



## STUDENTS

### Excused and Unexcused Absences

Students are expected to attend all assigned classes each day. Upon enrollment and at the beginning of each school year, the district shall inform students and their parents/guardians of this expectation, the benefits of regular school attendance, the consequences of truancy, the role and responsibility of the district in regard to truancy, and resources available to assist the student and their parents and guardians in correcting truancy. The district will also make this information available online and will take reasonable steps to ensure parents can request and be provided such information in a language they can understand. Parents will be required to date and acknowledge review of this information online or in writing

### Excused Absences

Regular school attendance is necessary for mastery of the educational program provided to students of the district. Students at times may appropriately be absent from class. School staff will keep a record of absence and tardiness, including a record of excuse statements submitted by a parent/guardian, or in certain cases, students, to document a student's excused absences. The following principles shall govern the development and administration of attendance procedures within the district:

- A. The Following are valid excuses for absences:
1. Participation in a district or school approved activity or instructional program;
  2. Illness, health condition or medical appointment (including but not limited to medical, counseling, dental or optometry);
  3. Family emergency, including but not limited to a death or illness in the family;
  4. Religious or cultural purpose including observance of a religious or cultural holiday or participation in religious or cultural instruction;
  5. Court, judicial proceeding or serving on a jury;
  6. Post-secondary, technical school or apprenticeship program visitation, or scholarship interview;
  7. State-recognized search and rescue activities consistent with RCW 28A.225.055;
  8. Absence directly related to the student's homeless status;
  9. Absence resulting from a disciplinary/corrective action. (e.g., short-term or long-term suspension, emergency expulsion); and
  10. Principal (or designee) and parent, guardian, or emancipated youth mutually agreed upon approved activity.

The school principal (or designee) has the authority to determine if an absence meets the above criteria for an excused absence.

- A. If an absence is excused, the student shall be permitted to make up all missed assignments outside of class under reasonable conditions and time limits established by the appropriate teacher except that in participation-type classes a student's grade may be affected because of the student's inability to make up the activities conducted during a class period.
- B. An excused absence shall be verified by the parent; adult, emancipated or appropriately-aged student; or school authority responsible for the absence. If attendance is taken electronically, either for a course conducted online or for students physically within the district, an absence will default to unexcused until such time as an excused absence may be verified by a parent or other responsible adult. Students thirteen and older have the right to keep information about drug, alcohol or mental health treatment confidential. Students fourteen and older have the same confidentiality rights regarding HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. All students have the same confidentiality rights regarding pregnancy prevention and treatment.

#### Unexcused Absences

- A. Any absence from school for the majority of hours or periods in an average school day is unexcused unless it meets one of the criteria above for an excused absence.
- B. As a means of instilling values of responsibility and personal accountability, a student whose absence is not excused will experience the consequences of his/her absence. A student's grade may be affected if a graded activity or assignment occurs during the period of time when the student is absent.
- C. The school shall notify a student's parent or guardian in writing or by telephone whenever the student has failed to attend school after one unexcused absence within any month during the current school year. The notification shall include the potential consequences of additional unexcused absences.
- D. A conference with the parent or guardian shall be held after three unexcused absences within any month during the current school year. A student may be suspended or expelled for habitual truancy. Prior to suspension or expulsion, the parent shall be notified in writing in his/her primary language that the student has unexcused absences. A conference shall be scheduled to determine what corrective measures should be taken to ameliorate the cause for the student's absences from school. If the parent does not attend the conference, the conference may be conducted with the student and a school official. However, the parent shall be notified of the steps the district has decided to take to eliminate or reduce the student's absences.
- E. Not later than the student's fifth unexcused absence in a month the district 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.
- F. If such action is not successful the district shall 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 during the current school year or upon the tenth unexcused absence during the current school year.

- G. All suspensions and/or expulsions shall be reported in writing to the superintendent within 24 hours after imposition.

The superintendent shall enforce the district's attendance policies and procedures. Because the full knowledge and cooperation of students and parents are necessary for the success of the policies and procedures, procedures shall be disseminated broadly and made available to parents and students annually. Students are expected to attend all assigned classes each day. School staff will keep a record of absence and tardiness, including a call log and/or a record of excuse statements submitted by a parent/guardian, or in certain cases, students, to document a student's excused absences.

Students Dependent Pursuant to Chapter 13.34, RCW

A school district representative or certificated staff member will review unexpected or excessive absences of a student who has been found dependent under the Juvenile Court Act with that student and adults involved with that student. Adults may include the student's caseworker, educational liaison, attorney if one is appointed, parent or guardians, foster parents and/or the person providing placement for the student. The review will take into consideration the cause of the absences, unplanned school transitions, periods of running from care, in-patient treatment, incarceration, school adjustment, educational gaps, psychosocial issues, and the student's unavoidable appointments that occur during the school day. The representative or staff member must proactively support the student's management of their school work.

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| Cross References: | Policy 3230     | Student Privacy and Searches  |
|                   | 3240            | Student Conduct Expectations and Reasonable Sanctions   |
|                   | 3241            | Classroom Management, Discipline and Corrective Actions   |
|                   | 4218            | Language Access Plan  |
| Legal References: | RCW 13.34.300   | Relevance of failure to cause juvenile to cause juvenile to attend school to neglect petition                   |
|                   | RCW 28A.225     | Compulsory school attendance and admission [new section added pursuant to SSHB 2449 (2016 legislative session)] |
|                   | WAC 392-400-325 | Statewide definition of excused and unexcused daily   |

Management Resources: 2017 – July Issue  
2016 – July Issue  
2015 – June Issue  
2012 – December Issue  
2011 – December Issue  
Policy News, June 2001 More Tweaking of Becca Petitions

Adoption Date: February 21, 1989  
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Legal References Changed: July, 2011  
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