



CLASSROOM-BASED ATTENDANCE POLICY

It is the intent of the Board of Directors (“Board”) of BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL (“BCCHS” or the “Charter School”) to ensure that students attend school every day on time. Consistent school attendance is critical to school success. Being present for classroom instructional time is essential for students to reach their goals and achieve their dreams. Chronic absenteeism has been linked to an increased likelihood of poor academic performance, disengagement from school, and behavior problems.

Definitions

- “*Tardy*”: Birmingham Community Charter High School starts at 8:30 A.M. Students shall be classified as tardy if the student arrives after that time or after the start of any instructional period.
- “*Unexcused Absence*”: A student shall have an unexcused absence if the student is absent or is tardy for more than thirty (30) minutes without a valid excuse.

- “*Truant*”: A student will be considered truant if they miss three full days of school without a valid excuse during the school year. Additionally, if a student is late or absent for more than 30 minutes on three separate occasions without a valid excuse, they will also be classified as truant.

- “*Habitual Truant*”: A student is classified as a habitual truant if they are reported for truancy three or more times in a school year. This includes missing five full days without a valid excuse or being tardy/absent for over 30 minutes on five occasions.

- “*Chronic Truant*”: A student shall be classified as a chronic truant if the student is absent from school without a valid excuse for ten (10) percent or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date.

- “*School Attendance Review Team (“SART”)*”: The SART panel will discuss the absence problem with the student’s parent/guardian to work on solutions, develop strategies, discuss appropriate support services for the student and student’s family, and establish a plan to resolve the attendance issue.
 1. The SART panel shall direct the parent/guardian that no further unexcused absences or tardies can be tolerated.

 2. The parent/guardian shall be required to sign a contract formalizing the agreement by the parent/guardian to improve the child’s attendance or face additional administrative action. The contract will identify the corrective actions required in the future, and indicate that the SART panel shall have the authority to order one or more of the following consequences for non-compliance with the terms of the contract:



- a. Parent/guardian to attend school with the child for one day
 - b. After-school detention program
 - c. School counseling
 - d. Loss of field trip privileges
 - e. Loss of school event privileges
 - f. Required remediation plan as set by the SART
 - g. Notification to the County District Attorney
3. Notice of action recommended by the SART will be provided in writing to the parent/guardian.

Excused Absences for Classroom-Based Attendance

PLEASE NOTE: BIRMINGHAM MAY REQUIRE DOCUMENTATION FOR ALL THE REASONS LISTED BELOW

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies, and justifiable personal reasons, as required by law or permitted under this Attendance Policy.

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness, including an absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health.
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
3. Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments:
4. Students may be absent for up to five (5) days to attend the funeral services or grieve the death of an immediate family member. "Immediate family" includes parents, guardians, siblings, grandparents, or any relative living in the student's household.
5. If a pupil's immediate family member or someone closely associated with them passes away, the pupil may be excused for up to three days. This time can be used for:
 - a. Accessing victim services.
 - b. Grief support services.
 - c. Safety planning or relocation for the pupil or their immediate family.
 - d. Absences beyond three days may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the school administrator. "Immediate family" includes parents, guardians, siblings, grandparents, or any relative living in the pupil's household.

This summary provides an overview of the circumstances under which students may be excused from school:



6. **Religious Instruction:**
7. **Jury Duty:** Absences for jury duty as legally required.
8. **Child Care:** Students can be excused for illness or medical appointments of their child, with no doctor's note needed.
9. **Military Family Time:** Absences to spend time with an immediate family member on active military duty or recently returned from deployment.
10. **Election Participation:** Students can serve on election precinct boards.
11. **Naturalization Ceremony:** Attendance at the student's citizenship naturalization ceremony.
12. **Parental Leave:** Up to eight weeks of leave for a pregnant or parenting student, extendable if medically necessary.
13. **CEO/Principal Discretion:** Additional absences may be excused based on individual circumstances.
14. **Work Permit:** Students with a work permit may be excused for up to five consecutive days in the entertainment industry.
15. **Performing Arts Participation:** Absences for performances with a not-for-profit organization, limited to five days per school year with a parental note.
16. **Cultural Events:** Absences for participating in cultural ceremonies or events.
17. **Civic or Political Events:** Middle and high school students may be excused for civic events, with one required absence per school year, and possible additional absences with administrator approval.
18. **Personal Reasons:** Up to five days per school year for justifiable reasons (court appearances, religious observances, retreats, employment, or educational conferences) with advance written request and approval.

A student who is absent due to an excused absence will be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the excused absence that can be reasonably provided and will receive full credit upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time. The teacher of the class from which a student is absent shall determine which tests and assignments are reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the student missed during the excused absence.



Method of Verification

When a student who has been absent returns to school, the student must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. A signed, written note from the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The signed, written note must be submitted to the student's Grade Program Office Assistant in person inside the Counseling Center or via Parent Square.

Unexcused Absences/Truancy for Classroom-Based Attendance

The CEO/Principal, or designee, shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy, including working with the family in an attempt to resolve the attendance problem. A student's progress and learning may be affected by excessive unexcused absences. In addition, Birmingham Community Charter High School is fiscally dependent on student attendance and is negatively impacted by excessive unexcused absences. If all attempts to resolve the student's attendance problem are unsuccessful, Birmingham Community Charter High School will implement the processes described below.

Process for Addressing Truancy

1. First Two Unexcused Absences/Tardies: A phone call will be made to the parent/guardian by the CEO/Principal or designee. The classroom teacher may also call.
2. Third and Fourth Unexcused Absences/Tardies: Parents/guardians will receive an email and a Parent Square notification.
3. Fifth and Sixth Unexcused Absences/Tardies: A phone call will be made to the parent/guardian, and an email notification may be sent. After the sixth absence/tardy, parents will receive "Truancy Letter #1," indicating the student's "Truant" status, which must be signed and returned. This letter will be sent via certified mail and will be resent after the seventh absence.
4. Seventh Unexcused Absence/Tardy: Parents will receive "Truancy Letter #2," indicating "Habitual Truant" status, and a conference will be scheduled to discuss the student's records and develop an intervention plan.
5. Eighth Unexcused Absence/Tardy: Parents will receive "Truancy Letter #3," and the student will be referred to a Student Success Team (SST) and a Student Attendance Review Team (SART).
6. Consequences of Non-compliance: Failure to meet SART contract conditions may lead to administrative actions, including possible disenrollment.



7. Extended Absences: If a student is absent for ten or more consecutive days without a valid excuse and the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the student may be subject to disenrollment.
8. Contact Information: It's the responsibility of parents/guardians to keep BCCHS updated with current contact information.