

West Bonner County School District

STUDENTS

3050

Attendance Policy

The district recognizes that daily student attendance and time on task is essential to student learning. While students are required to be in attendance at school students can accumulate nine (9) absences each semester. This includes excused and unexcused (truancy), but does not include extracurricular absences or school approved activity absences. The board, or their designee may deny a promotion to the next grade or deny credit to any student who is absent from school or any class period(s) for any reason including family convenience in excess of nine (9) days. Absence due to school-approved activities will not be counted. Except in extraordinary cases, students are expected to be present at school and in their assigned grade or subject.

Students not meeting the attendance requirement will not receive credit even though they may have passing grades. Those students who have valid reason to believe that all or part of their absences is the result of extraordinary circumstances may request a review of their case by the building attendance committee. It is the responsibility of the parent and student to arrange for a meeting with the attendance committee. If no meeting occurs the student will lose credit for classes in which he or she has an excess of nine (9) absences. The building attendance committee will review the records and the circumstances and determine whether or not the student will receive credit. The attendance committee will consist of a building administrator, school counselor, teachers, staff, and possibly parents and/or students and will meet towards the end of the semester. The decision of the Attendance Committee may be appealed to the Superintendent. The appeal must be submitted to the superintendent within ten (10) working days after receiving the decision from the Attendance Committee. The decision of the Superintendent is final.

Absences

A telephone call or a note from either parent or guardian is required when a student is absent or late for any reason. Notes must be given immediately to the attendance secretary. When a student arrives late or returns after an absence, the student is required to report directly to the attendance office to sign in and present documentation of why the student was absent. All absences and each tardy will be recorded on the report card.

Activities or Preplanned Absences

It is the student's responsibility to notify the administration, attendance office, and all their assigned teachers prior to being absent. The school office (attendance secretary) will notify teachers for homework requests. Teachers may require the work to be completed and turned in prior to departure. Unless otherwise arranged by the student with their teacher(s), all other work is to be completed and turned into the teacher the day the student returns.

In the event a student must be absent during scheduled finals, written notification by parent must be provided at least two (2) weeks in advance to administration for approval to take finals early. If notification is not received, student may receive a zero "0" on the final.

Absences for school-sponsored activities are excused, but students are held responsible for the work missed. In order to participate in an extracurricular activity, including practice, students must be in school all enrolled classes on the date of the event. Failure to stay in good standing with assignment completion may result in lunch detention. Exceptions may be made by the Principal.

Excused Absences

An absence shall be excused upon written or verbal documentation from parent/guardian when the absence is due to the following:

Please note that absences may be excused but still count against the student under the nine, (9) Absence Policy.

1. Illness
2. Bereavement
3. College Visits (2 per year)
4. Other reasons prescribed by the policies of the Board, including medical or legal appointments or family emergencies. Verification should be available when requesting an admit slip.

*School work missed during an excused absence can be made up for full credit.

The Principal may grant an exception due to extenuating circumstances.

Nine (9) Absences Policy

The student has the responsibility within three (3) school days after the absence to provide supporting documentation that the absence was due to medical, legal, bereavement, school activities, or other acceptable reasons as approved by the building administrator. After each absence, parent/guardian should call or provide appropriate documentation such as a doctor's note for the absences.

Students may appeal a loss of credit to the Attendance Committee. It is the responsibility of the parent and student to arrange for a meeting with the attendance committee. If no meeting occurs the student will lose credit for classes in which he or she has an excess of nine (9) absences. The decision of the Attendance Committee may be appealed to the Superintendent. The appeal must be submitted to the superintendent within ten (10) working days after receiving the decision from the attendance/appeals committee. The decision of the Superintendent is final.

Extraordinary Reasons for Absences

Extraordinary absences are missed class time or school days for reasons other than parent/guardian excused or school extra-curricular activities. If such extraordinary circumstances occur that result in excessive absences, written verification and notification to the building principal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The primary consideration whether an absence is extraordinary and warrants being exempted shall include only those situations in which the student had no reasonable alternative to the absence.

Upon receiving written documentation from parent/guardian, state agency, healthcare provider, or agent of the court, the principal or designee has the authority to exempt the absence and request the assignments, grades and credit be awarded on the date of those absence(s). It is in the best interest of the student whenever possible for all absences to be pre-arranged.

Example of Extraordinary Absences are but not limited to: Extended illness/accident and recovery time for student or immediate member of family; court appearances except for traffic fines and tobacco violations; bereavement for immediate family including grandparents, aunt, uncles, cousins with limited number of days in consideration of travel time necessary; and other absences presented for consideration by building principal and should be pre-arranged when possible.

Unexcused Absence

An absence for reasons other than listed above shall be considered as unexcused. The student and parent/guardian assume the responsibility for making up work missed. Unexcused absences do not include suspensions.

Truancy

Willful absence of the student without the knowledge of the school or parents/guardians is considered truancy. It is unexcused and may lead to suspension or expulsion from school.

Habitual Truancy – Idaho Code 33-206 and 207

Idaho Code 33-206 – Habitual Truant Defined

- (1) A habitual truant is:
 - (a) Any public school pupil who, in the judgment of the board of trustees, repeatedly has violated the attendance regulations established by the board; or
 - (b) Any child whose parents or guardians, or any of them, have failed or refused to cause such child to be instructed as provided in Idaho Code
- (2) A child who is a habitual truant shall come under the purview of the juvenile corrections act if he or she is within the age of compulsory attendance.

