

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The goal of the attendance policies and procedures of the Bristol Warren Regional School District (BWRSD) will be to support and improve the regular attendance and performance of our students. The School Committee and Administration recognizes that regular attendance is vital to a student's success in school. In order to take full advantage of the educational programs offered, students must attend school on a daily basis. Regular attendance and parental support coupled with student effort are critical factors in learning and being successful in school. Ensuring that a student maintains regular attendance requires a cooperative effort by the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and school personnel.

BWRSD will not be responsible for the educational progress of students who fail to maintain regular attendance or who are removed from school for extended periods of time contrary to law or good educational practices as determined by the district.

Expectations

BWRSD requires that the parent(s)/guardian(s) ensure the regular attendance of their children and inform the school of any absences and the causes of such absences.

Medical Documentation

Under certain circumstances, BWRSD may require parents or guardians to present medical documentation of physical or emotional conditions causing a student's absence. BWRSD reserves the right to consult with the district physician to verify medical notes.

Definitions

Excused Absences: Excused absences include a student's participation in an approved school-sponsored activity, suspension days, religious holidays, a court appointment, family emergencies as approved by a school administrator; and illness or injury as documented in writing by a medical professional and provided upon a student's return to school.

Unexcused Absences: All absences not covered by the definition of "excused absences" above shall be considered "unexcused."

Excused Tardies: A student shall be considered tardy when he or she arrives to school after the beginning of the official school day. Excused tardies shall include a student's participation in an approved school-sponsored activity, observance of a religious holiday, a court appointment, family emergencies as approved by a school administrator and a doctor's appointment as documented in writing by a medical professional and provided upon a student's arrival at school the day of the appointment.

Unexcused Tardies: All tardies not covered by the definition of “excused tardies” above shall be considered “unexcused.”

Excused Early Dismissals: An early dismissal is the release of a student from school prior to the end of the student's school day. Excused early dismissals shall include a student's participation in an approved school-sponsored activity, observance of a religious holiday, a court appointment, family emergencies as approved by a school administrator and a doctor's appointment as documented in writing by a medical professional and provided upon a student's return to school.

Unexcused Early Dismissals: All early dismissals not covered by the definition of “excused early dismissals” above shall be considered “unexcused.”

Absence Notification Procedure

When a student is not able to attend school, students 18 years old and over and/or parents for all students under 18 years, must notify the school when the student is going to be absent for that day. All absences are recorded and reported as unexcused until notification of an approved reason for excused absence is provided to the main office. It is the student's responsibility (for those 18 years old and over) and/or parents'/guardians' responsibility to notify the school regarding a child's absence prior to the start of school on the day of the absence. It is the student's responsibility (for those 18 years old and over) and/or parent/guardian's responsibility to provide information regarding a family emergency or court appointment and to provide written documentation from a medical professional in the event of an excused absence. Excuses will not be accepted later than five school days after the absence.

Tardiness Procedure

Any student arriving after the start of the regular school day must sign in at the main office of their school. All tardies are recorded and reported as unexcused until an approved reason for excused tardy is provided to the main office. It is the student's responsibility (for those 18 years old and over) and/or parent/ guardian's responsibility to provide information regarding a family emergency or court appointment and to provide written documentation from a medical professional in the event of an excused tardy. Excuses will not be accepted later than two school days after the tardy.

Early Dismissal Procedure

Students shall be dismissed from school early only with the permission of a parent/guardian, unless they are 18 years of age or older. An early dismissal that is granted by the school nurse shall be recorded and reported as an excused early dismissal. All other early dismissals shall be recorded and reported as unexcused until an approved reason for excused early dismissal is provided to the main office. It is the student's responsibility (for those 18 years old and over) and/or the parent/ guardian's responsibility to provide information regarding a family emergency or court appointment

and to provide written documentation from a medical professional in the event of an excused early dismissal.

Intervention

Step 1: A student shall not miss ten percent (10%) or more of the days in a particular school year unexcused at any point in time. Once a student has missed ten percent (10%) or more of the days in a particular school year at any point in time through unexcused absences, tardies and/or early dismissals, administrators shall take the following intervention steps:

- a. The parent/guardian of any student who has missed ten percent (10%) or more of the school year unexcused at any point in time shall be notified in writing. The school shall make every effort to arrange for a meeting between appropriate school personnel, the District's truancy officer and the parent/ guardian.
- b. A student who has previously been referred to MTSS AND has missed ten percent (10%) or more of the school year unexcused at any point in time shall have the District's truancy officer attend the student's MTSS meetings.

Step 2: In the event that the procedures in Step 1 have been exhausted without improvement in a student's attendance to better than ten percent (10%) of the school year missed unexcused, the appropriate administrator at the school level shall authorize the District's truancy officer to file a petition in Truancy Court or Providence Family Court against either the student (high school) or parent/ guardian of the student (elementary/middle school). IEPs and 504 accommodation plans may be considered in the administrators' decision.

Family Travel and Vacation

Student absence from class for purposes of family travel or vacation is a loss of valuable classroom instructional time and is strongly discouraged. All work will be provided upon return to school; students are required to make-up all missed work. Absences due to family travel and vacation are considered unexcused absences.

Adopted: September 11, 2023

LEGAL REF: RI General Laws, Title 16, 16-19-1 to 16-19-10 (Compulsory School Attendance)