

Washington West Supervisory Union Model Policy

Policy F25-R

F25-R: STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Policy

It is the policy of the member district schools of the Washington West Supervisory Union: Fayston Elementary School, Harwood Union High School, Moretown Elementary School, Waitsfield Elementary School, Warren Elementary School, and the Waterbury/Duxbury Union School District (Crossett Brook Middle School and Thatcher Brook Primary School) to set high expectations for consistent student school attendance in accordance with Vermont law in order to facilitate and enhance student learning. This includes the expectation that the student will be in the school by the designated start time.

Background

Legal pupils between the ages of 6 and 16 and who are residents of a member district and non-resident pupils who enroll in a member district school are required to attend school for the full number of days that school is held unless they are excused from attendance as provided in state law. In addition, regular and punctual attendance is important to the development of responsible and effective work/study habits as well as a demonstration that students are assuming responsibility for their own behavior. Encouraging students to take full advantage of their education is a shared responsibility of students, families, schools, and communities.

Definitions

1. A **truant** student is one who is subject to compulsory school attendance (16 V.S.A. §1121) and who is absent without valid cause or excuse.
2. **Valid causes** for absences include illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the family, family emergency, situations beyond the student's control as determined by the Principal or other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent or guardian for the health and safety of the student and are confirmed in writing or verbally by the parent or guardian of the student.

Administrative Responsibilities

1. The principal or designee is responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of student attendance.
2. The principal or designee is responsible for assuring that the school has the appropriate family information that allows the school to contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) of all students whenever necessary.
3. Failure to comply with this policy may result in administrative investigation and possible administrative action. Students who are absent for more than 10 cumulative days in the school year are missing a great deal of instructional time. When students are absent (excused or unexcused) for a total of 10 school days, the principal or designee may request a meeting of the student's parents/guardians, the child's teacher, and the principal to address this issue.
4. In the event an extended absence is planned, the family is required to request that the absence be excused; such request must be made to the principal in advance of the planned absence. This request is subject to the principal's approval. All requested leaves of 10 or more days need to be submitted in writing to the Superintendent for approval.
5. When students are tardy to school or leave early for a total of ten or more days (unexcused), their families may be asked to meet with the principal and the child's teacher to address the issue.

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6. Chronic truancy and tardiness or early departures will be reported to the appropriate state authorities.
7. The principal is responsible for maintaining written administrative rules and procedures that will address the following issues and may include others as well.
 - A. written excuses;
 - B. tardiness;
 - C. notification of parents/guardian;
 - D. signing out of school;
 - E. excessive absenteeism;
 - F. homebound and hospitalized students;
 - G. early departures;
 - H. homework assignments;
 - I. making up work

Date Warned: 01.20.11
Date Adopted: FES: 02.15.11; HUHS: 02.16.11; MES: 02.01.11; W-D: 02.08.11; WES: 02.14.11; WS: 02.10.11
Legal Reference(s): 16 V.S.A. §§1121 et seq. (Attendance required)
VT State Board of Education Manual of Rules & Practices: §2120.8.3.3
Cross Reference: Admission of Resident Students (F13)
Admission of Non-Resident Tuition Students (F14)