Idaho Code 33-207 - Proceedings against parents or guardians

Idaho Code 33-207 stipulates that proceedings may be brought directly against a parent or guardian who is found to have knowingly allowed a student to become a habitual truant, and such parent or guardian shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Attendance Requirements – All students

Students are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Regular attendance is a critical factor in the establishment of a good scholastic record. Work missed through attendance from school is difficult to make up. There is no substitute for actual participation in the daily classroom discussion and work.

Administrative Procedures

- A letter will be sent to the parent/guardian of a student who has accumulated in excess of six (6) absences per semester for Grades K to 8. A letter will be sent to the parent/guardian of a student who has accumulated sixth (6th) eighth (8th) and tenth (10th) day absences in each course for Grades 9 to 12.
- A designated staff member will personally speak to the parent/guardian regarding the attendance policy, explain the ramifications of being absent or tardy, stress the importance of attendance and discuss appropriate intervention strategies when a student has accumulated ten (10) absences per semester in Grades K to 8 and nine (9) per semester in grades 9 to 12. Students in grades 9 through 12 must maintain 90% attendance in each class (90%).
- The administrator will request a conference with the parent/guardian of a student who has accumulated twelve (12) absences per semester in Grades K to 8 and ten (10) in grades 9 to 12. Other designated personnel may contact parents in order to resolve concerns regarding attendance.
- A *Truancy Petition* may be filed with the Bonner County Prosecutor's Office when a student has been absent in excess of twelve (12) days, either excused or unexcused, in any semester in grades k to 8 AND in excess of ten (10) unexcused or confirmed truancies in any semester grades 9 to 12. An administrator has the discretion to file a petition earlier on a case-by-case basis with the approval of the Superintendent.
- Students will be considered for retention for absences of more than twenty (20) days during any one school year in Grades K to 8.
- At the beginning of each school year, the administrator will send an awareness letter to parents/guardians of students who missed fifteen (15) or more days the previous school year.

Attendance Based Credit Denial

Students in grades 9-12 are expected to attend school on a regular basis. All absences are subject to review. Excessive absences, unexcused absences, and/or truancies may result in denial of credit.

Parents/guardians of students in grades 9 through 12 will be notified in writing when their student accumulates six (6) eight (8) and ten (10) absences per class semester.

- Communication Procedure
 - Weekly attendance reports will be run at each building to determine which students have accumulated the amount of absences as specified above in one or more classes.
 - Students with ongoing attendance problems will be referred to the administration to determine action to be taken.
 - If a student exceeds nine (9) absences any class during the semester, credit may be withheld.
- Credit Denial Notification
 - Parents/guardians will be notified in writing if credit was or will be withheld.

- Appeals Procedure
 - If a determination is made to withhold credit, the student and parent/guardian may make an appeal.
 - If an appeal is made, it is the responsibility of the student/parents to make arrangements to meet with the Attendance Committee and to provide substantial documentation that:
 - Clears up unverified absences, unexcused absences or truancies.
 - Illustrates extenuating circumstances that led to excessive absences.
 - Defines health or legal issues preventing the student from attending school.
- Appeal Process
 - The following two steps are established to guide students and parents through the appeals process.
 - An attendance committee will review the records and the circumstances and determine whether or not the student will receive credit. Each secondary building will have an attendance committee. Parents and students are encouraged to attend the appeal hearing and bring documentation to support a request for credit reinstatement. Failure to appear at the school-based appeal hearing may jeopardize consideration at the second level of appeal.
 - The decision of the attendance committee may be appealed to the superintendent or designee. The appeal must be submitted to the superintendent within ten (10) working days after receiving the decision from the attendance/appeals committee. The decision of the superintendent or designee is final.
- Truancy Petition
 - A truancy petition may be filed with the Bonner County Prosecuting Attorney's Office after nine (9) unexcused absences in grades 9 through 12. An administrator has the discretion to file a petition earlier on a case-by-case basis with the approval of the Superintendent.

Excessive Absences

Students who miss ten (10) consecutive days of school and their school has not been notified by a parent/guardian of the reason(s) for their absence and the school has attempted to contact the parent/guardian as outlined in policy, may be dropped from school. At the time the student returns to school, the student may be reenrolled.

Tardies

Classroom tardies should be handled by the teacher. Excessive tardies may be referred to the building administrator's office.

Educational Neglect

Idaho Code 16-1602(25) (d) defines educational neglect as: “A child who is without proper education because of the failure to comply with section 33-202, Idaho Code which requires a parent or guardian of every school aged child (7-16 years of age) in the state of Idaho to make certain that the child is instructed in subjects commonly and usually taught in the state of Idaho.

Credible evidence of educational neglect must be reported to the Department of Health and Welfare. If the report is substantiated by the Department of Health and Welfare, the information will be referred to the Bonner County Prosecuting Attorney for appropriate action against the parent and/or child.

Idaho Code: 33-202 through 33-207 and 16-1602(25) (d)

Policy reference: Policy 3020 Enrollment and Attendance Records

Policy History:

Adopted on: April 9, 2008

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