

# AuSable Valley High School Attendance Policy

## Statement of Philosophy

At AuSable Valley High School, we believe that all students must be in attendance daily to ensure academic success. For this reason, the following attendance policy outlines the responsibilities for students, families, and school personnel, in accordance with New York State Education Law. It should be understood that it is the legal responsibility of the parent, as well as the obligation of the student, to see that attendance at school is maintained according to this policy. Should you have any questions regarding the attendance policy, please contact Aimee Defayette, High School Principal, at 834-2800, or [defayette.aimee@avcsk12.org](mailto:defayette.aimee@avcsk12.org); or Matt Rogers, Director of Counseling, at 834-2800, or [rogers.matt@avcsk12.org](mailto:rogers.matt@avcsk12.org).

## Class Attendance

A vital and integral element of the learning experience includes interaction with others to develop critical thinking, listening and speaking skills. Recognizing this, the AuSable Valley Central School District Board of Education has adopted the following policy regarding class attendance.

### 1. Statement of Objectives:

It shall be the policy of AuSable Valley Central School District to have a Comprehensive High School Attendance Policy, which seeks to:

- a. Ensure the maintenance of an adequate and accurate record of attendance for all children enrolled as students at AuSable Valley High School and in accordance with New York State Education Law.
- b. Establish a practical mechanism to account for the whereabouts of all children throughout the school day.
- c. Maximize student achievement and school completion for all students.
- d. Increase student achievement by decreasing student absence and by encouraging a higher attendance rate.
- e. Comply with all aspects of the NYS Education Department with regards to pupil attendance, transfer, or withdrawal, etc. and the maintenance and compilation of all relevant and necessary data.

### 2. Description of Strategies to meet Objectives:

- a. Create and maintain a positive school climate and culture, which creates an environment conducive to learning and makes school a desirable place for faculty, staff and students.
- b. Encourage student attendance by communicating the attendance policy clearly to students, parents and faculty.
- c. Communicate any attendance concerns directly to parents and discuss those concerns with the student.
- d. Recognition of perfect attendance.
- e. Maintain accurate school attendance for the purpose of: identifying trends, conducting interventions and establishing an average daily attendance rate.

### 3. Course Credit Policy (Grades 9-12):

Students who are absent from a ½ year course for 13 days and from a one-year course for 25 days shall not receive course credit. **For course credit purposes all absences will be counted.** The decision to grant or deny course credit shall be the responsibility of the building principal. The building principal will hold attendance hearings at 8 days for a ½ year course and 15 days for a full year course to ensure that parents and students understand that repeated absences may result in denial of course credit. This minimum attendance policy requires that students be present for 85% of the school year.

### 4. Absences Defined:

AuSable Valley High School, in compliance with New York State Education Department law, identifies two types of absences: **Documented and Undocumented. ALL absences will be counted toward a student's daily/classroom attendance.**

- a. **Documented Absences**-An absence, tardy or early dismissal which is due to any of the following reasons:
  - Student Illness or Illness of immediate family member or death in the immediate family\*\*
  - Religious observance
  - Quarantine-verifiable by physician or County Health Dept.
  - Required Court appearances
  - Attendance at Health Clinics
  - Approved college visits {Letter from Admission's Office is required}
  - Approved Cooperative Work Programs
  - Military obligations
  - Road Test (not a driver permit test)

In school suspension (ISS) and out of school suspension (OSS) will not be counted toward the maximum number of allowable days missed.

**The above Documented absences still require verification and legitimate written excuses. A documented absence simply means that the student provided appropriate documentation for the absence; it does not automatically eradicate the absence.**

\*\*If a prolonged absence due to a short-term physical, mental or emotional illness is anticipated and/or occurs, the student's parents or guardians should contact the building administrator regarding tutoring. The student's physician/mental health professional, must verify any such absence. Tutoring counts as school attendance. In addition, for those students with chronic health concerns that cause intermittent attendance issues, the building principal will work with the student, parents, and classroom teachers of the student to develop an action plan for credit recovery. Such plans may include, but are not limited to, homebound instruction, tutoring after school, extra class work, etc. Successful completion of this plan will enable the student to receive course credit.

b. **Undocumented Absences**-An absence, tardy or early dismissal, which is not recognized as a documented absence.

These absences include, but are not limited to:

- Family vacations/Planned events
- Hunting trips
- Babysitting
- Oversleeping
- Field Trips not authorized by the principal
- Meetings held during the school day without principal's authorization
- Farm work
- Employment
- Guidance Office
- Nurse's Office

Students will be allowed to make-up missed class assignments up to the maximum of 24 absences. At 25 absences in a full-year course or 13 absences in a semester course, NO MAKE-UP work will be given and the student will receive no credit (NC) for the course unless otherwise determined by the outcome of the attendance hearing.

