

Bath County High School

Attendance Improvement Policy

Attendance Policy (Expectations):

When a student is absent from school, no learning occurs and even if the missed work is made up, the instruction cannot be made up. Furthermore, when a student is absent from school it reduces the funding that our school receives from the KDE. With the financial difficulties that all schools are experiencing, great attendance is an important key in the financial stability of our schools and a key to the quality of instruction our school can provide. The administration, faculty, and staff at Bath County High School expect all students and teachers to be present every day! All students at Bath County High School are expected to attend school on a regular basis in order to benefit from the instructional program provided. We want our students to develop desirable traits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. Students with poor attendance typically do poorly in school and most high school dropouts quit school due to a lack of achievement that resulted from poor attendance. Students who have good attendance usually excel in school, have higher grades, and enjoy school.

Parent Notification:

When a student is absent from school, the designated school attendance clerks shall call the student's home to verify that the student is suppose to be absent and inquire as to why the student is absent. We do this to make sure that students are not skipping school and to communicate with parents about student attendance and possible consequences of truancy.

Excused Absences:

When a student is absent from school the absence will either be recorded as excused or unexcused. Student who miss school due to an excused absence can make-up all work from the classes that they missed while they were absent. As outlined by KRS 159.150 and Board Policy 09.123, the school will accept six (6) parent notes each school year to excuse student absences. Furthermore, the following absences will be excused as well provided that verifiable documentation is provided to the school after an absence and within five (5) days upon return to school:

1. Personal illness* without a doctor's visit (up to six per school year with a parent note)
2. medical/dental/vision appointment (documentation is required from a physician),
3. death in the immediate family**, (funeral notice is required as documentation)
4. school activities (documentation will be provided by the school),
5. Driver's Test (a copy of the student's newly received Diver's License will serve as documentation and only a ½ day absence will be allowed one time during a student's four year school career),
6. Permit Test (a copy of the student's newly received Permit to Drive will serve as documentation and only a ½ day absence will be allowed one time during a student's four year school career),
7. court appearance (written documentation from the court is required), and
8. emergencies declared by the principal and pre-approved (the principal will provide the documentation for emergency absences through a written note to the attendance officer). When a student or parent needs to request an emergency principal's note, the parent or student must get pre-approved written permission from the principal PRIOR to the absence. A maximum of two (2) emergency principal's notes can be given per school year to each student.

All students have five (5) days to provide the documentation that is necessary to excuse an absence upon return to school. After the five days, the absence(s) will be considered unexcused and permanently recorded as unexcused (this applies to Prom Eligibility restrictions as well).

* Students with chronic or recurring personal illnesses or family illnesses are required to have a doctor's note on file with the school. Students with excessive absences due to illness who also have a request from a physician may be placed on home bound.

** Immediate family is defined by Bath County High School as mother, father, brother, sister, grandparent, aunt, uncle, close cousin (first, second, or third), mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, and legal guardian.

Parent Notes:

When a student is absent, the school requires that a written excuse from the parent/guardian of a student be provided to the office as soon as the student returns to school. All students at Bath County High School are allowed six (6) absences per school year that can be excused by a parent note. All absences beyond six (6) and all tardies beyond six (6) will be considered unexcused unless the absence or tardy is verified by a medical statement, court order, driver's test, permit test, death in the immediate family, doctor's appointment, or **pre-approved** emergency principal's excuse. All parental notes for tardies should be turned in upon arrival to school or dismissal from school – furthermore notes for tardies must be turned in within five (5) school days. All parental notes for absences must be turned in to the office within five (5) days upon return to school and must include the following:

1. Date the note is written
2. Student's full name (first and last)
3. Date of absence
4. Reason for the absence
5. Signature of parent/ guardian
6. Contact phone number (day and evening)

It is the parent's responsibility to indicate the reason for the absence(s) and the school will excuse the first six (6) parent notes regardless of reason given. A sample note is shown below...

August 7, 2008
Please excuse my son <i>George W. Bush</i> , a junior at Bath County High School, for his absence on August 13, 2008. He was unable to attend school due to a hunting accident.
Sincerely, <i>Barbara Bush</i>
Home Telephone: (606) 674-6325 Work Telephone: (606) 783-9900

Emergency Principal Excuses:

When a student has used all of their six (6) parent notes, Bath County High School will not accept any parent notes for absences beyond the six (6) and these absences will be recorded as unexcused. If an emergency does occur and a student has used all parent notes, a student can request up to two (2) emergency principal's excuses. However, all emergency principal's excuses **MUST** be PRE-APPROVED. In other words if a student is to receive an emergency principal's excuse, the student and/or parent/guardian must communicate with the principal prior to the date of the absence before an emergency principal's excuse will be issued. The student, parent, or guardian must communicate with the principal about the request before the date of the absence or on the date of the absence. No emergency principal's excuses will be issued to a student if a request is made after the absence has already occurred. Communication can occur via telephone, personal conversation, email, or written request as long as the communication occurs on or before the date of the absence. The principal shall have the authority to grant a maximum of two (2) emergency principal's excuses per student per school year.

