



SECTION

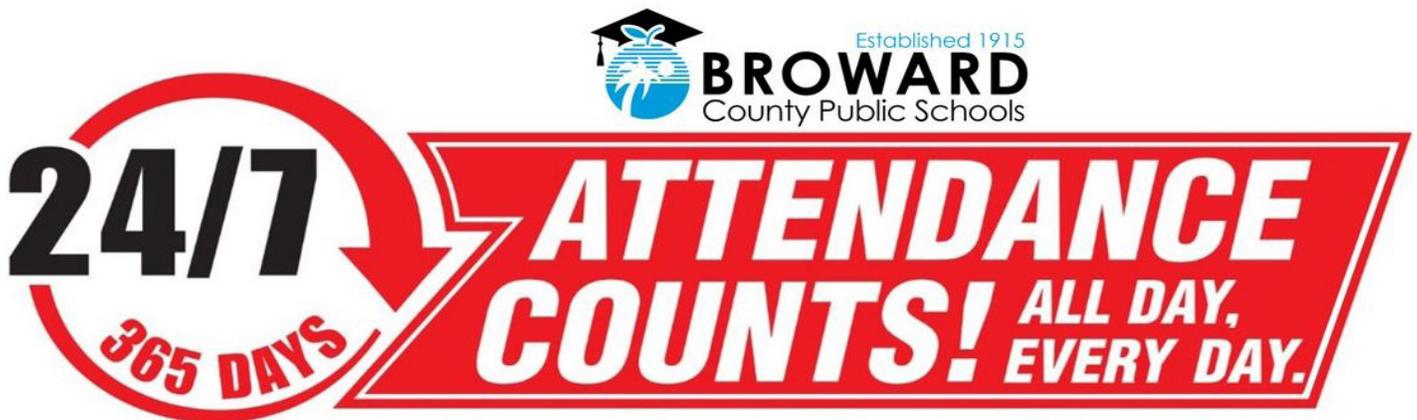
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Attendance

The parent of a child of compulsory school age is responsible for the child's daily school attendance. (F.S. §1003.24). School staff, parents, students, and appropriate State agencies are expected to work together to ensure that laws are obeyed including, but not limited to, referral to the State designated agency for possible court action for extended absence or truancy (F.S. §1003.27). SBBC Policy 5040 outlines the rules that apply to attendance and attendance procedures. You may view this policy and all SBBC policies on the Web at: <https://www.browardschools.com/Page/37754>. Florida law supports the active involvement of parents* until the student graduates from school (F.S. §§743.07, 1003.26, 1003.21). This serves as notice to the parent, that when a student reaches the age of majority (18 years of age) the parent shall continue to perform the parental functions of a dependent student, including, but not limited to, provide reasons for absences and tardiness, permission slips for early release, field trips, other activities, as necessary, and to register or terminate (withdraw) school enrollment, until the student graduates, except as indicated in Section B above.

*When the term "parent" is used, it also refers to either or both parents, any guardian of a student, surrogate or any person in a parental relationship to a student or any person exercising supervisory authority over a student in place of a parent F.S. §1000.21(5).

A student's presence in class is required to maximize the attainment of instructional objectives. For students who demonstrate patterns of non-attendance, interventions may be recommended.



Rights

Students have a right to know how the District defines and handles excused absences, unexcused absences, and tardiness. The District's Discipline Matrix that assigns specific consequences for misbehavior is part of the school's discipline plan. The Discipline Matrix, attached hereto as Appendix A, is hereby made part of this Code of Student Conduct. The Discipline Matrix sets forth the guidelines for assessing consequences for violations of SBBC policies. School principals have the discretion to deviate from these guidelines by assessing an appropriate consequence other than stated in the Matrix if he or she determines in his or her sole discretion that there are mitigating or aggravating circumstances. Principals may deviate by one level when applying consequences per the Discipline Matrix, except for substance related and mandatory expulsion incidents.

Under Florida law, the Superintendent of Schools/designee shall have the authority to assign, provide for the proper placement, and govern students so as to promote the safety and welfare of all students and school personnel. (F.S. §§1001.41, 1001.42, 1001.51 (24), 1003.31, 1003.32 and 1006.08).

Students have a right to make-up work they missed during an absence or suspension.

Students who are married, are parents, or are expectant mothers have a right to remain in the regular school program or to attend a special program designed to meet their needs.

Students have a right to be protected from exposure to communicable diseases and infestations when in school.

