

Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford

To Be Proposed:
September 7, 2022

Resolved, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Public Act 21-46, Section 18, adopts the amended definition of excused absence and unexcused absence and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action:

A student is considered to be “in attendance” if:

- 1) present at their assigned school, and/or*
- 2) participating in an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip); and/or,*
- 3) participating in statutorily authorized remote learning as determined through a combination of: synchronous virtual classes, synchronous virtual meetings, activities on time-logged electronic systems, and/or the completion and submission of assignments for at least half of the instructional school day.*

A student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip) for at least half of the regular school day. Students serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion are reported as “absent” except for each day that the student receives alternative education programming for at least half of the instructional school day.

Approved by a vote of _____, this seventh day of September, Two Thousand Twenty-Two.

Signed: _____
Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Secretary
State Board of Education

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

DATE: September 7, 2022

SUBJECT: Adoption of Definition of Remote Absence

Executive Summary

Introduction

Section 18 of Public Act No. [21-46](#), *An Act Concerning Social Equity and the Health, Safety and Education of Children*, requires that the State Board of Education amend the definitions of "excused absence" and "unexcused absence" to exclude a student's engagement in (1) virtual classes, (2) virtual meetings, (3) activities on time-logged electronic systems, and (4) the completion and submission of assignments, if such engagement accounts for not less than one-half of the school day during virtual learning authorized pursuant to Section 16 of this Act. As used in this section, "virtual learning" means instruction by means of one or more Internet-based software platforms as part of an in-person or remote learning model.

Background Information

In January 2008, the State Board of Education adopted a standard definition of "in attendance" for state reporting purposes: *A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip) for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent.*

With the onset of the pandemic in 2020, districts and schools implemented remote and hybrid learning models. The Connecticut State Department of Education subsequently issued guidance to districts - [Tracking Daily Attendance on Remote Days](#) - which stipulated the following:

A remote student can be considered 'in attendance' on a particular day if the total time spent in one or more of the following activities equals at least half of the regular school day:

1. **Synchronous virtual classes:** live classes that are streamed in real time to students using a videoconferencing platform;
2. **Synchronous virtual meetings:** meetings with a teacher, counselor, social worker, paraprofessional, etc. using a videoconferencing platform or via telephone. This may include homeroom opportunities, daily routine check-ins, counseling or other synchronous conversations;

3. **Time logged on electronic systems:** any time over and above the synchronous virtual classes and meetings that the student may have participated in during the school day; and
4. **Assignment completion and submission:** time determined by the teacher by starting with an estimate of time it would take for a typical student to complete and submit specific assignment(s) and using that estimate to gauge the amount of time for the day that should be allotted to each individual student to contribute to attendance.

Recommendation and Justification

It is recommended that the State Board of Education amend the definition of "in attendance" for state reporting purposes to the following:

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if:

- 1) present at their assigned school, and/or
- 2) participating in an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip); and/or,
- 3) participating in statutorily authorized remote learning as determined through a combination of: synchronous virtual classes, synchronous virtual meetings, activities on time-logged electronic systems, and/or the completion and submission of assignments for at least half of the instructional school day.

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip) for at least half of the regular school day. Students serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion are reported as "absent" except for each day that the student receives alternative education programming for at least half of the instructional school day.

Follow-up Activities

Following adoption, the CSDE will provide districts with additional guidance reinforcing that students meeting the definition of "in attendance" must not be marked as absent for state reporting purposes.

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