Excused and Unexcused Absences

Students are expected to attend all assigned classes each day. School staff will keep a record of absence and tardiness, including a call log and/or a record of excuse statements submitted by a parent/guardian, or in certain cases, students, to document a student’s excused absences.

Excused Absences

Regular school attendance is necessary for mastery of the educational program provided to students of the district. Students at times may appropriately be absent from class. The following principles will govern the development and administration of attendance procedures within the district:

A. The following are valid excuses for absences:
   1. Participation in a district or school-approved activity or instructional program;
   2. Illness, health condition or medical appointment (including but not limited to medical, counseling, dental or optometry);
   3. Family emergency, including but not limited to a death or illness in the family;
   4. Religious or cultural purpose including observance of a religious or cultural holiday or participation in religious or cultural instruction;
   5. Court, judicial proceeding, court-ordered activity or serving on a jury;
   6. Post-secondary, technical school or apprenticeship program visitation, or scholarship interview;
   7. State-recognized search and rescue activities consistent with RCW 28A.225.055;
   8. Absence directly related to the student’s homeless status or foster care/dependency status;
   9. Absence resulting from a disciplinary/corrective action. (e.g., short-term or long-term suspension, emergency expulsion) if the student is not receiving educational services and is not enrolled in a qualifying “course of study” activities as defined in WAC 392-121-107
   10. Absences due to student safety concerns, including absences related to threats, assaults or bullying
   11. Absences due to a student’s migrant status; and
   12. Principal (or designee) and parent, guardian, or emancipated youth mutually agreed upon approved activity.

The school principal (or designee) has the authority to determine if an absence meets the above criteria for an excused absence.

B. If an absence is excused, the student will be permitted to make up all missed assignments outside of class under reasonable conditions and time limits established by the appropriate teacher.
C. An excused absence will be verified by a parent/guardian or an adult, emancipated or appropriately aged student, or school authority responsible for the absence. If attendance is taken electronically, either for a course conducted online or for students physically within the district, an absence will default to unexcused until such time as an excused absence may be verified by a parent or other responsible adult. If a student is to be released for health care related to family planning or abortion, the student may require that the district keep the information confidential. Students thirteen and older have the right to keep information about drug, alcohol or mental health treatment confidential. Students fourteen and older have the same confidentiality rights regarding HIV and sexually transmitted diseases.

**Unexcused Absences**

A. Any absence from school for fifty percent or more of hours or periods in an average school day is unexcused unless it meets one of the criteria above for an excused absence.

B. Students are expected to make up work. A student's grade may be affected if a graded activity or assignment occurs during the period of time when the student is absent if the work is not made up.

C. The school will notify a student’s parent or guardian in writing or by telephone whenever the student has failed to attend school after one unexcused absence within any month during the current school year. The notification will include the potential consequences of additional unexcused absences.

D. A conference with the parent or guardian will be held after three unexcused absences within any month during the current school year. A conference will be scheduled to determine what intervention(s) should be taken to ameliorate the cause for the student's absences from school. If the parent does not attend the conference, the parent will be notified of the steps the district has decided to take to reduce the student’s absences.

E. Not later than the student’s fifth unexcused absence in a month the district will enter into an agreement with the student and parents that establishes school attendance requirements, refer the student to a community truancy board or file a petition and affidavit with the juvenile court alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010.

F. If such action is not successful, the district will file a petition and affidavit with the juvenile court alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010 by the parent, student or parent and student no later than the seventh unexcused absence within any month during the current school year or upon the tenth unexcused absence during the current school year.

The superintendent or designee will enforce the district's attendance policies and procedures. Because the full knowledge and cooperation of students and parents are necessary for the success of the policies and procedures, procedures will be disseminated broadly and made available to parents and students annually.

Cross References: Board Policy 3230                      Student Privacy
                                           3241                     Classroom Management, Corrective
                                           Student Privacy Actions or Punishment

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