

## STUDENTS

### Excused and Unexcused Absences

Students are expected to attend all assigned classes each day. Teachers shall keep a record of absences and tardiness.

### Excused Absences

The following are valid excuses for absences and tardiness. Missed work assignments and activities may be made-up in the manner provided by the teacher.

1. Participation in school-approved activity. To be excused, this absence must be authorized by a staff member and the affected teacher must be notified prior to the absence unless it is clearly impossible to do so;
2. Absence due to illness, health condition, family emergency, or religious purposes. When possible, the parent or adult/emancipated student is expected to notify the school office on the morning of the absence and send a signed note of explanation with the student upon his/her return to school. Adult students (those over eighteen) and emancipated students (those over sixteen who have been emancipated by court action) shall notify the school office of their absences with a signed note of explanation. Students fourteen years or older who are absent from school due to testing or treatment of a sexually transmitted disease shall notify the school of their absence with a signed note of explanation which will be kept confidential. Students thirteen years and older may do the same for mental health, drug, or alcohol treatment; and all students have that right for family planning and abortion. A parent may request that a student be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday. In addition, a student, upon the request of his/her parent, may be excused for a portion of a school day to participate in religious instruction provided such is not conducted on school property.
3. Absence for parental-approved activities. This category of absence shall be counted as excused for purposes agreed upon by the principal and the parent. An absence may not be approved if it causes a serious adverse effect on the student's educational progress. In participation-type classes (e.g., certain music, science lab, and physical education classes), the student may not be able to achieve the objective of the unit of instruction as a result of absence from class. In such a case, a parent-approved absence would have an adverse effect on the student's educational progress which would ultimately be reflected in the grade for such a course.

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### Excused and Unexcused Absences (continued)

#### Excused Absences (continued)

4. Absence resulting from disciplinary actions or short-term suspension. As required by law, students who are removed from a class or classes as a disciplinary measure or students who have been placed on short-term suspension shall have the right to make-up assignments or exams missed during the time they were denied entry to the classroom if the effect of the missed assignments shall be a substantial lowering of the course grade;
5. Extended illness of health condition. If a student is confined to home or hospital for an extended period, the school shall arrange for the accomplishment of assignments at the place of confinement whenever practicable. If the student is unable to do his/her homework or if there are major requirements of a particular course which cannot be accomplished outside of the class, the student may be required to take an incomplete or withdraw from the class without penalty; and
6. Excused absence for chronic health condition. Students with a chronic health condition which interrupts regular attendance may qualify for placement in a limited attendance and participation program. The student and his/her parent shall apply to the principal or counselor and a limited program shall be written following the advice and recommendations of the student's medical advisor. The recommended limited program shall be approved by the principal. Staff shall be informed of the student's needs, though the confidentiality of medical information shall be respected at the parents' request.

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### Excused and Unexcused Absences (continued)

#### Unexcused Absences

1. Each unexcused absence shall be followed by a warning letter to the parent of the student. Each notice shall be in writing in English or in the primary language of the parent, if possible. A student's grade shall not be affected if no graded activity is missed during such an absence.
2. After two unexcused absences within any month, a conference shall be held between the parent, student, and principal. At such a conference, the principal, student, and parent shall consider: adjusting the student's program; providing more individualized instruction; preparing the student for employment with specific vocational experience or both; transferring the student to another school; assisting the student to obtain supplementary services that might eliminate or ameliorate the causes of absence, or imposing other corrective actions that are deemed to be appropriate.

No later than the student's fifth unexcused absence in a month, the district shall enter into an agreement with the student and parents/guardians that establishes school attendance requirements, refer the student to a community truancy board, or file a petition and affidavit with the juvenile court alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010.

3. If the above action fails to correct the attendance problem, the student shall be declared an habitual absentee. The principal shall interview the student and his/her family and prescribe corrective action which may include suspension for the current semester and expulsion. No later than the seventh unexcused absence within any month during the current school year or upon the tenth unexcused absence during the current school year, the district shall file a petition and affidavit with the juvenile court alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010 by the parent/guardian, student, or parent and student. The petition consists of written notification to the court alleging that:

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### Excused and Unexcused Absences (continued)

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- a. the student has at least five or more unexcused absences within any month during the current school year or ten or more unexcused absences in the current school year;
- b. actions taken by the school district have not been successful in substantially reducing the student's absences from school; and
- c. court intervention and supervision are necessary to assist the school district to reduce the student's absences from school.

Additionally, the petition shall include the student's name, age, school, and resident; and the names and residences of the student's parents.

4. A student who has been expelled for attendance violations may petition the superintendent for reinstatement. Such petition may be granted upon presentation of a firm and unequivocal commitment to maintain regular attendance; and
5. Any student who presents false evidence, with or without the consent of his/her parent, in order to wrongfully qualify for an excused absence shall be subject to the same corrective action that would have occurred had the false excuse not been used.

Students are expected to be in class on time. When a student's tardiness becomes frequent or disruptive, the student shall be referred to the principal or counselor. If counseling, parent conferencing, or disciplinary action is ineffective in changing the student's attendance behavior, he/she may be suspended from class.

All sanctions imposed for failure to comply with attendance policies and procedures shall be implemented in conformance with state and district regulations regarding corrective action or punishment.

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                  March 6, 1995  
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