Attendance Incentives:

Bath County High School will work with local businesses to set up an attendance incentive program to reward students who have good attendance in school. Rewards will be set up on a monthly basis and depending on local business contributions and funding, the school will reward students who have good attendance in a variety of ways including, cash drawings, gift card drawings, free merchandise, and other similar awards.

Unexcused Absences:

An absence or school tardy that is not excused is considered unexcused. Students who have unexcused absences can still make up any work that is missed in order to ensure that they understand the material they missed, but the student will receive a zero on all class assignments that were made, missed, or collected during or due to any unexcused absence(s) or unexcused school tardy. In other words making up work for unexcused absences is recommended, but the work does not count and it will not be accepted by the teacher for credit. Anything that is not recognized by Bath County High School as excused is considered to be unexcused. This includes, but is not limited to skipping school*, shopping, vacation, work, car trouble, traffic jams, etc.

* Students who skip school place themselves in danger and place the Bath County Board of Education in legal jeopardy. Skipping school is a serious offense and students who skip school will be subject to the maximum consequences allowable by the school. Under state law, students who skip school for three days or more are considered truant.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences:

A "Student Attendance Contract" will be drafted by the school and provided to the parents or guardians of any Bath County High School student who receives their first unexcused absence. After the first unexcused absence, the student will be warned about the consequences for acquiring any additional unexcused absences and the parent/guardian will be notified of the consequences as well. When a student acquires more than one (1) unexcused absence, each subsequent unexcused absence by a student that occurs after the "Student Attendance Contract" is signed will result in one (1) day assignment of ACP for each unexcused absence beyond the first (i.e. two unexcused absences will result in two days assignment of ACP and four unexcused absences will result in four days of ACP). ACP will be used as a consequence for the first six (6) unexcused absences; after six (6) unexcused absences the student will be referred to the DPP for habitual truancy. By state law, any student who has been absent from school for three days, or who has been tardy to school on three days without valid excuse, is truant. Any student who is reported as truant more than two times is a habitual truant. Habitual truant students and their parents are legally liable under Kentucky Revised Statute and shall be referred to court for noncompliance. Once a student has been referred to the DPP for habitual truancy, the student's privileges will be revoked and the student will also be suspended from participation in all school events, activities, and clubs; in other words the student will not be able to participate in any school related activities or events including the following: prom, graduation, senior events, all fieldtrips, dances, parking, extra-curricular activities (including sports), co-curricular activities (including all school clubs and Beta Club), and the student cannot hold any office (class office or club office). Any dues or fees paid by a student or money spent to belong or participate in any events, clubs, or sports lost due to habitual truancy will not be refunded by the school and the money will be forfeited by the student and parent/guardian. In summary, the consequences for poor student attendance at Bath County High School are as follows:

Unexcused Absence Events

First Unexcused Absence

Second Unexcused Absence
Third Unexcused Absence
Fourth Unexcused Absence
Fifth Unexcused Absence
Sixth Unexcused Absence
Additional Unexcused Absences

Consequence

Warning by Administration and Student Attendance Contract Issued
One (1) Day in ACP
Referral to DPP for Habitual Truancy and Suspension of Student Privileges and Participation (see above for description)

Habitual Truancy (HB 72 and KRS 159.150):

By law, any student who has been absent from school for three days, or who has been tardy to school on three days without valid excuse, is truant. Any student who is reported as truant more than two times is a habitual truant. Habitual truant students and their parents are legally liable under KRS 159.150 and HB 72 and shall be referred to the courts by school personnel for noncompliance. Students who have accumulated more than six (6) unexcused absences shall be referred to the DPP for court referral. Any parent, guardian, custodian, or student of age eighteen or older who intentionally fails to comply with KRS 159.150 shall be fined one hundred dollars (\$100) for the first offense, two-hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for the second offense, and each subsequent offense shall be classified as a Class B misdemeanor and adjudicated in the courts.

Consequences for Habitual Truancy:

Students who have excessive absences from school and who become habitually truant shall become ineligible to receive credits in courses passed. Any student who has accumulated more than six (6) unexcused absences must attend summer school and make up each unexcused absence beyond the six (6) allowed by law by June 30 of that current school year or the student will not receive credits in any courses passed. In other words if a student has accumulated seven (7) unexcused absences, the student must attend one (1) day of summer school in order to lower their number of unexcused absences down to six (6). If a student misses thirteen (13) unexcused days of school, the student would have to attend summer school for seven (7) days in order to make up enough school time to reduce the unexcused absences down to six (6). Finally, since only fifteen (15) days of summer school is offered, a student can only make up fifteen days; therefore if a student accumulates more than twenty-one (21) unexcused absences they are completely ineligible to receive credits and must repeat all courses taken. When a student makes up missed unexcused absences, all work recorded as zeros during those absences will remain as zeros. When a student makes up excessive unexcused absences through summer school, this only permits the student to earn credits in any courses for which there was already a passing grade. If extenuating and exigent circumstances exist that caused a student to miss excessive unexcused absences, a student may petition the principal in writing for a waiver of this policy. If the principal deems the circumstances exigent the student will be invited to voice their request before the SBDM Council at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting. The SBDM Council will make the final determination of the extent of waiver if any for the policy.

