

# WASHINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ATTENDANCE POLICY 2900 SUMMARY

Established in compliance with Utah Code, Section 53A-11-101 and 53A-15-1501

Update: August 5, 2016

Purpose: The Washington County School Board strives to make every effort to be in compliance with state law as well as work together with the Fifth District Court to encourage the regular attendance of all Washington County students. The District believes this to be in the best interest of the students and the community. The Board, together with Washington County Schools, is committed to work in harmony with parents/guardian and to assist them with their responsibility to have their children in attendance at school.

**Students are responsible for the completion of any work missed due to absence, regardless of the reason for the absence (excused, unexcused, truant). Work missed will be due from the beginning of the quarter to midterm. Work missed after midterm will be due at the end of the quarter.**

## EXCUSED or Exempt ABSENCE

In order for an absence to be considered an excused absence, the school must be notified by the parent **within a reasonable timeframe determined by the school but not to exceed one (1) week.**

- 1) Phone call, in person, or note
  - Illness or family emergency
- 2) WRITTEN request (**at least one school day prior**)
  - Scheduled family event
  - Scheduled proactive visit to health care provider
- 3) Documented by school
  - Approved school activity
  - 504 Plan or IEP
  - Office excused
  - Court/detention
  - Homebound

### •Chronic Illness

**Documentation from a health care provider is required in validating the seriousness of chronic illness that hinders a student's attendance. It is the responsibility of the parent to schedule a meeting with school administration to formulate an individual attendance plan that will meet their child's needs.**

### •Excessive Excused Absences

**Excused absences will not be considered when referring excessive absenteeism unless it affects the student's academic performance or progress. If academic performance is affected and the student misses ten (10) percent or more school days, steps will be followed to resolve the attendance issues.**

## UNEXCUSED ABSENCE

Defined as a student being absent from his/her assigned class without knowledge of or permission from a parent, legal guardian or school official.

### •Truancy

- 1) School administration must meet with parents and the student to make reasonable efforts to resolve the issue.
- 2) Truancy prevention and intervention must be attempted and proven unsuccessful before a referral can be made.
- 3) The local school board may authorize a school administrator/administrator designee or a law enforcement officer acting as a school resource officer to issue notices or citations of truancy to school-age minors.  
No agent of the school may issue a habitual truancy citation:
  - until a student has been truant at least five (5) times
  - to a school age minor who is less than 12 years of age
  - if the student has at least a 3.5 cumulative GPA
  - is sixteen (16) years of age or older
- 4) The school must notify parents (mail or personal service)

### •Appeal

**The parent shall have the right to appeal a notice of truancy (Mandatory Parent Notification for Violation of Compulsory Education and/or Truancy) in writing to the building-level administrator within ten (10) days of being issued.**

## TARDY

A tardy is defined as reporting to class after the bell to start class has sounded.

- 1) Each school will establish a uniform tardy policy
- 2) A tardy may be excused by a parent when an emergency situation results in the student arriving late to school.
- 3) A student **may not** be excused for tardiness between classes
- 4) All tardies will be recorded on PowerSchool.
- 5) Teachers are directed to develop academic incentives for promptness.

## Steps to Resolve Attendance Issues

Utah Code Section 53A-1-103

*It is the duty of a school board, school district and principal to attempt to resolve attendance problems:*

- 1) Provide counseling by school authorities
- 2) Make necessary adjustments to curriculum and schedule
- 3) Implement appropriate interventions and alternatives
- 4) Provide a list of resources to assist the parent
- 5) Monitor school attendance
- 6) Enlist assistance of community and law enforcement
- 7) Issue a notice of compulsory education violation
- 9) Student Services Director may proceed in referring and reporting student/parent to the Office of the Washington County Attorney or Juvenile Court

## Steps for Correspondence/Communication

- 1) Send a **Courtesy Parent Notification** letter.
- 2) Contact parent by: telephone, text, e-mail, mail, or in person.
- 3) Send a **Parent Notification of Excessive Absences with Compulsory Education Requirements** directing parent to meet with school administration.
- 4) Send **Mandatory Parent Notification for Violation of Compulsory Education and/or Truancy** (by certified receipt).
- 5) Complete **Referral for Violation of Compulsory Education and Request for Juvenile Court Action** and send to WCSD Director of Student Services.

## Student Educational Neglect 78A-6-319

Utah Code 53A-11-101.5: A school-age minor under the age of 14 must comply with the requirement of compulsory education. Washington County School District understands that the parent or guardian is the primary person responsible for the education of their student. In order for educational neglect to be considered by the courts, the following may be used for evidence:

- 1) Child has failed to make adequate education progress
- 2) Child is two-years behind his/her age group in one or more basic skills and is not receiving Special Ed services or systematic remediation.
- 3) Child has been absent from school without good cause for more than 10 consecutive school days or 1/16th of the applicable school term.

