

Bethel Board of Education Policy Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, June 24, 2013 5:30 PM

Board of Education Conf. Room E, 1 School Street, PO Box 253, Bethel, CT
06801

1. Policy

1.A. Policy/Regulation 5113 - Attendance

1.B. Policy/Regulation 5123 -
Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

1.C. Policy/Regulation - Series 5000 - Search and
Seizure

1.D. Policy/Regulation 6146 - Graduation

2. Audience Participation

Students

Attendance and Tardiness-to-School

The Bethel Board of Education believes that regular, on-time student attendance at all grade levels is the cornerstone of any student's education; therefore, the Board obliges parents and students to assign the highest priority to regular and punctual attendance to school. The Board of Education also believes that irregular attendance, tardiness to school, and frequent early dismissals deprive students of critical educational opportunities which cannot be replicated with make-up work and which may cause students to fall seriously behind academically.

As a result of the Board of Education's strong commitment to requiring regular and on-time attendance by all students, the Board directs its administrators to do the following:

1. to establish an **Attendance Alert System** which informs students and parents when a student's attendance and/or tardiness-to-school is negatively impacting learning and achievement;
2. to establish and maintain a series of appropriate interventions for students at all grade levels who exhibit chronic attendance and/or tardiness-to-school problems.

Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences

Per Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210, a student's absence will be considered **excused** if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten days of the student's return to school or meets the following criteria:

- A. For **absences one through nine**, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absences and submits appropriate documentation with parent/guardian signature; and
- B. For **the tenth absence and all absences thereafter**, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:
 - a. Student illness appropriately verified by a licensed medical professional regardless of the length of the absence;
 - b. Student's observance of a religious holiday;
 - c. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
 - d. Mandated court appearances (with appropriate documentation provided);
 - e. Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends;
 - f. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

An absence from school shall be considered **unexcused** unless they meet one of the following criteria:

- A. The absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation requirements); or
- B. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence. (Absences that are the result of school and district disciplinary action are excluded from these definitions.)

Notification of Attendance Policies and Regulations

Parents and guardians of students at all grade levels will be informed annually at the beginning of the school year about their obligations regarding regular and punctual school attendance. Documents containing information on regular and punctual attendance will also be provided in Spanish and Portuguese for the convenience of the appropriate families. At parent conferences and back-to-school events, parents and students will be reminded of their obligations regarding regular and punctual attendance, and all attendance policies and regulations will be posted on the district and school websites, in September newsletters from all schools, and as part of parent/student handbooks.

Truancy

Because chronic school attendance problems and lack of school punctuality often impact the entire community as well as the school, student, and family involved, the Bethel Board of Education will engage a ~~Bethel Truancy Officer~~ **School Resource Officer** to assist each school with students who are truant or habitually truant (as defined below). Each Building Principal will make a referral to the ~~Bethel Truancy~~ **School Resource Officer** or to the **Department of Children and Families** when the specific interventions made to remediate truant or habitually truant students have not been effective.

A truant is any student under the age of eighteen (18) who has four (4) unexcused absences in one month, or has ten (10) unexcused absences in one academic year. A habitual truant is any student who has twenty (20) unexcused absences within an academic year.

Although a student over the age of eighteen (18) cannot legally be declared a truant, the Bethel Board of Education holds that the same attendance policies and regulations apply to all students—regardless of age. Reaching the age of majority, therefore, is not an excuse for irregular school attendance.

Students

Attendance and Tardiness-to-School—Berry School, Rockwell School, and Johnson School

Attendance and Tardiness to School

Truancy (continued)

As a result of the Board of Education's strong commitment to requiring regular and on-time attendance by all students, the Board directs its elementary school administrators to do the following:

1. to establish and maintain an **Attendance Alert Committee**--comprised of the principal, school counselor, and school nurse--at each school which meets monthly and carefully monitors student attendance, tardiness, and early dismissal requests;
2. to include the number of school absences, tardiness, and early dismissals on each report card;
3. to cause class participation to be included in the comment section used by classroom and specialist teachers;
4. to cause school attendance to be part of all students' permanent records;
5. to establish an **Attendance Alert System** which informs students and parents when a student's attendance and/or tardiness-to-school is negatively impacting learning and achievement, or when student is in danger of being retained due to poor attendance;
6. to trigger **Attendance Alert Letters** at 5, 10, and 15 absences, and to inform parents and students that excessive absences may result in grade retention or mandatory summer school attendance;
7. to establish and maintain—with the assistance of teachers, school counselors, school nurses, and other pupil services personnel—a series of appropriate interventions for students who exhibit chronic attendance and/or tardiness-to-school problems;
8. to require—per Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210—that parents provide written documentation of the reason for their child's absence within ten school days of the child's return to school;

