



Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Attendance
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### **Purpose**

The Board requires that school age children who are enrolled in the schools of this district shall attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the state. The educational program offered by this district is predicated upon the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation.[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8]

The Williams Valley Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is an essential component of a sound educational program. Regular attendance helps establish continuity in the student-teacher relationship as well as continuity in the instructional process.

To provide the opportunities that result in a sound educational program, the development of student-teacher relationships, and continuity in the instructional process, the following attendance requirements and procedures are established for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Attendance Requirements**

1. Students shall be required to attend during the days and hours that the school is in session, except that a principal or teacher may excuse a student for temporary absences with satisfactory evidence of mental or physical condition or other conditions which may reasonably cause absence.
2. Unless it can be documented that extenuating reasons exist, students who accumulate more than fourteen (14) days of absence not documented by medical excuses in one (1) school year will not be promoted to the next grade level. Seniors who accumulate more than fourteen (14) days of absence not documented by medical excuses in one (1) school year will not be eligible for graduation.
3. Students who exceed the fourteen (14) days of absence not documented by medical excuses but fall within fifteen (15) and twenty-one (21) days of absence may complete the school-based attendance improvement program to be eligible for promotion or, in the case of a senior, graduation.
4. Reasonable absences include illness, family emergencies, medical appointments or authorized school activity.
5. Unexcused absences include leaving school during school hours or any inexcusable absence, with or without parental permission.

## Attendance Procedures

### *Submission of Excuses for Absences -*

A written excuse must be submitted for every absence. The written excuse should be submitted to the office when the child returns to school. Written excuses will be accepted on any reasonable form of paper. Excuses may also be emailed to the attendance person designated for each school building. The absence will be considered illegal if the written excuse is not returned to the school within five (5) school days of the date of the absence.

### *Accumulation of Absences -*

Parents/Guardians of students who have accumulated seven (7) days of absence (legal or illegal) that have not been documented by medical excuses will be notified in writing by the school district.

*Accumulation of Ten (10) Days of Absence -* Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing when their child has accumulated ten (10) days of absence that have not been documented by medical excuses.

*Accumulation of Fourteen (14) Days of Absence -* Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing when their child has accumulated fourteen (14) days of absence that have not been documented by medical excuses. After fourteen (14) days of absence have been accumulated, a medical excuse must be submitted for every subsequent absence. Failure to submit a medical excuse will result in the absence being marked illegal.

Unless it can be documented that extenuating reasons exist, students who accumulate more than fourteen (14) days of absence in one (1) school year not documented by medical excuses will not be promoted to the next grade level. Students who were absent more than fourteen (14) days within a school year due to a documented severe or chronic illness must meet the academic requirements in order to pass to the next grade level.

Unless it can be documented that extenuating reasons exist, seniors who have accumulated more than fourteen (14) days of absence not documented by medical excuses will not be eligible for graduation.

Students who exceed the fourteen (14) days of absence not documented by medical excuses but fall within fifteen (15) and twenty-one (21) days of absence may complete the school-based attendance improvement program to be eligible for promotion or, in the case of a senior, graduation.

### *Medical Excuses -*

Medical excuses must be signed by a doctor and may be subject to verification by the school district.

### *Educational Field Trips -*

Educational field trips requested by parents/guardians will be considered legal absences and will be accounted in the accumulation of fourteen (14) days of absence because they are not medical excuses.

### *Illegal Absences -*

The law defines **truant** as a student subject to compulsory attendance who has three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.[2]

Under the compulsory school attendance regulations, parents/guardians of a student who has accumulated three (3) unexcused absences must be issued a First Offense Warning within the (10) days of the student's third unexcused absence.

If a student continues to accumulate unexcused absences after the written notice is provided, the school will convene a school attendance improvement conference. The school will invite the child, the person in parental relation to the child, other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource, appropriate school personnel, and recommended service providers. The school

will provide the parent/guardian with advance written notice of the meeting. The conference may occur if the parent/guardian declines to participate. The school will complete a written attendance improvement plan to have documentation of the conference.

