

Dear Parents and Guardians,

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND STATE LAW

- State law requires children from age 8 to 17 to attend school.
- Children who are 6 or 7 years old, who are enrolled in school, must also attend school.
- Youth who are 16 or older may be excused from attending school if they meet certain requirements. If you would like to discuss these requirements, please contact an administrator at your child's school.
- If your child is going to be absent, please contact the attendance secretary at your child's school. The complete truancy statute can be found by searching the Internet for "[RCW 28A.225](#)"

#### SCHOOL'S DUTIES UPON A STUDENT'S ABSENCES

- If your child has 3 unexcused absences in one month, State law requires us to schedule a conference with you and your child.
- In elementary school (K-6) after five **excused absences** in a month, or 10 or more **excused absences** in the school year, the school district is required to contact you to schedule a conference. A conference is not required if your child has provided a doctor's note, or pre-arranged the absence and writing, and plans are in place so your child does not fall behind academically.
- If a school aged child (K-12) has five **unexcused absences** in any month or 10 **unexcused absences** within the school year we are required to file a petition with the juvenile court, alleging of violation of RCW 28A.225.010. You and your child may need to appear in court.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in kindergarten, missing an average of just two days a month, whether excused or unexcused, makes it more likely that your child will not meet academic standards in math and reading by third grade.
- By sixth grade, absenteeism is one of 3 signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- By ninth grade, regular attendance is a better predictor of high school graduation rates and 8th grade test scores.

#### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Don't let your child stay home unless they are truly sick.
- Avoid appointment and travel when school is in session.
- Keep track of your child's attendance. Missing more than 9 days, excused or unexcused, could put your child at risk of falling behind.
- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine as well as finishing homework and packing backpacks the night before.
- Have a back-up plan in place with family members, neighbors, or other parents for getting your child to school in case something comes up.

If you are struggling to get your child to school for any reason, we are here to support you and work with you towards possible solutions. Please do not hesitate to contact your child school to schedule an appointment to discuss your child's attendance.

Helpful information about school attendance can be found at: [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)