

Attendance

Regular school attendance is a student and parent responsibility and necessary for mastery of the educational program provided to students of the district. It is recognized that classroom interaction between teacher and student enriches and clarifies knowledge of subject matter beyond the mere accumulation of factual data.

Parents of any child eight years of age and under eighteen years of age shall cause such child to attend school and such child shall have the responsibility to and therefore shall attend for the full time when such school may be in session unless the child is enrolled in an approved private school, an educational center as provided in chapter 28A.205 RCW or is receiving home-based instruction. Parents of any child six or seven years old, who have enrolled the child in school, shall cause the child to attend school for the full time when such school may be in session, unless the child is formally withdrawn from enrollment by the parents. Exceptions may be granted by the superintendent.

Students are expected to be punctual and regular in attendance and obey all rules and regulations of the school as determined by the administration and the Board of Directors.

Each school shall inform the students and parents of the students enrolled in the school about the benefits of regular school attendance, the potential effects of excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, on academic achievement, and graduation and dropout rates, the school's expectations of the parents and guardians to ensure regular school attendance by the child, the resources available to assist the child and the parents and guardians, the role and responsibilities of the school and the consequences of truancy. The school shall provide access to the information before or at the time of enrollment of the child at a new school and at the beginning of each school year. Parents or guardians must date and acknowledge review of this information online or in writing before or at the time of enrollment of the child at a new school and at the beginning of each school year.

A. Definitions

1. Tardy – arriving to class after the final morning bell.
2. Absence – has failed to attend school.
 - a. Half-Day Absence – has failed to attend 1.5 hours or more in the morning or afternoon.
 - b. Full-Day Absence – has failed to attend the majority of hours or periods in an average school day.
3. Community Truancy Board - a board established pursuant to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between a juvenile court and the Richland School District and composed of members of the local community in which the student attends school.

4. Unexcused Absence – student has failed to attend the majority of hours or periods in an average school day and the parent, guardian or adult student fails to submit any type of excuse statement by telephone, e-mail or in writing. It also occurs when the parent, guardian, or adult student submits an excuse that does not meet the definition of an excused absence and has failed to meet the school district’s policy for excused absences.
5. Excused Absence – Meeting one of the following criteria:
 - a. Absence due to illness, health condition, medical appointment, family emergency, religious or cultural purposes, court, judicial proceeding, postsecondary technical school or apprenticeship program visitation, or scholarship interview verified by parent or guardian by telephone, e-mail or in writing. In case of extended illness, the building administration may require a statement from a doctor.
 - b. Participation in a district or school approved activity or instructional program that causes absence from the classroom. To be excused this absence must be authorized by a staff member, and the affected teacher must be notified prior to the absence unless it is clearly impossible to do so.
 - c. Emergency situations. Situation could not be pre-arranged and or prevented by the student. Requires building administration approval to be excused.
 - d. Absence resulting from disciplinary actions – or short-term suspension. As required by law, students who are removed from a class or classes as a disciplinary measure or students who have been placed on short-term suspension shall have the right to make up assignments or exams missed during the time they were denied entry to the classroom if the effect of the missed assignments shall be a substantial lowering of the course grade.
 - e. Excused absence for chronic health condition. Students with a chronic health condition which interrupts regular attendance may qualify for placement in a limited attendance and participation program generally accomplished through the development of a 504 student accommodation plan. The student and his/her parents or guardian may apply to the principal or counselor for such consideration.
 - f. Absence directly related to the student’s homeless status.

The school principal has the authority to determine if an absence meets the above criteria for an excused absence.

If the absence is excused, the student is responsible for making up work missed or doing other work that may be accepted in lieu of work missed.

B. Verification of Excused Absence

An excused absence shall be verified by the parent, adult, emancipated or appropriately aged student; or school authority responsible for the absence within three days of the absence.

C. Conditions - Grades, Credits and Graduation

Students' grades in courses may be affected by absence or tardiness if daily attendance and participation are essential to complete course and is detailed for students in the course syllabus. Students shall receive written notification that the student's actual attendance is essential to the goals and learning objectives of that particular class.

Legal References:	WAC 392-400-325	Statewide definition of excused and unexcused daily absences
	RCW 13.34.300	Failure to cause juvenile to attend school as evidence under neglect petition
	Chapter 28A.225	Compulsory School Attendance and Admission

Richland School District No. 400

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