



Policy: 3122P

Section: Section 3000 - Students

Procedure Excused and Unexcused Absences

Attendance Records

School office staff will keep a record of excuse statements submitted by a parent/guardian or, in certain cases, students to document a student's excused absences.

Excused Absences

The following are valid excuses for absences and tardiness.

1. **Participation in school-approved activity or instructional program.** To be excused this absence must be authorized by a staff member and the affected teacher(s) should be notified prior to the absence.
2. **Absence due to:** illness; health condition; medical appointment; family emergency; religious or cultural purposes; court, judicial proceeding or serving on a jury; post-secondary, technical school or apprenticeship program visitation, or scholarship interview; State recognized search and rescue activities consistent with RCW 28A.225.055; and directly related to the student's homeless status.

When students are of age to make medical decisions, such absences may be excused without parent consent.

A parent/guardian may request that a student be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday.

3. **Absence for parental-approved activities.** This category of absence will be counted as excused for purposes agreed to by the principal and the parent/guardian. An absence may not be approved if it causes a serious adverse effect on the student's educational progress.
4. **Absence resulting from disciplinary actions or short-term suspension.** As required by law, students who are removed from a class or classes as a disciplinary measure or students who have been placed on short-term suspension will have the

right to make up assignments or exams missed during the time they were denied entry to the classroom if the effect of the missed assignments will be a substantial lowering of the course grade.

5. **Extended illness or health condition.** If a student is confined to home or hospital for an extended period, the school will arrange for the accomplishment of assignments at the place of confinement whenever practical. If the student is unable to do his/her schoolwork, or if there are major requirements of a particular course that cannot be accomplished outside of class the student may be required to take an incomplete or withdraw from the class without penalty.
6. **Excused absence for chronic health condition.** Students with a chronic health condition that interrupts regular attendance may qualify for placement in a limited attendance and participation program. The student and his/her parent will apply to the principal or counselor and a limited program will be written following the advice and recommendations of the student's medical advisor. The recommended limited program will be approved by the principal.

Missed Assignments

Students shall be allowed a reasonable opportunity to complete or turn-in assignments or tests missed during an excused absence. Assignments not completed because of an excused absence or tardiness shall be made up in the manner provided by the teacher. A student will be allowed at least one makeup day for each day of absence. If a missed assignment or test cannot be replicated outside of the class period it was initially offered in, the teacher shall either excuse that assignment or provide the student with an alternative assignment.

Notification of Absence

When possible, the parent/guardian, adult (those over eighteen) or emancipated (those over sixteen who have been emancipated by court action) student should notify the school office on the morning of the absence by phone, e-mail or written note and to provide the excuse for the absence.

If no excuse is provided with the notification, or no notification is provided, the parent/guardian, adult or emancipated student will submit an excuse via phone, email or written note within 48 hours of the student's return to school. Failure to provide a valid excuse within 48 hours will result in the absence being marked as unexcused.

Pre-Arranged & Extended Absences

If families have prior knowledge that their student will be absent, they may prearrange for the absence to be excused by completing the pre-arranged absence form that shall be made available online and through the schools. If the pre-arranged absence will result in the student being considered chronically absent, completion of the pre-arranged absence form is required. Teachers are not required to provide classwork or assignments in advance of an absence.

Chronic Absenteeism & Attendance Plans

If any **secondary** (6-12 grades) student is chronically absent, defined as having missed ten (10) percent or more of the school year, then the school principal shall have reason to consider that further absences may have an adverse impact on the student's educational progress and therefore that further absences may not be considered excused. A conference may be held once a student has ten (10) or more absences in a semester to develop a plan to support the student and the student will need to remain in compliance with such a plan in order for a school to consider further absences excused. A conference may not be required if prior notice of the excused absences was provided to the school or if a doctor's note has been provided and an attendance plan is in place to ensure the student will not fall behind in their coursework.

If any **elementary** (K-5 grades) student has five (5) or more excused absences in a single month during the current school year or ten (10) or more excused absences in the current school year, the school shall schedule a conference with the student and their parent(s) at a reasonably convenient time. The conference is intended to identify barriers to the student's regular attendance and to identify supports and resources so the student may regularly attend school.

The conference for elementary students must include at least one District employee, preferably a nurse, counselor, social worker, teacher, or community human service provider, and may occur on the same day as the scheduled parent-teacher conference, provided it takes place within thirty days of the absences. If the student has an Individualized Education Program or a Section 504 Plan, the team that created that program must reconvene. A conference is not required if prior notice of the excused absences was provided or if a doctor's note has been provided and an attendance plan is in place to ensure the student will not fall behind in their coursework.

Unexcused Absences (Truancy)

Absences are marked unexcused when:

1. The parent/guardian or adult/emancipated student submits an excuse that does not meet the definition of an excused absence as defined above; or
2. The parent/guardian or adult/emancipated student fails to submit any type of excuse statement within 48 hours of the student's return to school following an absence.

If a student has unexcused absences, the school shall progressively notify and engage the student and family in an effort to avoid further absences.

- A. The school shall notify a student's parent or guardian in writing or by telephone whenever the student has failed to attend school after any unexcused absence within. The notification shall include the potential consequences of additional unexcused absences.
- B. A conference with the parent or guardian shall be held after three unexcused absences within any month. If a regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference is scheduled to take place within thirty (30) days of the second unexcused absence, the school may schedule the attendance conference on the same day. If the parent or guardian does not attend the conference, the conference may be conducted with the student and school official and the parent or guardian shall be notified of the

steps the school has decided to take to reduce the student's absences.

- C. Not later than the student's fifth unexcused absence in a month, the school shall 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.
- D. If such action is not successful, the school 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 or upon the tenth unexcused absence during the current school year.
- E. Prior to a secondary student's fifth unexcused absence in a month, an authorized staff member may administer a needs assessment subject to consent and, where appropriate, provide the student with best practice or research-based interventions.
- F. The District established community truancy shall be composed of members of the local community in which the student attends school. The District shall file a stay of truancy petition for those students who appear before the community truancy board.

Tardies

Students are expected to be in class each assigned class period on time. Corrective action may be taken when a student's tardiness becomes frequent or disruptive.

A tardy may also be counted as an absence if the student more than half of an instructional period.

Early Dismissal & Closed Campus

Students who must leave the school during the school day must sign out of the school's attendance office prior to leaving the school. Leaving school without prior approval and without properly signing out may result in corrective action. Students are expected to remain on campus for the entire school day, except for high school students whose parents request that they be excused during lunch and students whose parents request attendance at another school or school-related activity during the school day.

Transfer Students

Schools shall request the attendance records of transfer students from the sending district. If the transfer student's attendance history subjects them to state truancy laws, then the school shall also request additional assessment, intervention, and petition information from the sending district along with written acknowledgements by the parent and student.

Conformance with State Law

All actions imposed for failure to comply with the attendance policies and procedures shall be implemented in conformance with state and District regulations regarding corrective action.

Adopted:
09/01/19

LEGAL REFS.:
RCW13.34.300
28A.225.050 - 060
28A.600.035
WAC 392-400-233
392-400-235
392-400-325

Adoption Date: **September 01, 2019**
