

## **Excused Absences (K-12)**

### **1. Personal Illness**

a. A note from the student's parent or guardian shall be required upon the student's returning to school. The note should include the reason(s) for and the date(s) of the absence(s). Upon returning to school, a student has three (3) school days in which to submit a note. After the time period has elapsed, the absence(s) shall become unexcused.

b. The school may accept a written note from a parent or guardian verifying a student's illness for up to a total of five (5) accumulated days during the school year. However, if a student is absent due to his or her personal illness for more than a total of five (5) accumulated days, a doctor's note specifying inclusive dates for the illness must be submitted in order for any subsequent illness-related absences to be excused. The Principal of the school has the right to accept or deny parent or guardian notes over the five-day limit.

### **2. Illness of Immediate Family Member**

A doctor's statement may be required after three (3) days.

### **3. Deaths**

a. In the family - - One day will be excused. Additional days will be excused at the discretion of the principal/designee.

b. Of others - - The principal/designee may approve as an excused absence with appropriate documentation.

### **4. Dental, Medical, and Counseling Appointments**

We strongly urge that these appointments be scheduled after school. However, if these appointments are during school hours, a doctor's or counselor's verification will be required, and reasonable travel time to and from the office will be allowed. Full days for dental and medical appointments will rarely be excused.

### **5. Extreme Weather Conditions**

### **6. Religious Observances**

Any student who misses a class or day of school because of the observance of a day set aside as sacred by a recognized religious denomination of which the student is a member or adherent, where such religion calls for a special observance of such day, shall have the absence from that school day or class excused and shall be entitled to make up any school work missed without the imposition of any penalty because of the absence.

### **7. Required Court Appearance**

Written verification of the student's required appearance and the time involved must be submitted upon the student's returning to school. These excuses must be obtained in the clerk's office of that particular court. The office closes at 4:00 p.m.

### **8. Extenuating Circumstances**

A student's absence due to circumstances, which, in the judgment of the principal, constitute good and sufficient cause of absence from school, may be excused with proper documentation.

### **Unexcused Absences (K-12)**

An unexcused absence from any class, study hall, or any activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled constitutes truancy. Any absence without written documentation is automatically unexcused. If an absence is excused, the work missed may be made up within five (5) days of returning to school from said absence except for days missed due to out-of-school suspension. Teachers are not required to furnish make-up work opportunities for students when their absence is unexcused or due to official suspension from school.

All students are required to turn in to their teacher or the attendance secretary at the school any note from a doctor, health official, funeral director, etc. in order for the absence to be considered excused. Any discrepancy will be decided by the Director of Attendance and/or the Principal of the school.

Out-of-school suspension days are unexcused, but excused for the purpose of completing all assigned work or tests recorded for students not absent on those days.

### **School Sponsored Activities**

Students participating in school sponsored activities whether on or off campus shall not be counted absent. However, since the student is missing important instructional time, these activities must be limited to six (6) per year. School sponsored activities beyond six (6) will count as absences and may be made up in the same way as all excused absences. Whenever possible, students should request make-up work before missing class for school sponsored activities. In order to qualify as "school sponsored," the activity must be school-planned, school directed, and teacher supervised. Mass exodus or early dismissal or late arrival of all students or any segment of students shall not be permitted for any reason except for emergencies such as inclement weather or other unavoidable situations, unless instruction time is made up in full.

### **Tardies (K-12)**

Being on time to school and class is essential for optimum teaching, learning, and earning promotion to the next grade. When a student is tardy, he/she disrupts this process for others and loses important learning time for himself/herself. School bus transportation is provided free of charge to students of Warren County. For this reason, tardies related to car problems, traffic, oversleeping, etc., are not valid reasons for tardiness. To receive an excused tardy when late to school, the student must have either:

- a) A doctor's statement
- b) An official court notice
- c) A parent with student or a telephone call from the parent and approval by administration. (Personal illness will be excused.)

### **Perfect Attendance**

To be eligible for perfect attendance, a student must be in attendance for a length of time equal to the state's minimum hourly requirement for a school day. To have perfect attendance a student's attendance record must indicate that the actual days absent at years end is .99 or below or less than 420 minutes away from school for the entire year. Students who sign in late and check out early will accumulate time and when this time reaches 420 minutes or 7 hours the student will be considered absent one day.

Students that have a perfect attendance record for thirteen years will be awarded a plaque from the Director of Schools and the Board of School Commissioners.

### **Parent/Guardian Notification of Truancy**

If and/or when a student misses his/her third (3<sup>rd</sup>) unexcused day of school, a letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian, by the school in which that student is enrolled.

If and/or when a student misses his/her fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) unexcused day of school, a letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian, informing them of their child's unlawful absence from school. The letter will also inform them as to how to correct the attendance problem.

### **Truancy Review Board**

The State of Tennessee considers a student who exceeds five (5) unexcused absences from school as truant.

When a student has more than five (5) unexcused days absent from school the principal or attendance teacher may summons that student to appear before the Truancy Review Board. This review board shall be a fact finding and problem solving session for the student. Each parent is welcomed at this meeting but one parent/guardian must attend this meeting with the student.

In the event that a student does not comply with the compulsory attendance law the Director of Attendance shall there upon serve, or cause to be served, upon the parent, guardian, or other person in Tennessee in parental relation to such children unlawfully

### **Noncompliance with State of Tennessee Drivers License Law**

The State of Tennessee considers a student withdrawn from school if he/she misses ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) total unexcused days in a single semester. The State also considers a student who fails to pass three (3) full unit subjects in a single semester to be in violation of this law. T.C.A. 49-6-3017.

Any student missing ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) total unexcused days of school during any semester or fails to pass three full units subjects in a single semester renders himself/herself ineligible to retain or receive a driver's license if of such age. The Director of Attendance shall be responsible for notifying in writing the Director of Schools and the parent/guardian of the student and the Department of Safety of any action taken by the school.

The Warren County Schools Disciplinary Board will offer any student in violation of Driver's License law the right to appeal in writing the suspension or revocation of the student's driver's license. This board will determine if any extenuating circumstances exist or verify that the student has all requirements that will allow him/her to retain or obtain the driver's permit or license.

Any administrative decision regarding attendance may be appealed initially to the Director of Schools and ultimately to the board. The appeal shall be made in writing to the Director or Schools within five (5) school days following the action or the report of the action, whichever is later.

In order to qualify for reclaiming a driver's permit or license the student must attend school as prescribed by law and make a passing grade in at least three (3) full unit subjects or their equivalency at the conclusion of any grading period.

### **Student Records**

Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.