Students

Attendance and Tardiness in Berry School, Rockwell School, and Johnson School (continued)

9. to establish meaningful recognitions of students with regular and punctual attendance records;
10. to educate students and parents about the changes in the elementary schools' attendance policy;
11. to seek the cooperation of parents in scheduling doctor's appointments and other appointments at times that do not encroach on students' instructional day;
12. to increase parents' understanding and cooperation regarding their legal and parental obligations regarding their children's attendance to school.

Attendance and Tardiness-to-School—Bethel Middle School

As a result of the Board of Education's strong commitment to requiring regular and on-time attendance by all students, the Board directs its middle school administrators to do the following:

1. to establish and maintain an **Attendance Alert Committee**--comprised of ~~the principal~~, assistant principals, school counselors, social worker, school nurse and attendance secretary--at each school which meets monthly and carefully monitors student absences, tardiness, and early dismissal requests;
2. to include the number of school absences, tardiness, and early dismissals on each report card;
3. to cause class participation to be included in the comment section used by classroom and specialist teachers;
4. to cause school attendance to be part of all students' permanent records;
5. to establish an **Attendance Alert System** which informs students and parents when a student's attendance and/or tardiness-to-school is negatively impacting learning and achievement, or when student is in danger of being retained due to poor attendance;
6. to trigger **Attendance Alert Letters** at 5, 10, and 15 absences, and to inform parents and students that excessive absences may result in grade retention or mandatory summer school attendance;

Students

Attendance and Tardiness - Bethel Middle School (continued)

7. to establish and maintain—with the assistance of teachers, school counselors, school nurses, and other pupil services personnel—a series of appropriate interventions for students who exhibit chronic attendance and/or tardiness-to-school problems;
8. to require—per Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210—that parents provide written documentation of the reason for their child’s absence within ten school days of the child’s return to school;
9. to establish meaningful recognitions of students with regular and punctual attendance records;
10. to educate students and parents about the changes in the elementary schools’ attendance policy;
11. to seek the cooperation of parents in scheduling doctor’s appointments and other appointments at times that do not encroach on students’ instructional day;
12. to increase parents’ understanding and cooperation regarding their legal and parental obligations regarding their children’s attendance to school.

Attendance and Tardiness-to-School—Bethel High School

As a result of the Board of Education’s strong commitment to requiring regular and on-time attendance by all students, the Board directs its high school administrators to do the following:

1. to establish and maintain an **Attendance Review Committee** which meets regularly and is empowered to examine any loss of credit as well as to reinstate or deny reinstatement of credit;
2. to award course credit to students on a semester basis;
3. to cause course attendance and class participation to be included in the calculation of a student’s grade in any class;
4. to cause school attendance records to be part of all students’ permanent transcripts;
5. to establish an **Attendance Alert System** which informs students and parents when a student’s attendance and/or tardiness-to-school is negatively impacting learning and achievement, or when course credit is in danger of being lost;

Students

Attendance and Tardiness to School – Bethel High School (continued)

6. to establish and maintain—with the assistance of teachers, school counselors, nurses, and other pupil services personnel—a series of appropriate interventions for students who exhibit chronic attendance and/or tardiness-to-school problems;
7. to establish a meaningful recognition system for students with regular and punctual attendance records;
8. to require—per Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210—that parents provide written documentation of the reason for their child’s absence within ten school days of the child’s return to school;
9. to increase parents’ understanding and cooperation regarding their legal and parental obligations regarding their children’s attendance to school.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-184 Duties of parents as amended by PA98-243 AND PA 00-157
10-185 Penalty
10-199 through 10-202 Attendance, truancy - in general
Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210

Policy Adopted: September 28, 1992
Policy Revised: 4/4/1994 - 9/21/2000
Revised: 5/10/2007
Revised: **6/20/2013**

BETHEL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bethel, CT

Students

Attendance and Tardiness-to-School

Attendance and Tardiness in the Elementary Schools

Definitions

1. Elementary Student

Any child enrolled in kindergarten through grade five in the Bethel Public Schools.

2. Parent

Any natural or adoptive parent, guardian, or other person having responsibility for a student.

