The entire process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study in order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each individual child. The regular contact of the students with one another in the classroom and their participation in instructional activities under the instruction of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose. This is an established principle of education that underlies and gives purpose to the requirement of compulsory schooling in this and every other state in the nation. The good things that schools have to offer can only be presented to students who are in attendance. Attendance reflects a student’s dependability and is a significant factor on the student’s permanent record. Future employers are as much concerned about punctuality and dependability as they are about academic record. School success, future scholarship, and job opportunity are greatly affected by a good attendance record.

Student Attendance is now be affected due to the proliferation of online and virtual classroom opportunities. The Sugar Salem Board of Trustees recognizes that students have a variety of needs that may not all be met through the traditional classroom setting. Students may now take classes to fulfill Sugar Salem graduation requirements through these other settings and receive full recognition as a Sugar Salem Graduate. This includes the fulfillment of all attendance requirements.

Section 33‑201, Idaho Code, states that the services of the public schools of this state are extended to any acceptable person of school age. "School Age" is defined as including all persons resident of the state, between the ages of five (5) and twenty‑one (21) years. For the purposes of this section, the age of five (5) years shall be attained when the fifth anniversary of birth occurs on or before the first day of September of the school year in which the child is to enroll in kindergarten. For a child enrolling in the first grade, the age of six (6) years must be reached on or before the first day of September of the school year in which the child is to enroll. Any child of the age of five (5) years who has completed a private or public out-of-state kindergarten for the required four hundred fifty (450) hours but has not reached the “school age” requirement in Idaho shall be allowed to enter the first grade.

Section 33‑202, Idaho Code, places the requirement for compulsory education upon the parent or guardian. The statutes also provide that school trustees shall cause proceedings to be brought against a child's parent or guardian under the provisions of the youth rehabilitation law when a parent or guardian violates the compulsory attendance law.

Section 33-205, Idaho Code, states that the Board of Trustees of any school district may deny enrollment, or may deny attendance at any of its schools by expulsion, to any pupil who is an habitual truant, or who is incorrigible, or whose conduct, in the judgment of the Board is such as to be continuously disruptive of school discipline, or of the instructional effectiveness of the school, or who presence in a public school is detrimental to the health and safety of other pupils, or who has been expelled form another school district in this state or any other state

Sugar Salem students should have no more than 6 verified absences in a trimester. Verified absences are those which are excused by parents. Conferences will be conducted with parents and school and other staff at 4, and subsequent absences as defined below.

Definitions:

1. Absence
   1. Not being present in the classroom, more than 10 minutes late to class, or leaving class more than 10 minutes early.
2. Verified Absence:
   1. an absence verified through writing or a call to the school. This should take place before, or within 24 hours of the absence.
3. Present
   1. Being present in the classroom or special attendance through permission of the school principal.
4. Special Attendance
   1. Being out of the classroom involved in a situation or activity the school board has deemed to be special attendance such as:
   2. School Sponsored Program. A field trip or special instructional clinic, etc. that is planned with written "Pre-trip instructional activities."
   3. An approved activity, tournament, or contest in which the student is selected  through an elimination process and is a direct participant.
   4. Participation of any school approved class including, but not limited to, virtual classroom activities and/or online courses provided by the Idaho Digital Learning Academy or other accredited online institution.
5. Extenuating Circumstance
   1. Attendance that is beyond the control of the student, parent, or school.
   2. Extended illness of student
   3. Death of parent or other immediate family member
   4. Family trips during school time.
6. Unverified
   1. When a student is either absent or tardy with valid and proven reason either through the office or parent/guardian.
7. Classroom
   1. Any station, room, or place where the student is under the supervision of the teacher or other recognized school official during the scheduled class time.
8. Tardy
   1. Missing 0 - 10 minutes of class time at the beginning or at the end of a class period.
9. Truancy
   1. The student is in the school building but is not in attendance at a regularly scheduled class, this without permission of the teacher or the school office.
   2. The student leaves the school building without prior approval by the parent or guardian (given by phone or written note) and without checking out through the office.
   3. When a student has 3 unverified tardies.

Consequences for truancy and excessive absences may include one or more of the following:

1. conference with parents, law enforcement, councilors, and other appropriate personnel.
2. medical verification of illness.
3. suspension in school.
4. suspension out of school.
5. community service.
6. homework made up at school under teacher or parent supervision
7. attendance at Saturday School.
8. retention in current grade level.
9. changes within current grade level.
10. referral to the juvenile justice system or health and welfare.

Absence Review Procedure: Absences should be reviewed on the following schedule:

* Four absences in a trimester trigger a review by the child’s homeroom teacher. This review may include a conference with the child and parent/guardian. The teacher may wish to invite a school nurse, counselor, or principal if needed. This conference will include a review by the teacher with the parents of district and school policy.
* Six absences in a trimester require a review by school administration. This review will include a conference with the teacher, child, and the parents or guardians. It may also include a nurse, the school counselor, and/or law enforcement.
* Nine absences in a trimester will trigger a review by the principal. This review will include a conference with the teacher, child, and the parents or guardians. It may also include a nurse, the school counselor, and/or law enforcement. After nine absences the case may be referred to Health and Welfare or Law enforcement.
* Subsequent absences will be reviewed in multiples of three and will include the above mentioned consequences. In the event that an attendance problem is not otherwise resolved utilizing the above steps, the students may be referred for expulsion as a habitual truant under the provisions of Section 33205 of the Idaho Code.

Excessive tardiness has a similar effect on a student’s education as absenteeism.

Tardiness Review Procedure: Tardies should be reviewed on the following schedule where contact will include the parent and child:

3rd tardy – general note sent home

6th tardy- review initiated by homeroom teacher

9th tardy – review initiated by principal

12th tardy – review initiated by staff and may include consequences for absences listed above.

15th tardy—review initiated by staff and should include consequences for absences listed above.

Further tardies will be dealt with in a similar manner.