

WALLINGFORD- SWARTHMORE SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: ATTENDANCE

ADOPTED: July 17, 2006

REVISED: February 9, 2015
June 26, 2017

204. ATTENDANCE	
<p>1. Purpose SC 1301, 1326, 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.12, 11.13, 11.41, 12.1 Pol. 200</p> <p>SC 1326, 1327</p>	<p>The district requires that school-aged students enrolled in district schools attend school regularly, in accordance with state laws. The educational program offered by this district is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The district recognizes, as well, that all children cannot be educated in the same manner and has therefore provided a variety of formats to meet the individualized needs of each student.</p> <p>Any child who has attained the age of eight (8) years on or before September 1 of any year, or who has entered school at an earlier age and who has not yet attained the age of seventeen (17) years, shall be deemed to be “compulsory school age” and shall be required to attend school regularly during the entire school year, except as provided by the Pennsylvania Public School Code of 1949, as amended.</p>
<p>2. Definition SC 1326 Pol. 113</p>	<p>Regular attendance shall be defined as attending school for the full day on each day during which school is in session. Students for whom individualized educational programs have been developed are expected to attend all sessions provided for in their program. Students are expected to attend all sessions unless properly excused by school authorities.</p>
<p>3. Authority SC 1301, 1302, 1327, 1329, 1330 Title 22 Sec. 11.11, 11.23, 11.25, 11.41, 12.1</p>	<p>Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in district schools during the days and hours that the school is in session, except that a principal or teacher may excuse a student for temporary absences when the student receives satisfactory evidence of mental, physical, or other urgent conditions which may reasonably cause the student's absence. Such excuses and/or requests for temporary absences or temporary exemptions from compulsory school attendance may be investigated and recommendations made through the Office of Educational Data & Registration. All exemptions from compulsory school attendance or requests for alternative educational programming must first be approved by the Superintendent.</p>

<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.25</p>	<p>The district considers the following conditions to constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:</p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.23, 11.25</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated district staff during school hours for health-related reasons. Absences of three (3) or more days will require a doctor's note. 2. Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth, or territory. 3. Quarantine. 4. Family emergency 5. Recovery from accident. 6. Required court attendance. 7. Death in family. 8. Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, FFA or combined 4-H and FFA group, upon prior written request.
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.41 SC 1501.7(f)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Observance of a religious holiday observed by bona fide religious group, upon prior written parental request. Release from attendance for this purpose shall not be recorded as an absence on the student's attendance record. 10. Non-school-sponsored educational tours or trips (see separate section). 11. College or post-secondary institution visit, with prior approval. 12. Other urgent reasons. Urgent reasons shall be strictly construed and do not permit irregular attendance.
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.26 Title 22 Sec. 11.25</p>	<p>Absences shall be treated as unlawful until the district receives a written excuse explaining the absence, to be submitted within three (3) days of the absence.</p>
<p>SC 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.22, 11.23, 11.28 Pol. 115, 116, 117, 118</p>	<p>Attendance need not always be within school facilities. A student will be considered in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the district; the student is receiving approved tutorial instruction or health care; the student is engaged in an approved and properly supervised independent study, work-study or career education program; the student is receiving approved homebound instruction.</p>
<p>SC 1546 Title 22 Sec. 11.21</p>	<p>The district shall, upon written request of the parents/guardians, release from attendance a student participating in a religious instruction program. All such instruction for a given child shall not require the child's absence from school for more than thirty-six (36) cumulative hours per school year, and its organizers must inform the district of the child's attendance record. The district shall not provide transportation to religious instruction. A penalty shall not be attached to an absence for religious instruction.</p>

