

## 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 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;
9. Absence resulting from a disciplinary/corrective action. (e.g., short-term or long-term suspension, emergency expulsion); and
10. 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.

- A. 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
- B. 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 the majority of hours or periods in an average school day is unexcused unless it meets one of the criteria above for an excused absence.
- B. As a means of instilling values of responsibility and personal accountability, a student whose absence is not excused will experience the consequences of his/her absence.

Students are expected to make up all 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.

- 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~~ requested/scheduled after ~~two~~ three unexcused absences within any month during the current school year. ~~A student may be suspended or expelled for habitual truancy, in a manner consistent with Policy 3241. Prior to suspension or expulsion, the parent will be notified in writing in his/her primary language that the student has unexcused absences.~~ A conference will be scheduled at a time reasonably convenient for all persons to determine what corrective measures should be taken to ameliorate the cause for the student's absences from school/analyze the causes of the student's absences. If a regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference day is to take place within 30 days of the third unexcused absence, then the school district may schedule this conference on that day. If the student's parent/guardian does not attend the conference, the conference may be conducted with the student and school official. The parent/guardian will be notified of the steps the district has decided to take to eliminate or reduce the reduce the student's absences. At some point after the second and before the fifth unexcused absence, the District will take data informed steps to eliminate or reduce the child'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.
- G. ~~All suspensions and/or expulsions will be reported in writing to the superintendent within 24 hours after imposition.~~

The superintendent 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 Actions or Punishment
Legal References:	RCW 13.34.300	Relevance of failure to cause juvenile to attend school to neglect petition
	RCW 28A.225	Compulsory school attendance and admission
	WAC 392-400-235	Discipline — Conditions and limitations
	WAC 392-400-260	Long-term suspension — Conditions and limitations
Management Resources:		
	<i>Policy News</i> , December 2011	Revision of Excused/Unexcused Definitions
	<i>Policy News</i> , June 2001	More Tweaking of Becca Petitions
	OSPI Memorandum No. 052-11M	Unexcused Absence Definition

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