

Attendance Information: Parent and Family Frequently Asked Questions

October 12th 2023

Question: What is an NG?

Answer: No Grade (NG) is what is assigned at the end of a grading period (semester or year) when a student has passed a course but did not meet the attendance requirements of the 90% rule. No one at Lanier assigns a NG as this is done automatically based on parameters set by the district and only the district.

Q: What is the impact of NG, what does it do?

A: An NG in a middle school core content area prohibits promotion to the next grade level and denies credit for any high school credit attempted and otherwise earned for each class in which the 90% rule is not met.

Q: What is the Principal's Plan?

A: The principal's plan is a way for students who have attended at least 75% of classes but have not met the requirements for 90% or more attendance set forth by the 90% rule. The Principal's Plan at Lanier Middle School is for students who meet or will meet these criteria to be assigned a Saturday School day for each grading period they miss two or more of the same periods. Attending Saturday School and completing this plan allows students to work toward preemptively meeting the requirements to override the NG and restore their credit/grade before the NG is assigned.

Q: So three hours on a Saturday erase all absences that grading period?

A: Absences are not erased and remain as coded in the system. Students who have two or more absences within a grading period which are not excused in relation to the 90% rule or in regard to compulsory attendance, will need to attend Saturday School. Attending Saturday School for the grading period will count toward satisfying the requirements for compulsory attendance at Lanier and for completion of the principal's plan, allowing NGs to be overridden.

Q: Is a Saturday session equal to one absence? Or does one Saturday session wipe out an NG?

A: The Principal's Plan is that students will attend Saturday School for two absences recorded in the same period for that grading period. If a student is absent two more times in a subsequent grading period for the same class or another class, they will be required to attend Saturday School again. The number of Saturday School sessions required for a student to attend is determined by whether or not the student has met the threshold for Saturday School during a grading period.

Q: What is the path for a kid that has to quarantine for COVID for ten days to get back on track to pass the grade and get credit?

A: It is recommended that students and parents contact the teachers in advance for any work that may be assigned during the absences via email. Students will be given the make-up time to

complete work missed in alignment to Lanier and HISD policy. A student in this situation will be able to attend the assigned Saturday school to meet the requirements of the principal's plan.

Q: What about a student who is participating in a school UIL sport?

A: According to Board Policy FM(LOCAL) The District shall permit students to be absent for extracurricular activities only in accordance with state rules. No additional activity-related absences shall be permitted. The District has established a maximum of five absences in each class or subject, in one semester, for student participation in extracurricular activities. Those absences will be coded as Activity or OSP.

Q: What is the path for a kid who is involved at the national level in a non-HISD sport who might have competitions during the semester?

A: Provide documentation of attendance to the attendance office so that they can be excused for compulsory attendance purposes. If students do not meet the requirements of the 90% rule regarding attendance, then that student should attend the assigned Saturday School as part of the Principal's Plan for restoring grades/credit.

Q: What is the path for a kid who has recurring quarterly medical visits?

A: It is recommended that students attend school for a portion of the day. Upon returning from the medical visit, a doctor's note should be provided to the attendance office. Provided the documentation is accurate, the absences will be coded as MD in the system and is considered excused for both regular compulsory attendance and for the 90% rule.

Q: What is the path for 8th graders who have to tour high schools during the school day?

A: When students visit another campus with their parent, it's an absence, if the parent provide an excuse note the absence can be excused for compulsory attendance. This does not excuse it for the purposes of the 90% rule.

Q: Is there an option for online classes (like a hybrid)?

A: The principal's plan requires students to attend in person on the Saturday assigned.

Q: How are you accurately tracking that once the student does complete the makeup days?

A: Our campus is required to document the courses and the required hours that students must makeup. These documents will be created once your student is identified as having to attend Saturday School and will be maintained until the end of the school year. Students who attend Saturday School will receive a note signed by an administrator for your records, indicating fulfillment of that requirement for that six-week period. Please hang on to these notes until at least the final report card in the unlikely event of a tracking issue.

Q: If a student misses one day, does that equal four absences (1 absence x period)?

A: Yes, to clarify, for the purposes of the 90% rule, missing one day would equal one absence for each period. Two absences in any one period for that grading period, which is coded as A,AT,CAB,CON,EX,EXP,SUS, will result in the student being required to attend Saturday School as part of the Principal's Plan.

