

Administrative Procedures for Board Policy #3122 Excused and Unexcused Absences

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.

Excused Absences

The following are valid excuses for absences and tardiness. Assignments and/or activities not completed because of an excused absence or tardiness may be made up in the manner provided by the teacher.

- A. **Participation in a school approved activity or instructional program.** To be excused this absence must be authorized by a staff member and the affected teacher must be notified prior to the absence unless it is clearly too difficult to do so.
- B. **Absence due to:** Illness, health condition; medical appointment; family emergency; religiousA.225.055; and directly related to the student's homeless status. When possible, the parent/guardian is expected to 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 will submit an excuse via phone, e-mail or written note upon the student's return to school. Adult students (those over eighteen) living on their own or with parent and school approval and emancipated students (those sixteen who have been emancipated by court action) shall notify the school office of their absences with a note if explanation. A parent may request that a student be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday. In addition, a student, upon the request of his/her parent/guardian, may be excused for a portion of a school day to participate in religious instruction provided such is not conducted on school property. A student shall be allowed one makeup day for each day of absence.
- C. **Absence for parental-approved activities.** This category of absence shall 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. In participation-type classes (e.g., certain music and physical education classes) the student may not be able to achieve the objectives of the unit of instruction as a result of absence from class. In such a case, a parent/guardian-approved absence would have an adverse effect on the student's educational progress which would ultimately be reflected in the grade for such a course. A student, upon the request of his/her parent/guardian, may be excused for a portion of a school day to participate in religious instruction provided such is not conducted on school property or otherwise involves the school to any degree.
- D. **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 shall 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 shall be a substantial lowering of the course grade.
- E. **Extended illness or health condition.** If a student is confined to home or hospital for an extended period, the school shall 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 which cannot be accomplished outside of class the student may be required to take an incomplete or withdraw from the class without penalty (reference Home Hospital language).
- F. **Excused absence for chronic health condition.** Students with a chronic health condition which interrupts regular attendance may qualify for placement in a limited attendance and participation program. The

student and his/her parent/guardian shall apply to the principal or counselor, and a limited program shall be written following the advice and recommendations of the student's medical advisor. The recommended limited program shall be approved by the principal. Staff shall be informed of the student's needs, though the confidentiality of medical information shall be respected at the parent's request.

- G. **Excused Absences.** The district shall initiate court petition procedures beginning with a parent conference and resulting in a court petition in cases of excessive absenteeism which adversely affect the student's educational progress.

For the purpose of this policy, excessive absenteeism may be defined as follows – When a student accumulates a combined total (excused and unexcused) of: five (5) absences within a quarter (45 days), ten (10) absences within a semester (90 days), and eighteen (18) absences in a year.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences fall into two categories:

- A. Submitting an excuse which does not constitute an excused absence as defined previously; or
- B. Failing to submit, whether by phone, e-mail or in writing, any type of excuse statement signed by the parent/guardian or note from an adult student.
 1. Each unexcused absence shall be followed by a telephone call or warning letter to the parent/guardian of the student. Each notice shall be in writing in English or in the primary language of the parent if feasible. A student's grade shall not be affected if no graded activity is missed during such an absence.
 2. After two unexcused absences within any month, the district will make every attempt to hold a conference between the parent, student and principal. At such a conference, the principal or designee, student and parent will consider:
 - a. Adjusting the student's program;
 - b. Providing more individualized instruction; preparing the student for employment with specific vocational experience or both;
 - c. Transferring the student to another school;
 - d. Assisting the student to obtain supplementary services that might eliminate or ameliorate the causes of absences, or,
 - e. Imposing other corrective actions that are deemed to be appropriate.

Not later than the student's fifth unexcused absence in a month, the district may enter into an agreement with the student and parents/guardians 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.

3. If the above action fails to correct the attendance problem, the student shall be declared a habitual absentee. The principal or designee shall interview the student and his/her family and prescribe corrective action. 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, the district 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 the student. The petition consists of written notification to the court alleging that:
 - a. The student has unexcused absences, and or excessive absences, in the current school year. While petitions must be filed if the student has seven or more unexcused absences within any month during the current school year or ten or more unexcused absences in the current school year, but a petition may be filed earlier; also unexcused absences accumulated in another school or school district shall be counted when preparing the petition;

3240 - Student Conduct Expectations and Reasonable Sanctions
3241 - Classroom Management, Discipline and Corrective Action

Legal References: RCW 28A.225.015 Attendance mandatory — Six or seven year olds — Unexcused absences — Petition.
RCW 13.34.300 Relevance of failure to cause juvenile to attend school to neglect petition
RCW 28A.225.010 Attendance mandatory — Age — Exceptions.
RCW 28A.225.020 School's duties upon child's failure to attend school.
RCW 28A.225.023 Youth dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW — Review of unexpected or excessive absences — Support for youth's school work.
RCW 28A.225.055 Excused absences — Search and rescue activities.
WAC 392-400-325 Statewide definition of excused and unexcused daily absences.

Management Resources: 2015 - June Policy Issue
2012 - December Issue
2011 - December Issue
Policy News, June 2001 More Tweaking of Becca Petitions

Adoption Date:
Classification: **Essential**
Revised Dates:
