



ATTENDANCE MATTERS



1 or 2 days a week may not seem like a lot but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	Over 12 years of schooling that is...
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Nearly 2.5 years!
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years!
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Over 8 years!

Just a little late may not seem like much but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	Over 12 years of schooling that is...	Which means the best your child might perform is...
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1.5 weeks per year	Nearly half a year!	Equal to finishing halfway through Grade 12
20 minutes per day	1 hour 40 minutes per week	Over 2.5 weeks per year	Nearly 1 year!	Equal to finishing Grade 11
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 years!	Equal to finishing halfway through Grade 9

We want your child to be successful at school. Yes, attendance matters!

EVERY DAY, EVERY MINUTE COUNTS

ATTENDANCE

At Westerly Public Schools, it is our belief that good school attendance is necessary in order for students to fully take advantage of the benefits that the school has to offer. In addition, the State Department of Education has issued clear guidelines for attendance that we must follow.

Westerly Public Schools faculty and staff expect every student to be present the entire school day for as many of the 180 days as possible. Attendance is the responsibility of the student and parents/guardians. Therefore, the District seeks to develop a partnership with parents/guardians to encourage this attendance. The experiences of the classroom are important to the student's education and any missed days can never be fully regained. As such, the scheduling of vacations while school is in session is discouraged. Parents/guardians, teachers, administrators and guidance counselors will work with the student in a positive manner to encourage the student's attendance and to address special needs.

A student who is absent from school without proper authorization is truant. Rhode Island General Laws, Section 16-19-1, states in part:

“Every child who has completed six (6) years of life and has not completed eighteen (18) years of life shall regularly attend some public day school during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session in the city or town wherein the child resides; and every person having under his or her control a child as above described in this section shall cause the child to attend school as required by the above stated provisions of this section, and for every neglect of this duty the person having control of the child shall be fined not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for each day or part of a day that the child fails to attend school, and if the total of these days is more than thirty (30) school days during any school year, then the person shall, upon conviction, be imprisoned not exceeding six (6) months or shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars (\$500) or both.”

- When students are absent from school, it is requested that a parent/guardian call the school before 9am**
- When a parent or guardian does not call by 9am, a phone call will be made to the parent/guardian at home or at work. In cases where telephone contact cannot be made, the Attendance Officer may be sent to the student's home.**
- When a student reaches 10 days absent/tardy, a meeting will be scheduled with the school to define the problem and explain the consequences to the student and parent/guardian. Appropriate referral will be made on/or before this time to the Support Services Team, RI Family Court Truancy Court and Westerly Juvenile Hearing Board. For the purposes of truancy, an absence is only excused by a note from a physician or school nurse. • All make-up work must be completed within a reasonable period of time. • A student absent from school on a regular school day may not attend or participate in any after school activity that day. Any exception to this rule must be made by the administration prior to the student attending the activity. The administration reserves the prerogative to exercise judgment in cases where extenuating circumstances exist. • Absences for students will be recorded as a full day, a tardy or early dismissal.**