

Nov 2, 2014

Dear School Board,

After being approached by numerous students and faculty, we, as the Class of 2016 Class Officers, have decided to take the initiative in reviewing and revising the policy on junior frees.

The current policy, listed as JHCA, states:

JHCA - USE OF UNSCHEDULED CLASS TIME FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

The high school principal may allow members of the senior class the privilege of early dismissal/late arrival from school or to leave campus during the school day provided:

The senior meets the academic eligibility standards outlined in policy File: JJJ Co-Curricular and Athletic Programs and High School Eligibility Requirements beginning with grades recorded in the last quarter of the student's junior year.

The senior meets and follows the Senior Privilege Regulations which are detailed in the student handbook

It is the responsibility of the principal to review the Senior Privilege Regulations as circumstances dictate, or annually, as necessary and appropriate. The principal will report significant changes or situations to the School Board.

We are proposing revising that policy so it would state:

JHCA - USE OF UNSCHEDULED CLASS TIME FOR HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS AND SENIORS

The high school principal may allow members of the junior and senior classes the privilege of early dismissal/late arrival from school or to leave campus during the school day provided:

The junior or senior meets the academic eligibility standards outlined in policy File: JJJ Co-Curricular and Athletic Programs and High School Eligibility Requirements beginning with grades recorded in the last quarter of the student's sophomore year for juniors and the last quarter of junior year for seniors.

The junior or senior meets and follows the Junior and Senior Privilege Regulations which are detailed in the student handbook

It is the responsibility of the principal to review the Senior Privilege Regulations as circumstances dictate, or annually, as necessary and appropriate. The principal will report significant changes or situations to the School Board.

Furthermore, we are proposing revising the Senior Privilege Regulations portion of the student handbook to accommodate for these changes. This section, which begins on page 51 of the student handbook, states:

FREE PERIODS—"FREES"

During the junior year, students may earn the privilege of having free time (frees) in lieu of study halls during periods when no classes are scheduled. Juniors may not leave the school building during frees except to visit the designated picnic area outside. Juniors must report to study hall and sign out to a specific area; they must sign back in before the end of the period to verify their continued presence on campus and to get any messages from staff looking for them. Students who have frees are allowed to go to the library, cafeteria, or a teacher's classroom if they have received prior permission. Students who have earned frees are not allowed to go to the gymnasium or gather in the hallways. To earn frees, on a quarterly basis, students must maintain a grade of 85 or above in all subjects or have a GPA of at least 90 for the previous quarter. For this privilege we do not round grades up (you must have a 90 or better). Frees are a privilege and may be revoked or suspended for inappropriate behavior (e.g. not going to study hall in quarters when "frees" have not been earned, being disrespectful, cutting classes, falsely signing out of free period, blocking hallways or interfering with classes). In an emergency evacuation, students on "frees" are required to report to a pre- designated study hall monitor.

LEAVING CAMPUS

We do not have an open campus except for the Senior Privilege described above and thus students are expected to be at school during the school day. The obvious reasons for this policy have to do with safety and desire and need for parents to know where students are and be able to contact them for various reasons, not just emergencies. However, in addition to these obvious reasons, we have found that students who leave campus frequently end up in academic difficulty. Sooner or later students who leave campus miss classes and despite protests to the contrary, students do not study better at home.

We are proposing that these portions of the student handbook be revised to look like this:

FREE PERIODS—"FREES"

During the junior year, students may earn the privilege of having free time (frees) in lieu of study halls during periods when no classes are scheduled. Both juniors and seniors may leave the school building during frees. Juniors must report to study hall and sign out to a specific area; they must sign back in before the end of the period to verify they are back on campus and to get any messages from staff looking for them. Students who have frees are allowed to go to the library, cafeteria, a teacher's classroom if they have received prior permission, or off campus. Students who have earned frees are not allowed to go to the gymnasium or gather in the hallways. To earn frees, on a quarterly basis, students must maintain a grade of 85 or above in all subjects or have a GPA of at least 90 for the previous quarter. For this privilege we do not round grades up (you must have a 90 or better). Frees are a privilege and may be revoked or suspended for inappropriate behavior (e.g. not going to study hall in quarters when "frees" have not been earned, being disrespectful, cutting classes, falsely signing out of free period, blocking hallways or interfering with classes). In an emergency evacuation, students on "frees" are required to report to a pre- designated study hall monitor.

LEAVING CAMPUS

We do not have an open campus except for the Junior and Senior Privilege described above and thus students are expected to be at school during the school day. The obvious reasons for this policy have to do with safety and desire and need for parents to know where students are

and be able to contact them for various reasons, not just emergencies. However, in addition to these obvious reasons, we have found that students who leave campus frequently end up in academic difficulty. Sooner or later students who leave campus miss classes and despite protests to the contrary, students do not study better at home.

These changes to the policy would be slight, but they would have an incredibly positive impact. The rule stating that juniors aren't allowed to leave campus during frees is openly and widely broken. Mr. Shedd has already expressed that he is not going to be strictly enforcing this rule and that he supports giving juniors an open campus. Therefore, formally allowing juniors to leave campus and having students sign out ends the potential safety hazard of having students lying about their whereabouts during a fire drill or emergency. Additionally, allowing juniors to leave campus if they meet the guidelines encourages students to get their GPAs up. Juniors have been yearning to be able to leave during frees for years, and allowing this would create a huge incentive for students to pull their grades up.

Students at Cape Elizabeth High School are responsible, driven, and incredibly hard working. Rewarding good grades and behavior encourages students and gives students incentive to work hard. Lastly, the fact that Mr. Shedd and Mr. Carpenter wholeheartedly support giving juniors privileges to leave campus speaks volumes. Our administrators trust the student body because they can see that the students have earned it and that they deserve to be rewarded.

Thank you for your consideration,

The Class of 2016 Class Officers

USE OF UNSCHEDULED CLASS TIME FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

The high school principal may allow members of the senior class the privilege of early dismissal/late arrival from school or to leave campus during the school day provided:

- A. The senior meets the academic eligibility standards outlined in policy *File: JJJ Co-Curricular and Athletic Programs and High School Eligibility Requirements* beginning with grades recorded in the last quarter of the student's junior year.
- B. The senior meets and follows the *Senior Privilege Regulations* which are detailed in the student handbook

It is the responsibility of the principal to review the *Senior Privilege Regulations* as circumstances dictate, or annually, as necessary and appropriate. The principal will report significant changes or situations to the School Board.

Reference: *Senior Privilege Regulations within student handbook*
JJJ – Co-curricular and Athletic Programs and High School Eligibility Requirements

ADOPTED: October 6, 1984
REVISED: November 8, 1994
Recoded: June 1998
REVISED: MAY 11, 2000 (Formerly *Early Dismissal/Late Arrival for High School Seniors*)
February 10, 2009
Reviewed: February 11, 2014