Boston Public Schools/ BCLA’s Attendance Policy

Every student is expected to attend all of his/her classes every day. Regular attendance and promptness is expected. It should be understood that absences, whether excused or unexcused, may have a negative impact on the class grade. Successful students seldom are absent or tardy. If students have irregular attendance, it will affect their class performance, interest in school, and ability to keep up with assigned work. More than 3 unexcused absences in a term violate the requirements for receiving credit in a given subject. Therefore students may receive no credit (NC) or (F). Students may have the opportunity to go to the appeal board* for a hearing if there are exceptional circumstances surrounding the absence.

Students must bring in a note after each day they are absent. The note must include the date absent, the reason for the absence, a phone number for the parent or guardian, and the parent or guardian’s signature. Students may make up work they missed during excused absences.

**Excused absences may include:**

- An illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. The illness or injury must be verified by a health care provider, school nurse, or parent.
- A death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin) or other significant personal or family crisis
- Court appearances (must bring a note from court)
- Medical or psychological tests during the school day. The parent must show evidence (such as a note from the health center) that the tests, could not be scheduled after school.
- Religious holidays (In order to accommodate the religious beliefs of students, all who observe any holiday because of religious beliefs should be marked constructively present upon submitting a valid note from a parent or guardian).
- Visits to special education schools in some cases for students with disabilities
- Other extraordinary situations approved by the School Site Council.

**What Is an Unexcused Absence?**

Some parents think that any absence will be excused as long as the parent sends a note. This is not true. Here are a few examples of unexcused absences—even if the parent sends a note:

- Repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a health care provider verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
- Student needed to baby-sit
- Cutting class
- Family vacation
• Trip to the homeland
• Extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar.

Students are responsible for all the work they miss, even if an absence is excused. When it becomes necessary for a student to be absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the main office which in turn will notify the Attendance Officer, before 10:00AM at 617-635-8937. Upon the student’s return to school, a note from the parent explaining the cause of absence is required.

**Tardy to School:**

Whether walking or using public transportation to get to school, the student is responsible for arriving at school on time. First period begins promptly at 7:45 am; therefore, being late is not acceptable. Students should plan to arrive at school at least ten minutes before the start of their regular school day so they can be in their first period class on time. Any student who arrives after 8am should go directly to their Community Leader’s office in order to be marked in for the day and to obtain a pass to class. Students who are chronically late to school will receive an Administrative after school detention and may also lose the privilege in participating in extra-curricular activities. Failure to serve detention will result in disciplinary action. Parents are to encourage and help their children make it to school on time. If your child is late for school he/she should have a note indicating why he/she is late. *A reason for an excused tardy is the same as one for an excused absence. All other reasons for being tardy are unexcused, even if the parent calls the student in late.*

**Tardy to Class:**

Tardies to class in 2nd-6th periods will be addressed by the specific teacher. If a student misses more than ½ the class time it will be considered an absence. Habitual tardiness will be addressed by the Community Leaders on an individual basis.

**Class Cutting:**

We expect students to attend all of their classes on time. Students who miss more than ½ the period will be marked absent for that class. Students who are absent from regularly scheduled classes or other mandatory activities, without a valid excuse school cannot make up work missed on that day Class cutting is not tolerated and will result in a consequence.

**Early Dismissal:**

Request for early dismissal should be submitted in writing to your child’s community leader. A student will not be released with just a note, *BCLA requires that a parent/guardian be called to confirm request in order for the student to be released from school.* A telephone number where a parent/guardian can be reached in case of an emergency is mandatory. If a student becomes ill they must report to the nurse for an early dismissal.

**Attendance Appeal Board:**

The Attendance Appeal Board is a forum in which a student can present the outstanding circumstances for being absent in order for his/her grades re-instated. The Appeal Board meets each marking term.