

## STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (Grades K-5)

As directed by the Board, the following procedures will be used to implement the district's attendance policy.

### Definitions

*Attendance:* A student is considered to be in attendance if the student is physically present in a class; participating in a district-sponsored or district-approved activity; participating in a class through alternative methods or media as allowed by Board policy; receiving homebound services; or receiving services at another location pursuant to law or by arrangement of the district.

*Parent:* A parent, guardian or person acting as a parent in the absence of the parent or guardian if the student is under 18. If the student is 18 or otherwise emancipated, the student will serve as the parent for purposes of this procedure.

*Tardy:* A student is tardy if the student arrives after the expected time. Tardiness will be counted as an absence in situations where the student arrives too late to have meaningful participation in the class, lesson or activity.

*Truancy:* A student is truant if the student is absent from school without the knowledge and consent of the parents and the administration. A student is also considered truant if the student leaves school without the consent of the principal or accumulates excessive unjustifiable absences, even with parental consent. Truancy is a type of unexcused absence.

### Attendance Standards

The following absences will be excused. Documentation must be provided as indicated.

1. Illness or injury of the student, with written excuse from parent.
2. Illness or injury of a member of the student's family when the student's presence is necessary or expected, with written excuse from parent.
3. Medical appointments, with written appointment confirmation by medical provider.
4. Funeral, with written excuse from parent. The principal may require a program or other evidence from services as well.
5. Religious observances, with written excuse from parent.

FILE: JED-API

Critical

6. Other appointments that cannot be scheduled outside attendance hours, such as court appearances, with written excuse from parent.
7. Out-of-School suspension.
8. Visits with a parent or legal guardian who is an active duty member of the military who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or is immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, with permission of the superintendent or designee.

All other absences and any absence for which required documentation is not provided are unexcused.

### **Consequences for Violations**

#### ***Grades K-5***

Attendance in early grades is crucial to later academic development. In addition, attendance habits are formed in early grades, and many later attendance problems can be averted with intensive family and student interventions in early grades. For this reason, principals with the assistance of building staff will closely monitor student attendance and implement intervention strategies and other actions as follows:

1. Any time a student is absent and the parents have not contacted the school, the principal or designee will notify the parent.
2. When a student has accumulated five (5) excused absences or two (2) unexcused absences in any semester, the principal or designee may set up a conference with the parent at a time convenient for the parent to discuss the student's attendance and current level of academic performance. One (1) or more of the student's teachers will be in attendance. The purpose of the conference is to clarify the school's expectations regarding attendance and elicit suggestions from the parent on how to improve the student's attendance, including identifying reasons why the student is not attending school regularly.
3. When a student has accumulated eight (8) excused absences or two (2) unexcused absences in a semester, the principal will schedule a conference with the parents at a time convenient for the parents. All of the student's teachers will be present, and the parents will be encouraged to bring other family members. The purpose of this conference is to determine why the student is not attending school regularly; to examine the student's academic performance; to communicate district attendance expectations; to provide information about compulsory attendance laws and educational neglect; to elicit suggestions from family members about increasing the student's engagement with school; and to create an attendance

plan that includes specific intervention strategies designed to improve the student's attendance.

4. When a student has accumulated nine (9) excused absences or three (3) unexcused absences in a semester, a staff member from the district will schedule a conference or arrange an in-home visit to discuss the student's attendance plan and any necessary modifications to the student's attendance plan.
5. When a student has accumulated ten (10) excused absences or three (3) unexcused absences in a semester, the district will determine whether there is reason to suspect educational neglect or whether the parent is violating the compulsory attendance laws. If so, the district will contact the Children's Division (CD) of the Department of Social Services or the local prosecutor.
6. More than ten (10) excused absences or three (3) unexcused absences in a semester will be a factor in determining whether the student may be retained or required to attend summer school as a condition of promotion.

Students are expected to make up assignments from missed classes within the time period established by their teachers. Students who do not complete missed assignments in the required time may be required to attend academic support sessions outside of the regular school day.

Any conference may be waived by the principal if the absences were caused by a specific event or long-term illness. In cases where the district is aware that a student must be absent for an extended period of time, the district will arrange for the student to receive instruction by other appropriate means.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Note: The reader is encouraged to review policies and/or forms for related information in this administrative area.***

Implemented: April 15, 2009

Revised:

MSIP Refs: 6.3, 6.5, 7.7, 8.6, 8.7, 9.6

Boonville R-I School District, Boonville, Missouri