



## WENATCHEE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 246

### Attendance Process for Policies 3121 & 3122

The Board of Education feels that regular attendance is necessary for a quality education. In addition to developing an appreciation for lifelong learning the student must also develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility. There is a direct relationship between poor attendance and class failure. Students who have good attendance, which the majority do, generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more and are more employable after leaving high school. Nonetheless, it is recognized that at times students appropriately may be absent from class. Therefore, the following principles shall govern the development and administration of attendance procedures within the district.

- A. Absences due to illness or a health condition, a religious observance, when requested by a student's parent(s), school-approved activities, family emergencies and, as required by law, disciplinary actions or short-term suspensions shall be excused. The principal may, upon request by a parent, grant permission in advance for a student's absence providing such absence does not adversely affect the student's educational progress. In addition, a student, upon the request of a parent, may be excused for a portion of a school day to participate in religious instruction provided such is not conducted on school property during the school day.
- B. If an absence is excused, students shall 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.
- C. Excused absences shall be verified by the parent or school representative authorizing the absence.
- D. As a means of instilling values of responsibility and personal accountability, a student whose absence is not excused shall experience the natural consequences of his/her truancy. A student's grade shall be affected if a graded activity or assignment occurs during the period of time when the student is truant/unexcused.
- E. Loss of credit for missed assignments due to unexcused absences shall not be a disciplinary device. Therefore, if no graded activity or assignment is missed during an unexcused absence, a truant student's grade shall not be affected.

It shall be the responsibility of building principals and certificated staff to enforce the district's attendance policies and procedures. Because the full knowledge and cooperation of students and parents is necessary for the success of the policies and procedures, these shall be disseminated broadly and made available to parents and students.

### Attendance Procedure

1. Students are expected to attend and be on time for all assigned classes each day. A record shall be kept of student absences and tardiness.
2. **Excused Absences and/or Tardiness.** Depending on school procedures, a parent phone call on the day of the absence or a signed parent note of explanation is required for verification. Missed work assignments and activities may be made up in the manner provided by the teachers. The following valid absences fit in this category.
  - a. **Participation in school-approved activity.** To be excused this absence must be authorized by a staff member and the affected teacher(s) notified prior to the absence unless it is clearly impossible to do so.
  - b. **Absence caused by illness, health condition, or family emergency.** The parent 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. A parent may request that a student be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday. In addition, a student, upon 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.
  - c. **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 and physical education classes) the student may not be able to achieve the objectives of the unit of instruction as a result of absence from class. In such 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.
  - d. **Absence resulting from disciplinary actions or short-term suspensions.** 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 or examinations will be a substantial lowering of the course grade.

3. **Extended illness or 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 or her schoolwork, or if there are major requirements of a particular course which cannot be accomplished outside of class, the student may be required to take an **incomplete** or **withdraw** from the class without penalty.
4. **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 or guardian shall apply to the principal or counselor and a limited program shall be approved by the school principal. The staff shall be informed of the student's needs, though the confidentiality of medical information shall be respected (at the parent's request).
5. **Unexcused Absences.**
  - a. 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. Students with handicapping conditions shall receive a copy of the rights and responsibilities of handicapped students. A student's grade shall not be affected if no graded activity is missed during such an absence.
  - b. When a student evidences repeated truancies, a conference shall be held between the parent, student and principal. If a student has a handicapping condition, a special service director will be notified and an IEP conference will be held to discuss appropriate action to be implemented. 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.
  - c. If the above action fails to correct the truancy problem, the student shall be declared a habitual truant. The principal shall interview the student and his/her family and prescribe corrective action which may include suspension for the current semester and referral to juvenile court.
  - d. A student who has been suspended 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.
  - e. 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.
6. 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 conference, or disciplinary action is ineffective in changing the student's tardy behavior, he or she may be suspended from the class or from school.
7. All sanctions imposed for failure to comply with the attendance policies and procedures shall be implemented in conformance with state and district regulations regarding student discipline.