

WILKINSBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT

TITLE: ATTENDANCE

ADOPTED: May 25, 2004

REVISED:

204. ATTENDANCE	
1. Purpose	<p>It is the policy of the Wilkinsburg School District that students enrolled in the schools of this district must attend school regularly in accordance with the compulsory education laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The educational program offered by the Wilkinsburg School District requires the presence of the student and also requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order that the student can be educated to the level required by the academic standards adopted by this school district.</p>
2. Authority SC 1301, 1302, 1327, 1329 Title 22 Sec. 11.11, 11.13, 11.23, 11.25, 11.41	<p>Attendance is required of all students enrolled in the schools of the district during the days and hours that school is in session except that certain absences may be excused.</p>
3. Guidelines	<p>In the case of any and all absences from school, it is the responsibility of the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to make sure that all assignments that the student has missed are made up, followed and/or covered by remedial lessons, as the circumstances may warrant. The amount of time allotted to a student to make up schoolwork missed due to excused absence is at the discretion of the student's teacher(s), but should not exceed a time period equal to the time of the student's absence, and in no case will be longer than two (2) weeks.</p>
Title 22 Sec. 11.22, 11.28 SC 1327, 1329 Pol. 115, 117, 118	<p>A student will be considered to be in attendance if present at any place where the student is receiving approved instruction, or at the place where the student is engaged in an approved and properly supervised work-study or career education program, or at home when the student is receiving approved homebound instruction.</p>

Excused Absences

All absences, lateness and request for early dismissals from school require a written explanation, generally referred to as an “excuse,” from a parent/guardian of the student who is absent, late, or applying to leave school early. Every student is required to submit such a written parental excuse for each absence or lateness from school within a two (2) school day time period following his/her return to school.

Request for early dismissal must be accompanied by a written excuse or be supported by a telephone conversation (or personal appearance) with the student’s parent/guardian.

The above notwithstanding, no student is to be dismissed early from an elementary school unless accompanied by a custodial parent/guardian or other adult pre-designated by the custodial parent/guardian.

Absences, lateness, or early dismissals will be excused and legal if they are caused by:

1. Illness or severe injury.
2. Recurring or repeated illness.*
3. Recovery from injury or illness.*
4. Death in the family.
5. Arrest or detention by law-enforcement personnel.*
6. Quarantine.*

Excuses for the following should be requested, in writing, by the student’s parent/guardian at least three (3) school days prior to the student’s absence:

1. Medical or dental appointment.
2. Serious family illness.*
3. Court-ordered appearance.*
4. Religious holiday.
5. Job interview.

6. College visitation.
7. School-sponsored or other educational tour or trip.*
8. Job shadowing of parent/guardian (one day per year, maximum).

(*To be excused, absences so marked should have confirmation by a physician, officer of the court, etc. on official stationery, copy of the official form, or other official documentation.)

A principal may require an official written excuse for any absence if the principal feels that a parent/guardian may be exaggerating a student's need to be absent.

Unexcused Absences

The accumulation of any combination of unexcused absences and/or tardiness that equals three (3) days of unexcused absence in any academic year will result in the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) being prosecuted by the school district for violation of Pennsylvania's compulsory school attendance laws. This is a responsibility of the district attendance officer.

Each single day of unexcused absence on the part of the same student during the rest of the academic year will constitute grounds for further legal action before the magistrate, which will be similarly handled by the district attendance officer.

Any quizzes or other work missed because of unexcused absences, tardiness or class cutting cannot be made up; this includes assignments not turned in by announced deadlines.

No teacher can be required to help a student make up work missed because of unexcused absence from school or from a particular class.

Tardiness

Unexcused lateness is tardiness. The principals of the school district and the Superintendent will jointly decide on penalties for tardiness in consideration of the age and grade of the student. Tardiness that is prolonged more than two (2) hours on any given day will be recorded as one-half day unexcused absence.