Notes:

- To receive credit for attendance in a specific class, a student must be present for a minimum of 30 minutes.
- The minimum of 140 days is equal to 85% of the total days of possible attendance. The total days of possible student attendance does not include Superintendent Conference Days or Regents Examination Days (in January and June).
- The policy also applies to students enrolled in Champlain Valley TEC (CV-TEC) Vocational Education programs. Students exceeding the number of absences will either audit the CV-TEC program or return to the home school with appropriate coursework as determined by the student's school counselor.
- If a student is absent from school, the parent/guardian should inform the school (by phone) of the reason for the absence.
- Written excuses for absences ARE REQUIRED BY NEW YORK STATE LAW! Upon returning to school, the student **must** have a written explanation giving the following information:
  - Student's name
  - Date(s) of absence
  - Grade
  - Reason for absence
  - Signature of Parent/Guardian
  - Letters/notes for absence due to court appearance, college visits and doctor visits due to illness are required.
- In the event of an attendance hearing, the student's attendance file will be presented as documentation of the nature of the student's absences.
- When a student needs to be dismissed prior to the end of the school day, a note (signed by the student's parent/guardian) stating the reason and time of dismissal should be submitted to the Attendance Office upon entering school. In the rare case that an emergency requires that a student leave unexpectedly, the parent or guardian should call the Attendance Office and request that his/her child to be dismissed. The parent/guardian, or their designee, must physically come into the office and sign out his/her child. In every case, the register needs to be signed and a written excuse is required upon the return of the student.

- Chronic absences, tardiness, or truancy will be investigated and, if not corrected, will be reported to the proper authorities.

**Parents of students with attendance concerns shall be notified in the following manner:**

Parents of a student in grades 9-12 will receive verbal and written notification when their son or daughter has been absent TEN, FIFTEEN and TWENTY days for full year courses and FIVE, EIGHT and THIRTEEN days for semester courses. Parental input will be sought to initiate intervention strategies to improve student attendance.

**c. Description of Attendance Incentives/Sanctions to be used:**

At **25** days for a full year course and at **13** days for a semester course, the student will not be eligible for course credit but will be auditing the course. The parents will be given the opportunity to attend an attendance hearing with the High School Principal after 15 absences from a full year course or 8 absences from a ½ year course to discuss possible denial of credit if absences continue. Teachers will be notified in advance of attendance hearings and will be given the opportunity to provide input to the principal. When a student reaches the maximum number of absences, the result **may** be denial of course credit.

The outcome(s) of the attendance hearing may result in: (1) extension of the minimum attendance policy, (2) the assignment of No Grade to the student of poor attendance, (3) decision of future consequences of absences, (4) a discussion of intervention strategies, and (5) a discussion of the responsibility of student and parent in regards to pupil attendance. If the student receives a “No Credit” for his or her class, he/she will audit the class and participate as deemed appropriate by the teacher. However, the student will not be eligible to have his/her exams or quizzes graded. The student who successfully audits the course, maintains appropriate classroom behavior, and accrues less than 30 absences (for a full year course, 15 for a half year course) for the remainder of the course will be eligible to attend summer school. A student who accrues 30 absences for a full year course and 15 absences for a semester course will not be eligible to attend summer school.

**Description of Incentives:**

In general, the following attendance incentives will be used to encourage greater student attendance:

- Participation in Student Recognition activities
- Certificate issuance (Perfect Attendance)
- Eligibility for CV-TEC
- Maintenance of driving privileges
- Senior privileges

**5. Description of Disciplinary Sanctions:**

Undocumented absences and/or truancy will be subject to in-school suspension. As per the code of conduct other disciplinary measures may include:

- After-School Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Lunch detention
- Revoking driving privileges
- Revoking senior privileges
- Alternate program placement
- Child Protective Services (CPS report)
- Referral to the court
- Referral to Person In-Need Of Supervision
- NO CREDIT (NC) designation
- Denial of CV-TEC participation or the rescheduling from a program at CV-TEC to a program at AuSable Valley High School.

**6. Communication to Parents/Guardians:**

- An evening meeting will be held at the beginning of the school year for all high school families to discuss the attendance policy. Every effort will be made to keep parent(s)/guardian(s) informed of their child’s attendance issues or concerns. In addition to parent conferences and attendance hearings, parents should be contacted when their child’s attendance reaches the prescribed benchmarks.
- The office/Dean of Students will attempt to call the parents of any student who has been absent 3 days in a row without notification, left school without permission, or regularly comes to school late. Please note that students who are tardy to school on a regular basis may be subject to disciplinary action.
- At any time parents are welcome to schedule meetings with administration and faculty to discuss issues related to attendance and to develop a plan for compliance if necessary.