

# Student Attendance Policy

## I. Goal:

The goal of Wilmington City School District is that no student should miss any days of school without legitimate excuse. A significant correlation exists between school attendance and academic and lifelong success. **To help ensure that our students achieve that success, Wilmington City School District has joined with all of the school districts in Clinton County in adopting a uniform attendance policy as described below.**

## II. Attendance Guidelines

- A. The attendance policy will cover each semester that the student is enrolled;
- B. Each Student will be permitted a maximum of ten (10) absences per school year without independent verification; i.e. doctor excuse, etc.
- C. Every five (5) instances of tardiness will count as an unexcused absence;
- D. Every two (2) instances of half-day absence will count as an unexcused absence; A half-day absence is considered as missing two or more hours in one school day according to the student's individual schedule without legitimate excuse;**
- E. Until a child accumulates ten (10) absences in a school year, a note or a phone call from the parent or guardian will excuse the absence for one of the reasons listed below. If a note or phone call is not provided to the school by the parent or guardian within 48 hours of the child's return to school, the absence will be unexcused;

## III. Legitimate Excusable Absences

After a student has accumulated ten (10) absences (excused or unexcused) in a school year, absences will only be excused under the following circumstances:

- A. Short Term Personal Illness: For a child who has been absent for ten (10) days in a school year, any further absence for personal illness will require a doctor's excuse. The doctor's excuse must be signed by the doctor and indicate that the student was seen by the doctor personally and state the reason for the student's inability to attend school. Any absence greater than ten(10) days in a school year not accompanied by a doctor's excuse as described above will be unexcused; A doctor's excuse must be provided to the school within 48 hours of the child's return to school or the absence will be unexcused; If an excuse is not accepted by the school, the original will be returned to the student with a notation as to why it was refused, e.g., excuse not provided within 48 hours of the student's return to school, excuse not written by a doctor, etc.; a copy of the refused excuse will be maintained in the student's file;
- B. Long Term Personal Illness: If the child suffers a long term illness requiring extended absence from school, a doctor's excuse must be provided to the school every twenty(20) school days. The doctor's excuse must indicate that the child was seen personally by the doctor, the reason for the child's continued inability to attend school

- and provide specific dates which are to be excused; A doctor's excuse must be provided to the school within 48 hours of the child's return to school or the absence will be unexcused; If an excuse is not accepted by the school, a the original will be returned to the student with a notation as to why it was refused, e.g., excuse not provided within 48 hours of the student's return to school, excuse not written by a doctor, etc.; a copy of the refused excuse will be maintained in the student's file;
- C. **Illness or Injury in the Family:** Independent verification by a physician explaining the nature and severity of the illness or injury to the family member requiring the student to be absent will be required within 48 hours of the student's return to school; If verification is not accepted by the school, a copy of the document(s) and the original(s) will be returned to the student with a notation as to why it was refused, e.g., verification not provided within 48 hours of the student's return to school, verification not from a physician, etc. a copy of the refused document(s) will be maintained in the student's file;
  - D. **Quarantine of the Home:** Absences will only be excused for the length of quarantine as fixed by health officials; Verification from relevant health officials explaining the nature and length of the quarantine must be submitted within 48 hours of the student's return to school; If verification is not accepted by the school, a copy of the document(s) and the original(s) will be returned to the student with a notation as to why it was refused, e.g., verification not provided within 48 hours of the student's return to school, verification not from appropriate health officials, etc.; a copy of the refused document(s) will be maintained in the student's file;
  - E. **Death in the Family:** Three days absence will be permitted, unless a parent or guardian offers a reasonable explanation that more school absences are necessary; the parent or guardian may provide a note to the school to advise the school of the absence, however under certain circumstances, the school may require additional documentation to confirm the student's absence was legitimate;
  - F. **Observance of Religious Holidays:** Any child shall be excused if his/her absence was for the purpose of observing a religious holiday consistent with his/her truly held beliefs, and the parent or guardian has notified the school in writing at least 48 hours prior to the absence;
  - G. **College Visits, Job Interviews, Job Shadowing, Armed Services Tests, Professional Appointments:** The total of these absences may not exceed three (3) days without the specific approval of the principal or superintendent. Students with excessive absences (5 or more days in a quarter) may have such absences denied. The absence must receive prior approval by the school and verification of the student's attendance at the activity must be provided to the school within 48 hours of the student's return to be excused; For events that require absence for part of a day, the student's absence will only be excused for the time necessary to attend the event. For example, if a student has a 1 p.m. professional appointment at an office fifteen minute away, the

student is expected to attend school until it is necessary to leave for the appointment and then immediately return;

**H. Vacations: Vacations shall be excused only if pre-approved by the school principal. Students with excessive absences (5 or more days in a quarter) may have such absences denied;**

I. Other: (Superintendent or Principal Must Approve)

#### **IV. Unexcused Absences-Definitions**

- A. Any absence other than those described above;
- B. No parent or guardian contact upon the child's return to school;
- C. School suspension, expulsion;
- D. Failure to provide documentation of any excusable absence listed above;
- E. Five (5) instances of tardiness will count as an unexcused absence;
- F. Two (2) instances of half-day absence will count as an unexcused absence;**

#### **V. Absence Notification Procedures**

- A. Immediate Notification: As a result of the Missing Child Act, a student's parent/guardian is required to contact the school office between 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on the day of the absence;
- B. If the school does not hear from the parent/guardian, school officials are obligated to attempt to make contact with a parent/guardian to verify the absence. We will attempt to contact you phone. If phone contact is unsuccessful, a postcard will be mailed to you.
- C. A reported absence may still be determined to be unexcused according to the absence policy as outlined in sections II., III., and IV. above;
- D. Ways of Reporting Absences: Absences will be considered reported if either...
  - 1. A parent or guardian calls the school the day of the absence and provides the reason for the absence;
  - 2. A parent or guardian writes a note or provides other required documentation to the school listing the day(s) missed and the reason for the absence(s);
  - 3. School officials make contact with a parent or guardian and receive a satisfactory explanation for the absence(s).