The law defines **habitually truant** as six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year by a child subject to compulsory school attendance.[2]

When a child is habitually truant and under fifteen (15) years of age at the time of the referral the school will:[38]

- Refer the child to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program OR to the appropriate county Children and Youth Services.
- The school may file a citation in the office of the appropriate magisterial district judge against the person in parental relation of the student.[38]

When a child is habitually truant and fifteen (15) years of age or older at the time of the referral the school will:[38]

- Refer the student to a school or community-based attendance improvement program OR file a citation with a magisterial district judge.
- If the student continues to incur additional unexcused absences after being referred to a school attendance improvement program, the school may refer the child to the appropriate county Children and Youth Services.
- Student driving privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the school year.

When a child is habitually truant and has exceeded compulsory school age seventeen (17) years or older the school will:

- Refer the student to a school or community-based attendance improvement program.
- If the student continues to incur additional unexcused absences after being referred to a school attendance improvement program, the school will levy a fine of \$25 per day for each additional unlawful absence.
- Student driving privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the school year.

### Religious Holidays

Absences occasioned by the observance of a religious holiday shall be excused. No student shall be deprived of an award or eligibility to compete for an award or the opportunity to make-up a test given on a religious holiday.[17]

### Miscellaneous Provisions

Attendance need not always be within the school facilities. A student will be in attendance at any place where school is in session by authority of the Board, or at the place where the student is receiving approved tutorial instruction or health care, or at the place where the student is engaged in approved work-study or a career education program, or at home when the student is receiving homebound instruction.[3][10][18][19][20][21][22]

Each student assigned to a program of independent study will be in attendance, provided that s/he is under the guidance of a staff member so assigned and reports to such staff member the place in which s/he is conducting study and regularly demonstrates progress in the course.[23]

Repeated infractions of attendance policies may warrant suspension or expulsion from the regular school program. It shall be the policy of the Board to consider the appropriateness of the educational

program which is offered to students who repeatedly absent themselves from such program.[16][24][25]

The Board shall waive the requirements for attendance at the schools of this district for the following reasons:

1. On certification by a physician and approval of the Department of Education, children who are unable to attend school or apply themselves to study for mental, physical or other reasons which preclude regular attendance.[9][26][27]
2. Enrollment in private or nonpublic schools.[3][28]
3. Enrollment in private trade or business schools.[3]
4. For children who have completed the sixth grade and who are engaged in farm work or domestic service, application for an exemption permit must be made by the parent/guardian through a personal interview and home visit by the issuing officer and completion of Form PICA-39 and the district withdrawal form.[26]
5. For children who are regularly employed during the school session, requests for employment certificates must originate with the parent/guardian, in writing or in personal interview. Form PICA-32 and the district withdrawal form, signed by the parent/guardian and a medical examiner, shall be submitted to the principal who will issue the working certificate and forward it by mail to the employer. Applicants will furnish the guidance counselor or the principal with a release which will drop the student's name from the active roll of the school district.[19][26]

Students who are receiving private instruction from a qualified tutor or who are enrolled in special schools conducted by the Schuylkill County Intermediate Unit or who are homebound may be excused from regular attendance at the schools of this district.[3][18][21]

The Board may report to appropriate authorities infractions regarding attendance of students under age seventeen (17). The Board shall notify parents/guardians that such infractions of the compulsory attendance requirements shall be prosecuted.[13][14]

Upon written request by the parent/guardian, the Board shall release a student from attendance at school to participate in religious instruction. Such instruction shall not require the student's absence for more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year and its organizers must inform the Board of the student's attendance record.[17][29]

No grade or school may be dismissed before the regular dismissal time unless approved by the Superintendent. No pupil may leave school prior to the regular time of dismissal unless approved by the principal.

Children shall be released from school only to parents/guardians or to persons authorized by parents/guardians as responsible for the pupil. In the event of illness, it shall be determined that the parent/guardian or responsible adult is at home before a pupil is released.

Children shall not be dismissed during school hours for private music lessons, scouts, clubs, organizations, unless receiving prior approval from the Superintendent.