Rule

The School Board of Broward County, Florida stresses the importance that all students attend school regularly and remain in school until they graduate from high school. However, "a child who attains the age of 16 years [or age specified by State statute, whichever is older] during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the child files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the District's School Board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce earning potential and must be signed by the child and the child's parent. The school district must notify the child's parent of receipt of the child's declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment" (F.S. §1003.21). Declaration of Intent Forms are available at each school's administration office. Also be aware that students who drop out of school are not eligible to receive a driver's license or driver's permit or will have their license or permit revoked (F.S. §322.091).

NON-ATTENDANCE AND EARLY SIGNS OF TRUANCY

IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY. If your child is not in school, he or she MAY BE showing early signs of truancy through a pattern of non-attendance (SBBC Policy 5040).

Responsibilities

Students have a responsibility to attend all classes.

Students have a responsibility to be on time for school and all classes.

Students have a responsibility to ask their parents to notify the school when they are absent.

Students have a responsibility to ask teachers for, and to complete, make-up assignments, in accordance with the guidelines from Make-Up Work (see SBBC Policy 4000: Student Progression Plan).

Students have a responsibility to get medical advice and/or counseling about how to adjust their schooling for marriage, pregnancy, and parenthood.

Students having or suspected of having a communicable disease are not allowed to attend school. In order to return to school, parents must obtain a doctor's note stating that the student is no longer contagious. Chickenpox is the only infectious disease that does not require a doctor's note.

WHAT IS A PATTERN OF NON-ATTENDANCE?

A student may be establishing a pattern of non-attendance when he or she has an accumulation of tardiness, early sign-outs, and/or unexcused absences that exceed five (5) school days in one marking period or ten (10) school days in two (2) marking periods. If the child study/collaborative problem-solving team finds that a pattern of non-attendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies. (F.S. §1003.26(1)(b)).

A student may be identified as “habitual truant” if he or she has fifteen (15) unexcused absences within ninety (90) school calendar days with or without the knowledge or justifiable consent of the child’s parent, is subject to compulsory school attendance under F.S. §§1003.21 (1) and (2)(a), and is not exempt under F.S. §§1003.21 (3) or §1003.24, or by meeting the criteria for any other exemption specified by law or rules of the State Board of Education. (F.S. §1003.01 (8)).

Parents and students may verify absences at any time at school or at home by contacting the school or by accessing electronic attendance records through Pinnacle.

If after an accumulation of absences as noted above, the principal and/or his designee determines that the reasons for time out of school are invalid, the principal/designee shall refer the student to the Collaborative Problem-Solving Team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing and provide appropriate interventions, and/or the State Attorney’s Office will be notified due to non-compliance with compulsory school attendance laws. (F.S. §1003.26 (1)(b)). However, if the principal and/or designee determine that the reasons for the absences are valid and there are no early signs of truancy, the parent must provide a note (to be kept on file at the school) that provides the reasons for those absences. No further action will be taken.

REPORTING AN EXCUSED ABSENCE

Parents can find absence reporting options on each traditional school’s website. On the website, under **CONTACT**, select **“REPORT AN ABSENCE”** where parents can choose their preferred absence reporting method:

- Online Form: Submit an online form that will provide a confirmation email that includes the date and time of submission
- Voicemail; or
- Handwritten note from parent delivered to the front office

An absence report must come from a parent and give the date(s) of the absence(s) and the reason for the absence(s). Parents **MUST** report these absences within two (2) school days, although school principals **MAY** make exceptions in cases of need. School staff members have a legal right to ask for a written medical excuse. (F.S. §1003.24(4)).

For High School Only, absences for shared-time students must be reported to both schools.

For Elementary Only, the Broward Truancy Intervention Program (BTIP) is a partnership between the Broward State Attorney’s Office and the SBBC. The program is designed to prevent excessive absences through parent notification and accountability, school interventions, and daily monitoring of attendance. Parents are expected to communicate with school personnel regarding absences. Parents who do not comply are referred to the State Attorney’s Office for failure to comply with F.S. §1003.27 which provides that a parent commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided by law, if the parent refuses or fails to have a child attend school regularly or refuses to participate in meetings concerning the child’s truancy.

EXCUSED ABSENCE CRITERIA

Students must be in school. However, when it is necessary to be out of school, absences may be excused for one of the reasons listed below. (Students on field trips, in internal suspension or attending alternative-to-suspension programs are considered present). **Parents must report the absence within two (2) school days of the absence, or the absence will be considered unexcused.** Any absence is unexcused until the school's attendance clerk receives notification from the parent to excuse the absence (refer to section "Reporting an Excused Absence"). **A reason for the absence must be provided and absences can only be excused for one of the eight SBBC allowed reasons for absences.** Some situations will require written documentation from a private physician or public health unit. Excused absences include:

