

R 11-12-9 Absences

Enrolled students may be lawfully absent from school for the causes or conditions listed below. Each cause or condition shall be subject to confirmation by the Coordinator of Attendance.

❖ Excused Absences

- Medical and or dental appointment which cannot be scheduled outside the school day when the absence is verified in writing by the physician or dentist;
- Illness of the student verified by parent/guardian not to exceed three consecutive or five total days per semester. Verification by a physician will be required if absences exceed three consecutive days. In the event of a major outbreak of a particular illness, such as the flu, occurs within the school population, the Superintendent may exercise his/her emergency powers and issue a county-wide waiver of the required physician's verification of absences extending beyond three days.
- Illness or injury in the family when student absence verified as essential by a physician;
- Illness of the infant child of an enrolled student who is the child's primary caretaker, not to exceed five days per semester. Verification must be from physician, student's parent/guardian, or student 18 years of age or older.
- Calamity, such as fire in the home, flood, or family emergency upon approval by the school principal;
- Death in the family, limit three days for each occurrence except in extraordinary circumstances. "Family" is defined as mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle, brother-in-law, brother's children, sister-in-law, sister's children, student's children, or any person living in the same household;
- Leaves of educational value. (Example: family educational trips, 4-H educational activities, serving as a Page, etc.) Parent must fill out county forms and the leave must adhere to the following stipulations: Obtain prior approval of school administrator;
 - The parent must submit an obtain prior approval of the educational plan detailing objectives and activities;
 - The leave may not exceed five days, and there must be verification of implementation of the education plan upon the student's return;
 - A leave that extends more than five days requires County Board of Education approval.
- School approved extracurricular activities;
- Legal obligation with verification;
- Failure of bus to run or extremely hazardous conditions;
- Observance of religious holidays;
- Handicapped students' absences should be addressed in accordance with SBP 2419, Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities.

❖ Unexcused Absences

Any absence not meeting the above requirements shall be considered an unexcused absence, including out-of-school suspensions. Parents have the right to appeal the application of this policy.

❖ **Other Out-of-Class School Related Activities**

A student absent who attends class field trips, math field day and other approved curricular activities and approved extracurricular school sponsored activities (i.e., leave early or for full day for an FFA conference, sporting event, etc., as a participant, not as a spectator) will be reported absent; however, the absence will not count against the school or student's ADA.

❖ **Unexcused Tardiness/Unexcused Leaving School Grounds**

Leaving school grounds anytime throughout the day will be reported to the office as excused or unexcused. Each school will determine and post times of the day according to what time constitutes a full day (.74) or one-half day (.50) present. A student is tardy when s/he arrives at school or class after the time designated as the beginning of instruction.

At the beginning of each school year and throughout the school term, each principal will communicate to the parents the importance of the students arriving at school on a punctual basis. Each teacher will periodically explain to the students and parents, when possible the inconvenience and disruption that a late student causes. This disruptive factor will also be explained in each student's school handbook. The principal or designee will notify the parent/student in writing when a student has been tardy to school six times. Excessive tardiness that cannot be remedied at the school level shall be referred to the Coordinator of Attendance.

As deterrents to tardiness, the schools may use, but are not limited to, after school detention, behavior improvement programs, loss of certain privileges, etc. Excessive tardiness will be addressed through each school's discipline policy-

❖ **Makeup Work for Excused and Unexcused Absences**

- Students who are not in attendance for regular classroom instruction for any reason shall be provided the opportunity to make up any missed class work.
- Elementary students will be assigned make-up work upon their return to school.
- Any student in grades 6-12 shall be responsible for obtaining a contract or approved alternative for make-up work from the Principal or designee and to present said contract or approved alternative to each teacher for make-up assignments.
- The student shall be allowed the number of days absent plus one day to complete the make-up work. Teachers may grant an extension to a student if the request is based upon justifiable reasons; however, failure to complete the work assigned by the teacher will result in the student receiving a zero as the grade for the make-up work in that class.
- Depending upon the circumstances, students may be expected to report to class early or to stay late to make up exams and other missed assignments. If a student has missed a test announced in advance or work assigned prior to his/her absence, the test or work will be made up or turned in on the day that the student returns to class.
- Students who have been absent for an extended period of time may receive an incomplete on their report card until the make-up work timeline, which shall be the number of days absent plus one, has expired. The incomplete shall then be changed to the grade earned.

❖ **Procedural Steps in Dealing With Unexcused Absences:**

- After three unexcused absences, the principal or the principal's designee (i.e., secretary, home-room teacher, etc.) may telephone the parent to check on suspected absences, particularly if it appears a pattern of unnecessary absences is beginning to develop. If the

parent has no phone or there is no answer, above person should send a written communication or make a home visit.

- When contact with the parent has been attempted by phone call, note or home visit and the student has accumulated five unexcused absences, then the school will notify the parent by mail that a conference with the parent, principal or a designated assistant principal and other appropriate members of the school staff is required.
 - The principal or a designated assistant principal shall hold the conference with the parents and appropriate school personnel to develop an Attendance Plan of Action. The Coordinator of Attendance may attend the meeting as appropriate and he/she shall be included when possible and appropriate.
 - If the parent does not come for the conference or the APA does not improve attendance, the school will make an official referral to the Coordinator of Attendance.
 - When the student has accumulated five unexcused absences, the Coordinator of Attendance will initiate Form CA-2, West Virginia "Notice of Unexcused Absence from School", certified mail, return receipt requested.
 - The Coordinator of Attendance shall hold a parent conference as mandated by CA-2 and include the student. The principal may also attend. The group shall make an Attendance Plan of Action or revise the current APA.
 - If the parent refuses to pick up the registered letter at the post office, or if the parent does not come to the parent conference, the Coordinator of Attendance shall make one more attempt to meet with parent (i.e., phone, letter, home visit).
 - If APA does not improve attendance, the Coordinator will take a further legal step, which may include the filing of a complaint in magistrate or circuit court. This may require a court appearance for the Coordinator of Attendance, principal and possibly other members of the faculty.
- ❖ A student may not be suspended solely for failure to attend class.
(WVC §18-8-4; §18-8-5 and SBP 4110)