Leaving School Early (Checking Out):

Students who need to leave school early must bring a note to the office immediately when they arrive at school. A parent note must be given to the secretary in the front office and should include the date, reason for early release, time of early release, and the telephone numbers of parents. The office secretary will call the parent to verify the note and allow the student to leave. In an emergency situation, parents may call the school and request an Early Release of their child. When a student becomes ill during the school day, the student must come to the nurse's office. The nurse will take care of all calls to parents in the event that an ill student needs to leave school early. All students who leave school early must sign out in the front office before leaving. Students can only be checked out by parents, guardians, and those people on the student's Check-Out Sheet. When a parent is called or calls the school, the school personnel who answered the telephone will sign the Student Check-Out Sheet to allow the student to leave. Students are not allowed to sign themselves out for any reason, even those students who are eighteen (18) years old or older (exceptions will only be made for emancipated students).

Consequences for Unexcused Tardies:

A school tardy occurs when a student leaves school early or arrives late. Just like absences, all school tardies are either excused or unexcused. If a tardy is not excused by a parent note (six maximum), medical statement, court order, driver's test, permit test, death in the immediate family, doctor's appointment, or **pre-approved** emergency principal's note then the tardy is unexcused. When a tardy is unexcused, the student will be assigned break detention for each unexcused tardy up to six (6). Break detentions, for unexcused tardies will be issued/assigned by the office staff. After six (6) unexcused tardies, the student will receive ACP for all subsequent unexcused school tardies.

Excessive Medical Excuses:

It is important for all students to be at school every day – a student cannot learn if they aren't in school. It is also important for students to schedule medical appointments so that the student can be at school all day or at least part of the day. Medical appointments can also be made on non-school days during scheduled breaks. Even though a medical absence is usually an excused absence, excessive medical absences can hinder learning and negatively impact the education being provided to a student. If a student misses more than ten (10) days of school due to medical reasons, the student must have the doctor or ARNP complete a Medical Excuse Form (Form XMA8) for each and every absence beyond ten (10). A regular medical excuse will NOT be accepted for any absences in excess of the ten (10) and failure to submit this completed form for the medical absences beyond ten (10) will result in the absence being recorded as unexcused. Form XMA8 can be picked up in the attendance office or front office at Bath County High School and will also be sent to all local doctor offices for easy access and use.

Educational Enhancement:

A student who is attending or participating in an educational activity may request that the absence be excused as an educational enhancement. The student must complete an appropriate Educational Enhancement Request Form (Form EHO8) and return it to the school attendance officer at least five (5) days prior to the absence. Such an absence as requested by the signed application and approved by the school principal will be considered an excused absence. The major intent of the activity must be educational in order for the student to be granted this type of absence. The proposed activity must have curriculum (e.g. art program, dance programs, State Fair activities, workshops that are educational in nature, college visits, etc.). The principal will use his/her good judgment to determine if the activity meets guidelines. A student may be approved for up to ten (10) days of absence per year for this purpose. Students who are granted an absence under this law will be allowed to make up all school work. Student grade can not be affected by lack of attendance or participation in classed for approved days. This type of absence can not occur during the school's fall or spring CATS testing window or during the first five (5) and last five (5) days of each semester. Decisions may be appealed to the Superintendent and then to the Board of Education

Post-Secondary Visitations:

We hope that all of our students that graduate from Bath County High School go on to attend some post-secondary institution or trade school. In order to help students with their post-secondary plans we allow seniors to make up to two (2) documented visits to a post-secondary institution. These two (2) documented post-secondary visits will be recorded as excused absences. Any student wanting to visit a post-secondary institution must follow these guidelines:

1. Students with unexcused absences are not eligible for post secondary visitations.
2. Written permission must be acquired from the guidance counselor **prior** to the visit.
3. The senior must obtain a signed and dated document that provides evidence that the student made the post-secondary visit (including time spent on campus).
4. The documentation must be signed by the counselor (the counselor verifies that permission was granted prior to the visit) and provided to the attendance clerk in order to get an excused absence for the visitation.

Make-Up Work:

When a student misses school due to an excused absence, it is the student's responsibility upon returning to school to make arrangements with their teachers to make up work. All missed work must be made up within three (3) days of returning to school unless the student has missed more than three (3) days of school. In the event that a student has missed more than three (3) days of the school, the student will receive the same number of days missed to make up work (for example: if a student missed five days then they have five days to make up the work). Only make up work that is due to an excused absence will be graded and recorded by teachers. Assignments, quizzes, and tests that need to be made up should be completed on an individual basis with teachers.