1. Illness. Parents should obtain a copy of the Hospital/Homebound referral packet from the Hospital/Homebound contact person at the school if their child is expected to miss at least fifteen (15) school days due to illness, a medical condition, for social/emotional reasons, or who would miss excessive days intermittently throughout the school year for the same reasons and could benefit from supplemental instruction.
2. Illness of an immediate family member.
3. Death in the family.
4. Religious holidays of the student's specific faith.
5. Required court appearance or subpoena by a law enforcement agency.
6. Special event. Examples of special events include important public functions, education enrichment activities, conferences, State/national competitions, college/university campus tour/visit as well as exceptional cases of family need.
7. Scheduled doctor, dentist appointments, or treatment for autism spectrum disorder by a licensed health care practitioner or certified behavior analyst (F.S. §1003.21(2)(b)).
8. Students having or suspected of having a communicable disease or infestation that can be transmitted are to be excluded from school and are not allowed to return to school until they no longer present a health hazard (F.S. §1003.22). Examples of communicable diseases and infestations include, but are not limited to, fleas, head lice, ringworm, impetigo, and scabies. Students are allowed a maximum of five (5) school days excused absence for each infestation of head lice.

Note: Students on field trips, students who attend alternative-to-suspension programs, or in-school suspension programs are not considered absent.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

It is the responsibility of the school principal to ensure that parents are contacted after each unexcused absence and to ensure that there are specific, appropriate interventions as a result of each unexcused absence. Parents may receive letters to inform them of their student's unexcused absences. These letters are generated from official attendance records.

1. Absences are excused only for the reasons previously listed. If absences are not excused, as defined in the previous section, the absences are considered unexcused. **This does not apply to suspensions.**
2. Students without a completed Certificate of Immunization indicating compliance with the current required schedule of immunizations will not be allowed to attend classes until the certificate is provided or a waiver is obtained. Students who receive the first shot in a series of immunizations but who are late obtaining subsequent shots will be given three (3) school days grace period after which they will be excluded from school and the resulting absences will be considered unexcused.
3. **For Secondary Only**, students 14-18 years of age who drop out of school or who have fifteen (15) unexcused absences within ninety (90) school calendar days and have a driver's license or driver's permit will have their driving privileges suspended by the Division of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles or will not be issued a license or permit if they apply for one. Additional information about procedures and waivers is available from school administration or guidance offices.

SUSPENSIONS

1. Students who have been assigned an out-of-school suspension and choose not to participate at the alternative-to-suspension site will be considered suspended.
2. Students who have been assigned an out-of-school suspension and do not attend all of the assigned days in the alternative-to-suspension site, those days that they do not attend will be considered suspended.

MAKE-UP WORK

For SBBC policies regarding the earning of grades and credits for make-up work, related to absences, field trips and suspensions, see SBBC Policy 4000: Student Progression Plan.

TARDINESS

Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment and can have a negative impact on student achievement. Tardiness may also count toward establishing a pattern of non-attendance that may indicate early signs of truancy. A pattern of non-attendance may be established by an accumulation of tardiness, absences (excused and unexcused), and early sign outs that exceed five (5) school days in a marking period or ten (10) school days in two (2) marking periods.

1. A tardy is excused for the same reasons that an absence is excused. Excused absences/tardiness include illness, illness of an immediate family member, death in the family, religious holidays of the student's faith, required court appearance or subpoena by a law enforcement agency, special event, scheduled doctor or dentist appointments, or communicable disease. In extenuating circumstances, principals and/or their designee may also excuse a tardy for reasons other than those stated if documentation is provided. Parents must follow the same process to excuse a tardy as they do to excuse an absence.
2. Tardiness is defined as a student not being in the classroom when classes are scheduled to begin. A student who has an excused tardy (note or telephone call) should report directly to class after first checking in at the designated check-in area of the school.
3. Excessive tardiness will be addressed on a case-by-case basis to determine if there is a pattern of non-attendance.
4. Tardiness to any class without documentation may be considered unexcused.

EARLY SIGN OUTS

When students are signed out early on an ongoing basis, their academic performance may be negatively impacted. The school system strongly encourages parents to ensure their student is in school for the full school day every day. Signing out early may count toward establishing a pattern of non-attendance that may indicate early signs of truancy. A pattern of non-attendance may be established by an accumulation of tardiness, absences (excused and unexcused), and early sign outs that exceeds five (5) days in a marking period or ten (10) days in two (2) marking periods.

1. All schools will establish procedures for early release that ensure that all students are treated consistently.
2. Students shall not be released within the final 30 minutes of the school day unless the principal/designee determines that it is an emergency or the student has a medical/dental appointment that cannot be reasonably scheduled at another time.
3. Excessive early sign outs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis to determine if there is a pattern of non-attendance.