

EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Regular school attendance is necessary for mastery of the educational program provided to students of the district. Annually, the Bainbridge Island School District will inform students and parents/guardians of the benefits of regular school attendance, the consequences of truancy, the role and responsibility of the district in regards to truancy, and the resources available to assist the student and parents/guardians in increasing school attendance and correcting truancy. The district will also make this information available online and will take reasonable steps to ensure parents can request and be provided such information in languages in which they are fluent. Parents will be required to date and acknowledge review of this information online or in writing.

The following guidelines will govern the development and administration of attendance procedures for all grades within the district. School staff will keep a record of absences and tardiness. Absences will be determined as excused or unexcused. The school principal or designee has the authority to determine if an absence meets the criteria for an excused absence. Any absence from school is unexcused unless it meets one of the criteria for an excused absence.

Excused Absences

The following are valid excuses for absences:

- A. Participation in a district or school approved activity or instructional program;
- B. Illness, health condition or medical appointment, including, but not limited to, medical, counseling, dental or optometry;
- C. Family emergency, including, but not limited to, a death or illness in the family;
- D. Religious or cultural purpose including observance of a religious or cultural holiday or participation in religious or cultural instruction;
- E. Court, judicial proceeding, or serving on a jury;
- F. Post-secondary, technical school or apprenticeship program visitation, or scholarship interview;
- G. State-recognized search and rescue activities consistent with RCW. 28A.225.055;
- H. Absence directly related to the student's homeless status;
- I. Absence resulting from a disciplinary/corrective action, including, but not limited to, short-

Adopted: March 29, 2001
Revised: January 30, 2014
Revised: December 10, 2015
Revised: June 7, 2017
Revised: August 31, 2017

Bainbridge Island School District

term or long-term suspension, emergency expulsion; and

- J. Principal or designee and parent, guardian, or emancipated youth mutually agreed upon approved activity.

If an absence is excused, the student will be permitted to make up all missed assignments outside of class under reasonable conditions and time limits established by the appropriate teacher; except that in participation-type classes, a student's grade may be affected because of the student's inability to make up the activities conducted during a class period.

An excused absence will be verified by a parent/guardian or an adult, emancipated or appropriately aged student, or school authority responsible for the absence. If attendance is taken electronically, either for a course conducted online or for students physically within the district, an absence will default to unexcused until such time as an excused absence may be verified by a parent or other responsible adult. If a student is to be released for health care related to family planning or abortion, the student may require that the district keep the information confidential. Students thirteen and older have the right to keep information about drug, alcohol or mental health treatment confidential. Students fourteen and older have the same confidentiality rights regarding HIV and sexually transmitted diseases.

Excessive Excused Absences

- A. If an elementary student in kindergarten through grade 6 has five (5) or more excused absences in a single month during the school year or ten (10) or more absences in the current school year, the principal or designee will schedule a conference with the student and his/her parent/guardian at a reasonably convenient time. The school will make reasonable efforts to provide this information in a language in which the parent/guardian is fluent. The conference is intended to identify reasons for the student's absences and identify supports and resources so the student may regularly attend school.
- B. This attendance conference will take place within thirty (30) days and may be included in a previously scheduled parent conference or meeting if held within thirty (30) days.
- C. The conference must include at least one school district employee, preferably a nurse, counselor, social worker, teacher or community human services provider.
- D. If the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan, the team that created that program must reconvene.
- E. A conference is not required if there is prior written notice or a doctor's note is provided to the school and there is an academic plan in place to ensure the student does not fall behind.

Unexcused Absences

Any absence from school is unexcused unless it meets one of the criteria above for an excused absence. A student whose absence is not excused will experience the consequences of his/her absence. A student's grade may be affected if a graded activity or assignment occurs during the period of time when the student is absent. A student's grade will not be affected if no graded activity is missed during such an absence.

- A. The school will notify a student's parent or guardian in writing, telephone, or electronically whenever the student has failed to attend school after one unexcused absence. The school will make reasonable efforts to provide this information in a language in which the parent/guardian is fluent. The notification will include the potential consequences of additional unexcused absences.
- B. After three unexcused absences within any month during the current school year, a conference will be scheduled with the principal or designee, student and parent/guardian. The conference is intended to identify reasons for the student's absences and identify supports and resources so the student may regularly attend school.
- C. This attendance conference will take place within thirty (30) days and may be included in a previously scheduled parent conference or meeting if held within thirty (30) days.
- D. The conference must include at least one school district employee, preferably a nurse, counselor, social worker, teacher or community human services provider.
- E. If the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan, the team that created that program must reconvene.
- F. The district will designate a staff member to apply the Washington Assessment of the Risks and Needs of Students (WARNS) or other state approved assessment and, when appropriate, provide the student with the best practice or research-based intervention consistent with WARNS.
- G. No later than the student's fifth unexcused absence in a month, the district will:
 - 1. Enter into an agreement with the student and parent/guardian that establishes school attendance requirements;
 - 2. Refer the student to a community truancy board; or
 - 3. File a petition to juvenile court alleging a violation of RCW.28A.225.010
- H. If such action is not successful to substantially reduce the student's absences and if the student is under the age of seventeen, not later than a student's seventh unexcused absence

Adopted: March 29, 2001
Revised: January 30, 2014
Revised: December 10, 2015
Revised: June 7, 2017
Revised: August 31, 2017

Bainbridge Island School District

within any month during the current school year, or a tenth unexcused absence during the school year, the district will file a petition and supporting affidavit for a civil action with the juvenile court alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.101.

- I. All suspensions and/or expulsions will be reported in writing to the superintendent within 24 hours after imposition.

Community Truancy Board

A community truancy board will be established prior to the 2017-2018 school year with the purpose of working with students and families to identify the reasons for excessive absences and identifying supports and resources so the student may regularly attend school. The truancy board will be established pursuant to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the district and the juvenile court of Kitsap County and will be composed of members of the local community trained as members of the Community Truancy Board. If a parent, or student over age 18, chooses not to participate in the community truancy board, the truancy petition will be referred back to the juvenile court.

The district will designate and identify to the juvenile court, and update as necessary, a staff member to coordinate district efforts to address excessive absenteeism and truancy, including outreach conferences, coordinating the MOU, establishing protocols and procedures with the court, coordinating trainings, and sharing evidence-based and culturally appropriate promising practices. The district will also identify a person within each school to serve as a contact regarding excessive absenteeism and truancy and assisting in the recruitment of community truancy board members.

Transfer Students

In the case of a student who transfers from one district to another during the school year, the sending district will provide to the receiving district, together with a copy of the WARNS assessment or other state approved assessment and any interventions previously provided to the student, the most recent truancy information for that student. The information will include the online or written acknowledgement by the parent and student. Parents of students enrolling in the district during the school year will receive the annual attendance information and acknowledge receipt in written form during the registration process.

Students dependent pursuant to Chapter 13.34, RCW

A school district representative will review unexpected or excessive absences of a student who has been found dependent under the Juvenile Court Act with that student and adults involved with that student. Adults includes the student's caseworker, educational liaison, attorney if one

Adopted: March 29, 2001
Revised: January 30, 2014
Revised: December 10, 2015
Revised: June 7, 2017
Revised: August 31, 2017

Bainbridge Island School District