3. Excused Absences

~~Bethel students receive an excused absence when they are absent from school for the following reasons:~~

- ~~a. Illness or injury of the student. The school nurse, or his/her designee, will call parents if he/she does not hear from them on the first day of a child's absence. The district reserves the right to require a physician's note or other appropriate certification for absences in excess of five (5) consecutive days or a total of fifteen (15) days in any school year.~~
- ~~b. Serious illness of a family member which necessitates the absence of the student.~~
- ~~c. Death in the immediate family.~~
- ~~d. Religious holiday.~~
- ~~e. Such other exceptional circumstances as approved by the principal.~~

Per Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210, a student's absence will be considered **excused** if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten days of the student's return to school or meets the following criteria:

- A. For **absences one through nine**, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absences and submits appropriate documentation with parent/guardian signature; and
- B. For **the tenth absence and all absences thereafter**, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:
 - a. Student illness appropriately verified by a licensed medical professional regardless of the length of the absence;
 - b. Student's observance of a religious holiday;

- c. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
- d. Mandated court appearances (with appropriate documentation provided);
- e. Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends;
- f. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

4. Unexcused Absences

~~These absences are those which do not come under any of the definitions of excused absences. All vacations taken while school is in session are considered unexcused absences.~~

An absence from school shall be considered **unexcused** unless they meet one of the following criteria:

- A. The absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation requirements); or
- B. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence. (Absences that are the result of school and district disciplinary action are excluded from these definitions.)

5. Truant

Any student who has four (4) unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten (10) unexcused absences from school in any school year is considered truant.

6. Habitual Truant

Any student who has twenty (20) unexcused absences within a school year is considered a habitual truant.

Students

Attendance and Tardiness in the Elementary Schools (continued)

Attendance Monitoring for the Elementary Schools

1. Parents must notify the elementary school of the absence of their child before the official school start time on the day of child's absence by calling the school attendance line **and following up with documentation as described in #3.**
2. The school nurse or her designee will contact the parent or guardian regarding a child's absence if the school does not receive parent notification of the absence on the school attendance line before the start of school.
3. For an absence from school to be classified as excused, ~~the principal will require a satisfactory explanation from the parent or guardian.~~ **documentation of the absence should explain the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. Such documentation should include a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official who spoke with the parent/guardian, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate.**
4. The principal will determine whether absences are excused or unexcused based upon the district's attendance policy **and the new guidance from Connecticut General Statutes 10-198a and 10—220.**
5. On the fifth consecutive day of a student's absence, the school nurse will call home to verify the medical or other reason(s) for the absence.
6. An **Attendance Alert Letter**, signed by the principal, will be sent to parents notifying them when their child has reached 5, 10, and 15 absences from school, or if the child's record indicates a pattern of tardies-to-school or early dismissals.
7. The principal, the school nurse, and school counselor will comprise the **Attendance Alert Committee** and will meet monthly to monitor attendance, early dismissal requests, and tardies-to-school. They will review all student attendance records carefully in order to do the following:
 - a. identify those students with attendance or tardiness problems, or with excessive requests for early dismissals;
 - b. examine the impact of each student's attendance/tardiness/loss of class time on his/her instructional program and documented achievement;
 - c. develop family intervention strategies for improving attendance on a case-by-case basis;
 - d. develop specific goals and timelines for improving identified students' attendance.

Students

Attendance and Tardiness in the Elementary Schools (continued)

8. If a student's attendance record does not improve after school-family interventions have been implemented, and the student reaches **ten (10) unexcused absences**, some or all of the following may take place:
 - a. the principal may develop and implement, with assistance from the school social worker or school counselor, **additional** attendance interventions ~~program~~ for the student and parents;
 - b. the principal may determine that the student be retained;
 - c. the Attendance Alert Committee and the classroom teacher may recommend the student to the Early Intervention Program;
 - d. the principal may make a referral to Special Education/Related Services where a comprehensive evaluation may be requested at a PPT to determine the nature of the student's attendance problems or eligibility for special education services;
 - e. the principal may develop a IDEA Section 504 Plan for the student or, if the student is determined to be eligible for special education services, an Individual Education Program (IEP) may be devised;
 - f. the principal may engage the services of Bethel's ~~truancy~~ **School Resource Officer** to intervene with the family on behalf of the student's attendance;
 - g. the principal may file a written complaint with the CT Superior Court and the Department of Children and Family Services pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 46b—149 alleging that acts and omissions on the part of the child/parents are such that family has service needs;
 - h. if the student is considered truant according to CGS 10—198a, the Superintendent or his/her designee will be notified to coordinate services with and referral of truant and habitual truant to community agencies providing child and family services.

