

SF JSHS Attendance Policy Spring 2025

ATTENDANCE

There are few factors more important to a student's academic success than regular school attendance. Poor attendance not only jeopardizes any chance a student has to be successful in the classroom but also represents one of the most problematic personal habits one could have in adult life. Employers are interested only in employees who consistently show up to work, and who do so in a punctual manner. The St. Francis Jr/Sr High School Attendance Policy is built upon the following philosophy:

- Attendance is clearly necessary for success in the classroom.
- Good attendance is a life skill that prepares students for the world of work.
- Good attendance correlates with a strong work ethic and dependability.
- Attendance is equated with job performance.
- The school is held accountable for student academic achievement and improvement.
- It is highly unlikely that a student will improve when attendance is poor.
- Kansas's law requires all students to attend school until the age of 18 or until graduation.

Considering both the importance of regular school attendance to a student's proper academic and social development and the fact that students are legally required to attend (Kansas Statute [72-1111](#)), the administration and staff of USD 297 will take every reasonable measure to ensure that students are in regular attendance. Certainly, there are legitimate reasons for missing school, and Board policy takes that into account when distinguishing between excused and unexcused absences.

Notification: Parents/Guardians must confirm the student's absence by calling the SFJHS office (785) 332-8153 prior to or on the day of the absence. After 48 hours, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Excused Absence: "Excused absence is absent because of illness, because of participation in school activities, or because of other reasons with the approval of parents." Excused absences require documentation within 48 hours of the marked absence and include the following.

1. School-related trips (Not counted toward PowerSchool absence total)
2. College visits (Not counted toward PowerSchool absence total)
3. Any illness (either personal or family) or disability of a student. (Counted toward Powerschool absence total)
4. Written documentation from a dentist, physician, chiropractor, or other health care provider establishing a student's presence at that provider's office. A note on Providers letterhead is sufficient; no further explanation for the student's presence at that office is necessary. (Counted toward PowerSchool absence total)
5. A phone call from a parent or guardian to the school secretary or principal *explaining the need* for the student to be gone from school. (Counted toward PowerSchool absence total)

SF JSHS Attendance Policy Spring 2025

6. Absence pre-arranged by the parents and approved by the principal. (Counted toward PowerSchool absence total)
7. Unforeseen emergency situations (Counted toward PowerSchool absence total)

Consequences for Excessive Absences

Each student will be allowed no more than 10 total absences per semester excluding school-sponsored activities, college visitation days and hospitalization. Once students exceed the 10 day limit they will receive a 10% grade deduction on a per class basis for the grade/assignments recorded for the day. Students will be allowed to make up assignments, but a 90% is the best grade they can earn. Students exceeding the number of absences will not lose credit if they provide medical documentation on provider letterhead for the absence upon their return to school.

Release of Students During School

• Parent Permission

Students shall not be released during the school day except upon a written or verbal request from the student's parent or person acting as a parent. Before releasing a student during the school day, the secretary or building principal shall verify the identity of the person seeking release of the student. If the principal is not satisfied with the identification provided by the person seeking release of a student, the student's release may be refused. Leaving school without permission will be classified as an unexcused absence. Parental permission to release a student does not guarantee that the absence will be excused.

• Sign In/Sign Out

Students must sign out in the office before leaving the premises and sign in upon returning during the school day. This is required under all circumstances. Students shall not be allowed to run personal errands for school employees off school premises during the school day.

Absence Counted Toward Truancy: “Any absence other than excused absence . . .”

“Truancy” is defined by USD 297 as happening when:

1. a student who is legally required to attend school is not attending.
2. a student is not attending school after having left home to do so.
3. a student leaves school without permission.

Penalties: As noted above, being absent from school for an illegitimate reason is a serious offense. The penalties enumerated below reflect that fact and correspond with board policy and state law.

SF JSHS Attendance Policy Spring 2025

First Offense: The student will meet with the principal, and the parents or guardians will be notified. The student will receive in-school suspension and will be placed on the ineligible list for the week.

Second and Subsequent Offenses: The student will meet with the principal, and the parents or guardians will be notified. The documented absences that count toward truancy will be presented. The student will receive in-school suspension and loss of privileges. The appropriate officials will be notified, according to state law.

Compulsory Attendance Requirements

Kansas's law requires students to attend school until the age of 18. Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds may be exempt from the compulsory attendance requirement if: they have attained a diploma or GED; or they are enrolled in an approved alternative education program, recognized by the local board of education; or a court orders exemption; or the parent or person acting as parent consents in writing to their child being exempt from the requirement and the child and parent attend a final counseling session conducted by the school to sign a disclaimer.

The law requires the disclaimer to include the following information: the academic skills the child has not yet achieved; the difference in future earning power between a high school graduate and a high school dropout; and a list of educational alternatives available to the child.

College Visitation Days

1. Juniors and Seniors may be excused for 2 College Visitation Days per year.
2. A College Visitation Form must be completed before the day of the visit with the required signatures (forms are available in the Counselor's Office).

ACTIVITY AND ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Any student participating in any after school activity, whether inter-school competition or practice, must have been in school on the day of the event for at least **three hours** preceding dismissal time. When an absence is unavoidable on the day of an activity for reasons other than illness, the principal shall be responsible to determine if the student may participate in the school activity that day. An **unexcused absence** for part of the day will eliminate a student from participation in the scheduled activity for that day. No student who checks out during the school day for illness will be eligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity that day including practice or games/events. Students gone on activities will be expected to be at school the next day. If a pattern of absences after activities becomes apparent, students will be withheld from the next activity.