Children may be released during school hours for medical or dental appointments, upon request of the parent/guardian.[10][11]

Parents/Guardians shall be notified of any request by police or court officials for release of a pupil during school hours.[30]

Students involved in an extracurricular event/activity must be in attendance at 8:15 a.m. on the day of the event/activity to be eligible to participate in that day's event/activity. Only a medical excuse signed by a doctor will be accepted as an excuse for tardiness or absence under these circumstances.

## High School - Tardiness To School

Junior-Senior High School students reporting to homeroom after the 7:44 a.m. bell has rung will be marked tardy to homeroom and will be disciplined according to the tardy to class procedure. Students who are tardy to homeroom twelve (12) times will lose their driving privileges. Only medical excuses signed by a doctor will be accepted as an excuse for tardiness to school. Students who arrive at school between 7:50 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. will be marked tardy to school and should report to the Guidance Office for a permit to attend class. Students who are tardy to school six (6) times will be assessed one (1) day of unlawful absence. Tardies will accumulate throughout the school year with penalties increasing for excessive tardiness at the rate of one (1) unlawful day of absence for every two (2) tardies following the initial six (6) tardies. Only a medical excuse signed by a doctor will be accepted as an excuse for tardiness to school.

Students who have scheduled medical/dental appointments that will cause them to be tardy to school should, whenever possible, give prior notice of the appointment to the Guidance Office.

Students involved in an extracurricular event/activity must be in attendance at 8:15 a.m. on the day of the event/activity to be eligible to participate in that day's event/activity. Only a medical excuse signed by a doctor will be accepted as an excuse for tardiness or absence under these circumstances.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent shall develop procedures which:

1. Ensure a school session which is in conformity with the rules of the State Board.[\[31\]](#)[\[32\]](#)[\[33\]](#)[\[34\]](#)[\[36\]](#)[\[37\]](#)
2. Manage the maintenance of attendance records in accordance with rules of the State Board.[\[12\]](#)[\[35\]](#)
3. Impose incremental disciplinary measures on truants.[\[13\]](#)[\[14\]](#)[\[15\]](#)[\[16\]](#)[\[25\]](#)
4. Ensure absent students have opportunity to make up work.
5. Notify parents/guardians within three (3) days of any proceeding under the compulsory attendance statute.[\[13\]](#)[\[14\]](#)

Legal

- [1. 24 P.S. 1301](#)
- [2. 24 P.S. 1326](#)
- [3. 24 P.S. 1327](#)
- [4. 22 PA Code 11.12](#)
- [5. 22 PA Code 11.13](#)
- [6. 22 PA Code 11.41](#)
- [7. 22 PA Code 12.1](#)
8. Pol. 200
- [9. 24 P.S. 1329](#)
- [10. 22 PA Code 11.23](#)
- [11. 22 PA Code 11.25](#)
- [12. 24 P.S. 1332](#)
- [13. 24 P.S. 1333](#)
- [14. 24 P.S. 1354](#)
- [15. 24 P.S. 1328](#)

15. 24 P.S. 1336

16. Pol. 233

17. 22 PA Code 11.21

18. 22 PA Code 11.22

19. 22 PA Code 11.28

20. Pol. 115

21. Pol. 116

22. Pol. 117

23. Pol. 118

24. 24 P.S. 1318

25. Pol. 218

26. 24 P.S. 1330

27. 22 PA Code 11.34

28. 22 PA Code 11.32

29. 24 P.S. 1546

30. Pol. 225

31. 24 P.S. 1501

32. 24 P.S. 1504

33. 22 PA Code 4.4

34. 22 PA Code 11.1

35. 24 P.S. 1339

36. 22 PA Code 11.2

37. 22 PA Code 11.3

38. 24 P.S. 1333.1

24 P.S. 510.2

24 P.S. 1327.1

24 P.S. 1329

24 P.S. 1333.2

22 PA Code 11.5

22 PA Code 11.8

22 PA Code 11.24

22 PA Code 11.26

22 PA Code 11.31

22 PA Code 11.31a

42 Pa. C.S.A. 6302

Pol. 103.1

Pol. 113

Pol. 113.3

Pol. 114

Pol. 137