Students

Attendance and Tardiness in the Middle School

Definitions

1. Middle School Student

Any child enrolled in grade 6 through 8 in the Bethel Public Schools.

2. Parent

Any natural or adoptive parent, guardian, or other person having responsibility for a student.

3. Excused Absences

~~Bethel students receive an excused absence when they are absent from school for the following reasons:~~

- ~~a. Illness or injury of the student. The school nurse, or his/her designee, will call parents if he/she does not hear from them on the first day of a child's absence. The district reserves the right to require a physician's note or other appropriate certification for absences in excess of five (5) consecutive days or a total of fifteen (15) days in any school year.~~
- ~~b. Serious illness of a family member which necessitates the absence of the student.~~
- ~~c. Death in the immediate family.~~
- ~~d. Religious holiday.~~
- ~~e. Such other exceptional circumstances as approved by the principal.~~

Per Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210, a student's absence will be considered **excused** if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten days of the student's return to school or meets the following criteria:

- A. For **absences one through nine**, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absences and submits appropriate documentation with parent/guardian signature; and
- B. For **the tenth absence and all absences thereafter**, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:
 - a. Student illness appropriately verified by a licensed medical professional regardless of the length of the absence;
 - b. Student's observance of a religious holiday;

- c. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
- d. Mandated court appearances (with appropriate documentation provided);
- e. Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends;
- f. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

4. Unexcused Absences

~~These absences are those which do not come under any of the definitions of excused absences. All vacations taken while school is in session are considered unexcused absences.~~

An absence from school shall be considered **unexcused** unless they meet one of the following criteria:

- A. The absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation requirements); or
- B. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence. (Absences that are the result of school and district disciplinary action are excluded from these definitions.)

5. Truant

Any student who has four (4) unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten (10) unexcused absences from school in any school year is considered truant.

6. Habitual Truant

Any student who has twenty (20) unexcused absences within a school year is considered a habitual truant.

Attendance Monitoring in the Middle School

1. Parents must notify the middle school of the absence of their child before the official school start time on the day of child's absence by calling the school attendance line **and following up with documentation as described in #3.**
2. The attendance secretary or her designee will contact the parent or guardian regarding a child's absence if the school does not receive parent notification of the absence on the school attendance line before the start of school.
3. For an absence from school to be classified as excused, ~~the principal will require a satisfactory explanation from the parent or guardian.~~ **documentation of the absence should explain the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. Such documentation should include a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official who spoke with the parent/guardian, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate.**

4. The principal will determine whether absences are excused or unexcused based upon the district's attendance policy and the guidance from Connecticut General Statutes 10-198a and 10—220.

5. On the fifth consecutive day of a student's absence, the school nurse will call home to verify the medical or other reason(s) for the absence.

6. An **Attendance Alert Letter**, signed by the principal, will be sent to parents notifying them when their child has reached 5, 10, and 15 absences from school, or if the child's record indicates a pattern of tardies-to-school or early dismissals.

7. The principal, assistant principal, social worker, the school nurse, school counselors and attendance secretary will comprise the **Attendance Alert Committee** and will meet monthly to monitor attendance, early dismissal requests, and tardies-to-school. They will review all student attendance records carefully in order to do the following:

- a. identify those students with attendance or tardiness problems, or with excessive requests for early dismissals;
- b. examine the impact of each student's attendance/tardiness/loss of class time on his/her instructional program and documented achievement;
- c. develop family intervention strategies for improving attendance on a case-by-case basis;
- d. develop specific goals and timelines for improving identified students' attendance.

8. If a student's attendance record does not improve after school-family interventions have been implemented, and the student reaches **ten (10) unexcused absences**, some or all of the following may take place:

- a. the principal may develop and implement, with assistance from the school social worker or school counselor, **additional attendance interventions program** for the student and parents;
- b. the principal may determine that the student be retained;
- c. the Attendance Alert Committee and the classroom teacher may recommend the student to the Early Intervention Program
- d. the principal may make a referral to Special Education/Related Services where a comprehensive evaluation may be requested at a PPT to determine the nature of the student's attendance problems or eligibility for special education services;
- e. the principal may develop a IDEA Section 504 Plan for the student or, if the student is determined to be eligible for special education services, an Individual Education Program (IEP) may be devised;
- f. the principal may engage the services of Bethel's **School Resource Officer** to intervene with the family on behalf of the student's attendance;
- g. the principal may file a written complaint with the CT Superior Court and the Department of Children and Family Services pursuant to Connecticut General

Statutes 46b—149 alleging that acts and omissions on the part of the child/parents are such that family has service needs;

- h. if the student is considered truant according to CGS 10—198a, the Superintendent or his/her designee will be notified to coordinate services with and referral of truants and habitual truants to community agencies providing child and family services.