Q: Given this is targeted toward kids who have passing grades but missing seat time, what would they do during Saturday School? Are there options like it was discussed last year where they can do community service or something else?

A: The Principal's Plan is for students to complete tutorial lessons in the core subjects related to their grade level or to complete the HISD approved college preparation course geared towards providing basic information to students about the college process. Students can complete other Lanier related work approved by the administrator supervising Saturday School.

Q: What is the attendance appeal and when do you need one?

A: Once an NG is assigned on the report card, you will receive the attendance appeal letter from Lanier. You can also find it online at houstonisd.org. Please note that completing the principal plan (i.e., Saturday School) is a way to avoid the assignment of an NG on a report card.

Q: What is the point of having excused absences versus unexcused absences if they have to make that time up anyway?

A: Excused and unexcused absences are important as they are used to determine attendance in regard to compulsory attendance rules and law. Attendance for credit has a different standard for what absences constitute an "excused" absence and have been determined by the district.

Q: Are these attendance guidelines different between 6th, 7th, and, 8th graders or common across the board?

A: The attendance guidelines the same for all students at Lanier Middle School.

Q: What are valid excuses for the 90 percent rule?

A: Information on excuses can be found in district policy FEA (LEGAL/LOCAL) and in FEC (LEGAL/LOCAL) which is available online at [HISD Board Policy Online](#).

Q: How many Saturdays are required?

A: Students will be asked to attend one Saturday School for each grading period they have two or more absences in the same period.

Q: If a student misses five days because of Covid, how many days of Saturday School do they need to do?

A: In the case the absences is overlapping a grading period, a student may be required to attend more, however, it is likely that the student will only have to attend one. Contact the attendance administrator or your grade level administrator for more information about this specific question.

Q: Could you please clarify what constitutes two absences given Lanier's block schedule? Is it two days? Or two of the same class period?

A: Two absences of the same class period.

Q: What if they miss the last 30 minutes of school due to the cut off time? Does this still count if not missing the entire class?

A: If the student was marked absent by the teacher, yes. Students are generally required to be in class for 2/3 of the class time to be considered present and the teacher has discretion.

Q: Is there a written policy somewhere and can you share a link to that?

A: The Saturday school requirement is part of the School's Principal's Plan to restore credit when a student does not or will not meet the requirements of the 90% rule. District attendance policy can be found online at [HISD Board Policy Online](#).

Q: We have religious observance on Saturday morning? Is there a non-Saturday option?

A: When you are provided notice of the requirement to attend Saturday school, please contact the attendance administrator or your grade level administrator for information on how to proceed.

Q: To be clear, MD partial day absences don't count towards NG but being out with the flu or COVID does?

A: In the majority of cases yes, that is correct.

Q: If a student misses one P and one R day in a grading period, two advocacy classes are missed. Will it count as NG?

A: They will only have missed one period for each of those days and advocacy is a non-graded subject and is not tracked for attendance for credit. Missing another P and R day in a grading period would require the student to attend Saturday School as part of the principal's plan.

Q: The annual medical check-ups and dentists all that should be excused

A: Yes, provided that signed medical excuse/notes are turned in and the student attends part of the school day.

Q: If you miss four full days due to sickness does that mean you get an NG in all those subjects?

A: They will likely be assigned a Saturday school, because we are on block schedule missing four consecutive days will mean that the student has missed two periods of all periods each day that class met during the absences. A good rule of thumb is to track absences by period.

Q: Does this force parents to send their kids to school sick? Even If a student is caught up or will catch up with the makeup?

A: Students who are ill should stay home and complete makeup work as normal. Due to the 90% rule, the student will have to attend Saturday School as part of the Principal's Plan to restore that grade/credit in the event that an NG is or will be assigned.

Q: Can a student do valid Lanier Middle School work during Saturday School instead of APEX Learning?

A: Yes, students can provide the administrator assigned to Saturday School with a list of their assignments that they intend to work on during that time to receive approval during Saturday School. The approval process is required to ensure students are engaged in meaningful work.

Q: What about students who have a 504 plan?

A: There are no accommodations for 504 which allow student to be absent for entire days/periods. Students who miss for medical appointments should make sure they attend school for a portion of the day to be marked present in their classes and return a note from their medical provider for those absences to be coded as MD.