<p>SC 1329, 1330 Title 22 Sec. 11.34 Pol. 113, 113.3 SC 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.5, 11.32</p> <p>SC 1327</p> <p>SC 1327, 1327.1</p> <p>SC 1330</p> <p>SC 1330 Title 22 Sec. 11.28 SC 1327.1 Pol. 137 Title 22 Sec. 11.34 Pol. 117</p> <p>34 CFR 300.111 34 CFR 300.534</p>	<p>All students of compulsory school age who reside in the district shall be subject to the compulsory school attendance requirements. The district shall excuse the following students from the requirements of attendance at the schools of this district, upon request and with the required approval:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On certification by a physician or submission of other satisfactory evidence and on approval of the Department of Education, children who are unable to attend school or apply themselves to study for mental, physical or other reasons that preclude regular attendance. 2. Students enrolled in nonpublic or private schools in which the subjects and activities prescribed by law are taught 3. Students attending college who are also enrolled part-time in district schools. 4. Students attending a home education program or private tutoring in accordance with law. 5. Students fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) years of age whose enrollment in private trade or business schools has been approved. 6. Students fifteen (15) years of age, and fourteen (14) years of age who have completed the highest elementary grade, who are engaged in farm work or private domestic service under duly issued permits. 7. Students sixteen (16) years of age regularly employed during the school session and holding a lawfully issued employment certificate. <p><u>Special Needs and Accommodations</u></p> <p>If a truant or habitually truant student may qualify as a student with a disability, and require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.</p> <p>For students with disabilities who are truant or habitually truant, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.</p>
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<p>SC 1333(c)</p>	<p><u>Discipline</u> The district shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment or transfer for truant behavior.</p>
<p>SC 1329(a.1) Title 22 Sec. 11.26</p>	<p><u>Educational Tours/Family Trips</u></p> <p>The Board may excuse a student from school attendance to participate in an educational tour or trip for entertainment purposes not sponsored by the district if the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student must be in good academic, disciplinary, and attendance standing. 2. The parent/guardian must submit the Trip Preapproval Request Form at least one week prior to the absence. 3. The student's participation must be approved by the Building Principal one week in advance of the scheduled trip.
<p>SC 1333, 1354 Title 22 Sec. 12.1</p>	<p><u>Truancy And Absence</u></p> <p>The district shall report to appropriate authorities infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of seventeen (17). The Board shall issue notice to those parents/guardians who fail to comply with the requirements of compulsory attendance that such infractions will be prosecuted according to law.</p>
<p>SC 1332, 1333, 1338, 1354</p>	<p>Truancy of Students Sixteen (16) Years of Age or Younger - After accumulation of three (3) illegal days absence from school, the student's parents/guardians shall receive a First Notice and his/her counselor will receive information copies of the notice. Further action will be determined in accordance with administrative procedures or by administrative decision, in accordance with applicable law and regulations.</p> <p>The Administration will issue a written notice to the parents/guardians inviting them to a School Attendance Improvement Conference, where the Administration will develop and implement a School Attendance Improvement Plan. Administrative procedures shall be maintained to address the following areas, including but not limited to, loss of credit for class participation, detention, Saturday school, in-school suspension, , petition for truancy, and referral to community agency.</p> <p>Truancy of Students Seventeen (17) Years of Age or Older - After accumulation of three (3) unexcused days absence from school, the student will be referred to the counselor. Further action will be determined in accordance with administrative procedures or by administrative decision, in accordance with applicable law and regulations.</p>

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Tardiness to School - Tardiness to school shall be handled according to administrative procedures or administrative determination. An accumulation of time missed from school due to unexcused tardiness can equate to full days of truancy and may be prosecuted in the same manner as other unlawful absence.

Class Cutting - Absence from specific classes during the school day is also considered an unexcused absence and the accumulation of time missed from class can equate to full days of truancy. Such situations may be prosecuted in the same manner as other unlawful absence.

Habitual Truancy

A student whose unlawful or unexcused absences total six (6) in a given school year is deemed habitually truant. The procedure when a child is habitually truant depends upon whether the student has reached fifteen (15) years of age.

For students under fifteen (15) years of age, the student will be referred to either a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program or the county children and youth agency (CYS) for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act. Additionally, the school may file a citation against the parent of a habitually truant child under fifteen (15) in a magisterial district court.

For students fifteen (15) years of age and older, the student will either refer the child to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program or file a citation against the student or parent/guardian in a magisterial district court. If the child incurs additional absences after a school refers that child to an attendance improvement program, or refuses to participate in an attendance improvement program, the school may refer the child to the local CYS agency for possible disposition as a dependent child.

	<p>Ten-Day Letters - When a student has been absent for more than ten (10) days in a school year without a doctor's excuse, the school administrator will send a letter to the student and the student's parents/guardians, informing them that any further absence would be considered illegal or unexcused, unless a doctor's excuse covering the absence period is furnished. The school principal, in consultation with the counselor, will take this action when, in the principal's judgment, the ten (10) absences have not been justified, even though excused by the parent/guardian. Any additional days of absence for tours or trips may not be excused by the Building Principal.</p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.41</p>	<p>The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students, parents/guardians and staff about the district's attendance policy by publishing such policy in the student handbook, parent newsletters, district website and/or other efficient methods.</p>
<p>4. Delegation of Responsibility</p> <p>SC 1501, 1504 Title 22 Sec. 4.4, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3</p> <p>SC 1332, 1339</p> <p>SC 1333, 1338, 1354 Pol. 218, 233</p>	<p>The Superintendent shall maintain administrative procedures for the attendance of students, which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure a school session that conforms with requirements of state law and regulations. 2. Govern the keeping of attendance records in accordance with law. 3. Impose on truant students appropriate incremental disciplinary measures for infractions of school rules, but no penalty may have an irredeemably negative effect on the student's record beyond that which naturally follows absence from classroom learning experiences. 4. Identify the habitual truant, investigate the causes of truant behavior, and consider modification of the student's educational program to meet particular needs and interests. 5. Ensure that students legally absent have an opportunity to make up work.