Regulations Governing Attendance at Bethel High School

Parent and Student Attendance Responsibilities

Students should *never* be absent from school or late to school without parental knowledge and consent. Bethel High School defines a school absence as missing more than one-half (1/2) of the school day, and a class absence as missing more than one-half (1/2) of the class period.

Parents or guardians of high school students are directly responsible for the following so that the high school can report and verify student absences:

1. to call the Attendance Office no later than 9:00 **a.m.** *each time a student is absent* to explain why that student is not in school;
2. **to follow up the attendance call with written documentation of the nature of and the reason for the absence within ten school days of the student's return to school;**
3. **to provide documentation of the absence which explains the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence; (Such documentation should include a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official who spoke with the parent/guardian, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate.)**
4. ~~to provide the Attendance Office with written explanations signed by the parent/guardian for any tardiness to school or early dismissal for any reason, and to obtain authorization (pass) to class after sign-in at the Attendance Office;~~ **to provide the attendance office with an explanation for any tardiness to school or early dismissal for any reason. Students must obtain authorization (pass) to class after sign in at the attendance office;**
5. to check the web-based attendance record regularly in order to monitor student attendance patterns from home;
6. to provide the high school Attendance Office with current telephone and/or cell phone numbers (or other reliable means of contacting the parent/guardian) during the school day so that student absences can be quickly reported to them.

School Attendance Responsibilities

All Bethel High School staff, teachers, and administrators are directly responsible for the following so that student absences and tardiness-to-school can be closely monitored:

Teachers

1. to review all attendance procedures regularly with each class so that all students will be informed of their attendance responsibilities;
2. to personally take attendance within the first ten minutes of every class period using the electronic attendance reporting system;
3. to make corrections to attendance record-coding as needed;
4. to monitor attendance and tardiness-to-school reports daily for all students;
5. to enforce all attendance policies and procedures consistently;
6. to participate as needed in interventions developed on behalf of students with parents, administrators, and pupil services personnel to improve attendance;
7. to provide make-up work opportunities as deemed appropriate (given reason for absence).
8. ~~to include student attendance and participation as part of the calculation of a student's course grade.~~

Attendance Office Personnel:

1. to contact parents/guardians daily regarding any student absences from school which have not been previously reported by the 9:00 a.m. deadline;
2. to accept and file all written notifications from parents/guardians regarding student absences, tardiness-to-school, or early dismissals;
3. to maintain current contact information for parents/guardians;
4. to post electronically an accurate attendance and tardy-to-school list daily to every teacher and administrator;
5. **to maintain a loss of credit spreadsheet for students who have accumulated ten absences;**
6. **to oversee the AlertNow system which notifies parents electronically and by telephone concerning unverified absences, accumulated absences (5,8,10) and loss of credit;**
7. **to run reports concerning consecutive absences for truancy and health office data.**

School Counselors and Pupil Personnel Staff

1. ~~to meet annually with all English classes to explain the attendance policy and regulations to all students;~~
(Please note: Administrators do this at the start of every school year.)
2. to contact students proactively who may be at risk for poor attendance/poor punctuality to help them understand and abide by the new attendance policy and procedures;

3. to participate regularly in a meeting with the building administrators to monitor student attendance patterns;
4. to develop, implement, and monitor a series of interventions on behalf of students who have or are developing negative attendance/punctuality patterns.

