade, attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.
- Missing 10%, or 2 days a month, over the course of the school year, can affect a student's academic success.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Make school attendance a priority

- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day.
- Help your teen maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Try not to schedule dental and non-Covid-19 related medical appointments during the school day.
- Keep your student healthy, and if you are concerned about Covid-19, call your school for advice.
- If your teens must stay home because they are sick or in quarantine, make sure they have asked teachers for resources and materials to make up for the missed learning time in the classroom.

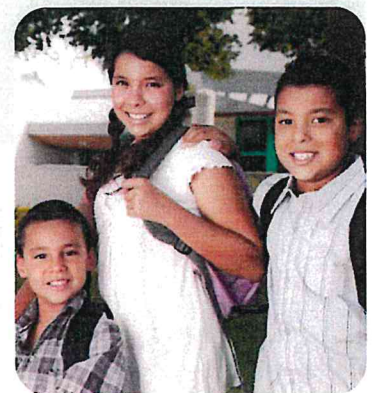
Help your teen stay engaged

- Find out if your children feel engaged by their classes, and feel safe from bullies and other threats.
- Make sure your teens are not missing class because of challenges with behavioral issues or school discipline policies. If any of these are problems, contact the school and work with them to find a solution.
- Monitor your teen's academic progress and seek help from teachers or tutors when necessary. Make sure teachers know how to contact you.
- Stay on top of your child's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Encourage your teen to join meaningful after-school activities, including sports and clubs.
- Notice and support your students if they are showing signs of anxiety.

Communicate with the school

- Know the school's attendance policy – incentives and penalties.
- Check on your teen's attendance to be sure absences are not adding up.
- Seek help from school staff, other parents or community agencies if you need support.

Updated November 2022



Visit Attendance Works at www.attendanceworks.org for free downloadable resources and tools!



Help Your Child Succeed in School: Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early

DID YOU KNOW?

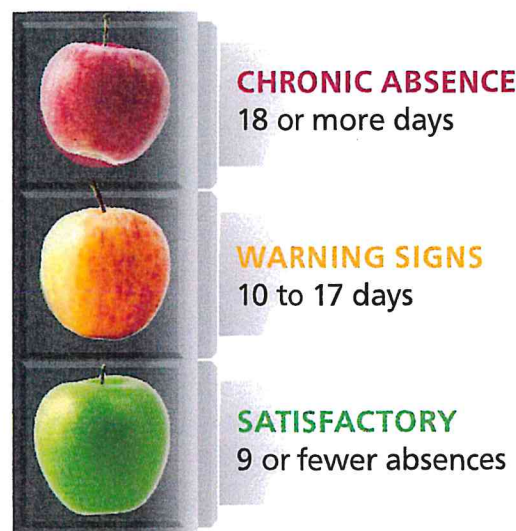
- Starting in preschool and kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10%, or about 2 days each month over the course of a school year, can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just 1 or 2 days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences and tardiness can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Eventually good attendance will be a skill that will help them succeed in high school and college.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Keep your child healthy and make sure your child has the required shots.
- Introduce your children to their teachers and classmates before school starts.
- Develop backup plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor or another parent.
- Try to schedule non-Covid-19 related medical appointments and extended trips when school isn't in session.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors and other parents for advice on how to make your child feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- If you are concerned that your child may have Covid-19, call your school for advice.
- If your child must stay home due to illness or quarantine, ask the teacher for resources and ideas to continue learning at home.

When Do Absences Become a Problem?



Note: These numbers assume a 180-day school year.