<p>Pol. 233.1</p>	<p><u>Class Cutting</u></p> <p>High School and Middle School subjects are taught in individual classes. Students are required to attend each and every one of the classes to which they have been assigned. Every teacher will record the absence of any student from any of his/her classes and report this information daily to the principal's office.</p> <p>The cutting of individual classes is punishable by placing the student on in-school suspension.</p> <p>Valid excuses for not attending particular classes must be obtained from the principal, a teacher or a counselor. A written reason for the excuse must be included in the excuse note. Such notes to excuse the skipping of classes are to be retained by the principal for at least the duration of the academic year. In cases of excused absences from classes, as with other excused absences, the student must be reminded that s/he is responsible for making up any missed work and finding out about any homework assignments made.</p> <p><u>Attendance in Alternative Assigned Schools</u></p> <p><u>Voluntary</u> - Rules of attendance for students who are enrolled in area Vo-Tech schools or other schools, or who are taking courses at local colleges, universities, or other schools during part of the school day will be, as far as possible, under the same rules as for those who are enrolled in Wilkinsburg District Schools for the full day.</p> <p><u>By Order of the School Board</u> - Students who have been assigned by the order of the Board of School Directors to attend alternative schools are required to be in attendance in all of the classes of those schools to which they have been assigned. Unexcused absences from these schools or classes will be treated by the Wilkinsburg School District similarly as unexcused absences from the Wilkinsburg Schools. In addition, accumulation of eleven (11) or more days of unexcused absence from these schools in any academic year will result in the withdrawing of district financial support for these students' attendance at the assigned schools regardless of what other penalties have been imposed.</p> <p><u>Students Under Suspension</u></p> <p>A student may be suspended for one or more days for violation of school rules or other behavior problems. (See Policy No. 233.1) Students who are absent from school because they have been suspended are considered to be legally absent during the time of suspension. If a student remains out of school beyond the date of the end of his/her suspension, such an absence will be recorded as an unexcused absence unless a valid excuse for such an absence is provided.</p>
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<p>Pol. 233.1</p> <p>4. Delegation of Responsibility</p>	<p>The name of each student under suspension, along with the date that the suspension will end, must be supplied by the student’s principal to the attendance office in a timely manner.</p> <p>In the case of illness or other excusable absence coming at the end of any suspension period, the affected student will appear at school as soon as s/he is able, in accordance with the requirements of this Attendance Policy. The principal of the student’s school may require official confirmation of any excuses for such absence (see responsibility of the principal, below).</p> <p><u>Students Beyond the Age of Compulsory Education</u></p> <p>Students who are over the age covered by the compulsory education laws of Pennsylvania are considered to be mature women and men who are attending school by their own choice. Any such student who accumulates three (3) days of unexcused absence in any academic year, after s/he reaches the age referred to by law, will be subject to expulsion from the Wilkinsburg School District.</p> <p>All district administrators and teachers should bear in mind that persistent attendance problems, whether with certain individual students or in general, are symptomatic of poor or conflicting attitudes toward the school culture, curriculum, and/or instruction. Without excusing truancy or minimizing the responsibility of individual students and their families to ensure regular school attendance, these larger issues and attitudes must be resolved if attendance problems are to be eliminated.</p> <p>The district Superintendent will, in consultation with the building principals, other administrators, and the district attendance officer, formulate rules and procedures for the uniform, effective enforcement of this Attendance Policy. This includes uniform procedures for reporting absences to the attendance officer, and uniform procedures for presentation of legal evidence before the local magistrate when prosecuting parents/guardians for truancy of their children.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the principal of each school to ensure, under the guidance and overall authority of the district Superintendent, that Pennsylvania state attendance laws and this policy are enforced. All excuses for absences, lateness and requests for early dismissal should be addressed to the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled. The principal of the school will determine the validity and reasonableness of all excuses and requests. The principal may require proof, in the form of an official’s or physician’s, etc. note, of the validity of any excuse supplied by a parent/guardian.</p>
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If the principal of a school is not available, the principal's designated replacement or agent will make rulings on excuses and request for early dismissal. In no cases will clerical or security personnel make rulings on the validity of any excuses or requests for early dismissal.

In cases where written excuses are to be supplied in advance of anticipated absences, lateness or early dismissal, the excuses should be delivered to the principal's office at least three (3) days before the anticipated absence.

Each principal (as well as teachers) will coordinate efforts with the attendance officer to maintain accurate, up to date and complete records, as indicated by this policy or as indicated by a spirit of effective teamwork.