Administrators

1. to meet regularly with school counselors and pupil personnel staff to monitor student attendance patterns;
2. to monitor the efficacy of all interventions developed on behalf of students who have or are developing negative attendance/punctuality patterns;
3. to monitor the **Attendance Review Committee** composed of **administrators**, teachers and school counselors—whose responsibilities are to examine any loss of credit as well as to reinstate or deny reinstatement of credit;
4. to monitor the **Attendance Alert System** which informs students and parents when a student's attendance and/or tardiness-to-school are negatively impacting learning and achievement or when course credit is in danger of being lost;
5. to recognize and reward students who have strong attendance records;
6. to provide training to all staff in attendance policy and procedures, and to monitor staff compliance with the policy;
7. to assist faculty in developing, implementing, and monitoring the impact of including course attendance and class participation as a part of a student's grade in any class;
- ~~8. to invoke the "C" rule for all students participating in school activities and athletic programs, and to monitor the impact of attendance on the implementation of the "C" rule;~~
9. to confirm that students not present by 8:00 a.m. are denied participation in any sports, after-school activities, or clubs;
10. to assist the Supervisor of Information Technology in monitoring all technical procedures for the attendance system;
11. to report to the Board of Education regarding student attendance annually.

Parents and students must make every effort to keep school absences to a minimum. *All* absences from school or from classes are tracked using specific codes by the Attendance Alert System. Attendance Alerts are the mechanism for making parents and students aware that course credits may be in jeopardy due to poor attendance.

For all courses, Attendance Alerts will be issued after five (5), eight (8), and ten (10) absences. Loss of credit will occur **after at** ten (10) absences. In order to get course credit back, students will have to make an appeal to the Attendance Review Committee.

Students

Attendance and Tardiness-to-School - Bethel High School

Attendance Alert System—Bethel High School

The following absences have special attendance codes and do not count toward the Attendance Alert System or toward loss of credit. Only the principal or his/her designee can approve any exceptions to this list:

1. Field Trips (maximum of 3 field trips per semester);
2. Office Appointments (pass is needed);
3. **Administrative Approval;**
4. Guidance Appointments (pass is needed);
5. Nurses' Office (pass is needed);
6. Special meetings, assemblies, sports, or school activities and related travel;
7. In-School Suspension;
8. Out-of-School Suspension.

The following absences also have special attendance codes and they do count toward the **Attendance Alert System** or toward possible loss of credit. Only the principal or his/her designee can approve any exceptions to this list:

1. Absences for any reason other than those listed above;
2. Early dismissal (if more than half the class period is missed);
3. Class Cut.

Excused Absences

Per Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210, a student's absence will be considered **excused** if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten days of the student's return to school or meets the following criteria:

- A. For **absences one through nine**, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absences and submits appropriate documentation with parent/guardian signature; and
- B. For **the tenth absence and all absences thereafter**, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:
 - a. Student illness appropriately verified by a licensed medical professional regardless of the length of the absence;
 - b. Student's observance of a religious holiday;
 - c. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
 - d. Mandated court appearances (with appropriate documentation provided);
 - e. Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends;
 - f. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

Unexcused Absences

An absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the following criteria:

- A. The absence meets the definition for an **excused absence** (including documentation requirements); or
- B. The absence meets the definition of a **disciplinary absence**. (Absences that are the result of school and district disciplinary action are excluded from these definitions.)

Attendance Intervention Schedule

In addition or in lieu of the interventions listed on the chart below, the following may also occur:

1. PPS/Building Administrative Team meet on a regular basis to address student attendance;
2. Any case involving attendance may be brought to the PPS/Building Administrative Team meeting at any point, if deemed necessary;
3. An attendance meeting may be called at any point by the School Counselor.

Attendance Intervention Schedule (continued)

<i># of Absences</i>	<i>Persons Responsible for Taking Action</i>	<i>Actions to Be Taken</i>
#5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Office Personnel • School Counselor • School Nurse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Office generates Attendance Alert Warning Letter • School Nurse notifies School Counselor if medical issues are contributing factors • If there are no medical or other issues documented: PPS/Administrative Team to follow steps below
#5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS/Administrative Team • Administrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS/Administrative Team reviews case to develop intervention plan • Administrator meets with student
#8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Counselor • Administrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS/Administrative Team Review Intervention Plan • School Counselor and Administrator meet with student and parents/guardians
#10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Office Personnel • PPS/Administrative Team • Attendance Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of Credit letter is sent electronically to parent/guardian and student • Student/Parents must fill out credit reinstatement document within 2 weeks • Attendance Committee will notify parent/guardian, student, and teachers concerning final credit descions

(cf. 6154 - Homework)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 10-184 Duties of parents.
 10-198a Policies and procedures concerning truants.

46b-149 Family with service needs.
PA 95-182 An Act Concerning the Reduction of Education Mandates
PA 95-304 An Act Concerning School Safety
Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a and 10-210

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