

## **Student Attendance Code of Conduct**

### **Documentation for Absences, Tardies and Early Dismissals**

Truancy Laws in Ohio have been amended with the passage of the HB 410 and all schools are required to keep track of the number of hours each student is in school. Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, schools will also report time out of school as an "occurrence" instead of an absence.

Generally, twelve (12) occurrences from school, which include full days, partial days, tardies and early dismissals, may be documented by a parent/guardian phone call/fax, note or email. This includes all excused and/or unexcused occurrences, tardies and early releases. All instances indicated shall count as (1) occurrence, whether the absence is a full/partial day, tardy or early release from school.

Medical notes shall NOT count against the (12) occurrences that a parent may excuse.

Absences, full and partial days, tardies and early dismissals in excess of (12) occurrences may not be excused by a parent/guardian and shall require documentation by the child's treating physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant- unless an occurrence is otherwise excused by the Principal due to unusual circumstances.

The foregoing general rule is for the convenience of school officials in the administration of this attendance regulation. This rule does not create an entitlement for a student to be absent from school 12 times. Application of this general regulation may be waived by school officials where circumstances indicate that its application does not serve the student's best interest. Those circumstances include, but are not limited to: the student's attendance in the current or prior school years; instances where students/parents have been adjudicated guilty for truancy related offenses or currently under active supervision or probation. Excused occurrences from school shall be granted only on the condition of a note from a physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, or excused by the school Principal.

Nothing contained in this attendance regulation is intended nor should be construed as restricting the discretion of school officials to make such inquiries and request such verification/documentation as is reasonably necessary to determine if an occurrence (full day absence, partial day absence, tardy or early dismissal) is excused.

### **Tardiness**

Being punctual to school is the minimum expectation that we have for all of our students. Any student arriving in class in their assigned seat after the start time of the student's school must report directly to the attendance office to obtain a tardy slip. The tardy slip must be presented to the teacher to be admitted to class. The attendance office will track tardies and report to the administration. Each tardy to school, unless medically excused, will count towards a student's 12 occurrences allowed in a school year.

Chronic tardies, eight (8) or more in a semester may result in after school detention, Thursday school, referral to counselor, in-school suspension or loss of driving privileges.

### **Early Dismissal**

Students must bring in their early dismissal note to the attendance office in the morning before school starts. All early dismissals, unless medically excused, will be counted toward the student's (12) occurrences in the school year. In all cases, a parent/guardian will be contacted to provide permission and a valid reason for the early dismissal. When a student arrives on the campus property he/she is under the jurisdiction of the school district until the end of the day. No student may leave the premises during the school day without proper authority from the attendance office. Also, no student will be permitted to return to school unless an "off-grounds" pass has been issued with a return time marked on it.

### **Absences**

Students who miss school are required to have their parent/guardian contact the attendance office within 2 hours of the student's school start time. Please refer to your child's designated school for school start times.

If the school does not receive notification, a phone call will automatically be made to the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian fails to contact the school, the absence will be considered unexcused until a parent/guardian makes direct contact (within 5 days) with the attendance office to verify the student's absence.

All notes parent/guardian or physician must be submitted to the attendance office within five (5) days of the absence, otherwise the absence will be unexcused.

### **District Responsibilities:**

The school, in compliance with Ohio Truancy Laws and HB 410, has established the following intervention strategies to avoid unexcused occurrences, partial and full days, tardies and early dismissal.

- If a student acquires 38 hours of combined excused and unexcused occurrences in one month or 65 hours of combined excused or unexcused occurrences in one school year, a warning letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian.
- If a student acquires 45 hours of unexcused occurrences a Truancy Education Meeting will be scheduled. This group meeting will be held in your child's school



district. The purpose of this meeting is to advise parents/guardians of the new truancy laws, school policy, and student current attendance records.

- The following are the thresholds that are defined in the Ohio Revised Code and serve as the definition of a Habitual Truant:
  - 30 consecutive hours of unexcused occurrences from school, OR
  - 42 hours unexcused occurrences from school in a school month, OR
  - 72 hours unexcused occurrences from school in a school year.

Should a student meet any of these thresholds during the school year, an Absence Intervention Team meeting will be scheduled by the Truancy Officer, for the purpose of developing an Absence Intervention Plan.

The team shall consist of the student, parent/guardian or their designee (a pre-approval FERPA form release for a designee to attend in a parent's place must be filed by the parent for the designee to participate in the Absence Intervention Team meeting), school administrator or their designee, and attendance officer. The team may also include the school psychologist, counselor, social worker, or representative of a public or nonprofit agency designed to assist students and their families in reducing absences and representative of the Juvenile Court.

If the parent/guardian fails to attend or otherwise respond and participate in the Absence Intervention Team, the school shall do both of the following:

- Investigate whether the parent/guardian's failure to attend triggers mandatory reporting to the public children services agency or instruct the Absence Intervention Team to develop an intervention plan for the child notwithstanding the absence of the parent/guardian.
- If the student fails to comply with the Truancy Intervention Plan and meets the legal definition of habitual truant, charges will be filed in Warren County Juvenile Court.