

75% attendance must for board exams: CBSE

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Calcutta: A minimum 75 per cent attendance is mandatory for Class X and XII students to be eligible for appearing in the board exams, the CBSE said in a circular sent to principals on Monday.

The board said that it may conduct a surprise inspection and, if it is found that students are absent without providing proper leave records, they will be considered “non-attending/dummy candidates”.

An additional 25 per cent relaxation will be provided only in case of medical emergencies and participation in national and international sporting events. The students will have to provide documents.

“As per the CBSE Examination By Laws...a minimum of 75 per cent attendance is mandatory for students to be eligible to appear for the board examinations. The board offers a 25 per cent relaxation only in cases of exigencies such as medical emergencies, participation in national or international sports events, and other serious reasons, if supported by the necessary documents/record,” the circular says.

Leave without a written request will be considered “unauthorised absence” from school.

For medical emergencies, students must submit a leave application along with documents and for other reasons, the students must inform the school of their absence with a valid reason in writing, the



board has said.

“If it is observed at the time of sudden inspection of the schools by CBSE that students are absent without proper leave records, it will be presumed that they are not attending the schools regularly and may be treated as non-attending/dummy candidates. CBSE shall not allow such students to appear in the board examinations,” the circular says.

The board has asked schools to inform parents and students about the mandatory 75 per cent attendance requirement and the potential consequences of not complying.

Several principals said that with such a circular, the board has come down heavily on “dummy institutes” where attendance can be manipulated.

Students feel not attending school gives them the scope to better prepare for competitive exams, especially medicine and engineering, principals said.

“Such a circular is helpful for conventional schools like us, where attendance is a priority....we keep telling parents and students, in groups and one on one, that attending school regularly would give

them the dual advantage of both completing their curriculum and getting a competitive edge,” said Jaidev Ghosh, principal, South Point High School.

Ghosh said such a circular will help create pressure on schools, which will get transferred to parents to let their children attend classes.

“Parents get influenced by external agencies because they want their children to excel without realising their potential,” said Ghosh.

Schools also face a situation where Class XI students at the time of admission seek attendance relaxation citing the example of other schools which offer that.

“Some of our students have gone to institutions where attendance is not that strict,” said Satabdi Bhattacharjee, principal, The Newtown School.

Bhattacharjee said 16-17-year-olds were losing out on all-round development when they were expected to stay home and prepare for a competitive exam.

“How can students not have a social life? The school is a social platform. Parents can’t take that away from students. It ends up creating more pressure on them,” said Bhattacharjee.

BDM International School principal Madhumita Sengupta said those who crack the entrance exams are mostly the ones with better attendance.

The board has asked schools to maintain attendance records for possible “surprise inspection”.