

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

The school laws of Maine require regular school attendance (Maine State Law requires attendance until the age of 17). Each STUDENT is expected to be in attendance except when there is an emergency. Student involvement in daily classroom activities is essential. Absences from school may result in failing grades, withdrawal from classes and/or other disciplinary action. It is imperative that PARENTS plan family trips/vacations to coincide with scheduled school vacations and plan professional visits to doctors, dentists, orthodontists, etc. during non-school hours. Attendance is a vital part of a successful educational experience. IT IS THE PARENT/GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO SUBSTANTIATE AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. ALL UNEXCUSED CLASS/SCHOOL ABSENCES WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY TIONS.

If a student accumulates 6 or more absences (unexcused), a parent/guardian meeting will be set up with the administration.

### OFFICE ATTENDANCE

#### A. Excused Absences

1. Belfast Area High School and the State of Maine defines an excused absence as:
  - a. Personal illness
  - b. An appointment with a health professional that cannot be made outside the regular school day
  - c. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day
  - d. A family emergency (verification may be requested)
  - e. A planned absence for personal or educational purposes that has been approved by the school and a form has been filled out.

For any excused absence, known ahead of time, the student is responsible for getting assignments **before** the absence.

2. **Procedures to follow:** When school time must be missed, please follow this procedure:

- a. When school time must be missed **THE PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST CALL THE SCHOOL** before 9 am on the morning of the absence. Please give the student's name and the reason for the student's absence. The student must report to the office upon his/her return to school to get a pass to be admitted to classes.

If it is not possible to call the school on the day of the absence, a note must be presented to the office before the student will be admitted to classes with a pass. The note must contain the STUDENT'S FIRST AND LAST NAME, the date(s) student was absent, and the reason for the absence. It must be signed and dated by the parent/ guardian. ANY STUDENT **NOT BRINGING IN A NOTE OR HAVING A PARENT/GUARDIAN CALL WITHIN TWO DAYS OF THE ABSENCE** WILL BE UNEXCUSED AND APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS WILL BE APPLIED.

- b. Absences for medical appointments or educational purposes require verification. The verifications may be in the form of an appointment card or note on medical or institution letterhead.
- c. Any student that has been absent for any length of time must report to the office to pick up a re-admittance slip, which must be presented to each teacher.
- d. Students are allowed to make up all work missed for an excused absence. The student should ask for the missed assignments and/or make arrangements with the teacher to make up any tests.

#### B. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

1. As stated, any absence not meeting the above criteria for an excused absence is an unexcused absence.
2. Any absence not excused 2 days after the return to school will be considered an unexcused absence.
  1. Any work missed due to an unexcused absence will result in a zero.
  2. By State Law a student may be deemed "habitually truant" after 10 unexcused absences.
3. Leaving school without permission is an unexcused absence. Permission after the fact is not acceptable.

#### C. APPEALS

All absence issues are subject to appeal to the Administration.

#### D. TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

A student not in his/her first period class at **7:38AM** shall be considered tardy. STUDENTS ARRIVING TARDY, PRIOR TO THE END OF THE FIRST PERIOD, MUST REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE OFFICE RECEIVE A PASS TO CLASS. For the first three tardies, per quarter, students will be admitted to class without penalty. On the fourth tardy and each subsequent tardy, per quarter, the student will receive an office detention.

Students tardy after the first period in the morning will be subject to the excused and unexcused policy as stated above.

#### **E. DISMISSALS**

1. Parents are strongly urged not to dismiss students from school unless there is a family emergency or an appointment that cannot be made at another time. **This includes study halls and lunch.**
2. Students may be dismissed for personal illness\*, observance of religious holidays, family emergencies, planned absences for personal or educational purposes which have prior approval by school administrator and appointments with a health professional that **CANNOT** be scheduled outside of the regular school day. An appointment card from the doctors' office must be presented in order to receive an excused dismissal card for scheduled health appointments. If a parent wishes to remove their student from school for reasons other than the above the student will receive an unexcused dismissal. **FAILURE TO GET DISMISSED BY THE OFFICE WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR LEAVING THE SCHOOL BUILDING WITHOUT PERMISSION.**

School work missed because of early dismissal must be made up within 24 hours unless special arrangements have been made with the teacher(s).

1. Students requesting dismissal from school on a given day must present the office with a note from their parent/guardian prior to 7:38 am. The note must have **student's full name, date, time of dismissal, reason for dismissal, and be signed by the student's parent/guardian. If dismissal is for an appointment the appointment card must also be presented at this time.**

\*Students wishing to be dismissed because of illness are to report to the nurse (office is located downstairs across from the guidance office). After receiving a dismissal pass from the nurse, students must report to the office to sign out. **IF THE NURSE IS NOT IN THE NURSE'S OFFICE, STUDENTS SHOULD REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE OR TO BE DISMISSED.**

#### **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

1. All students are expected to attend all classes and study halls unless excused by the office. **Regular class attendance** is vital to successful performance in the classroom. We will not condone unexcused class or study hall absences.
2. Each teacher will create a **participation grade** that will be representative of each student's attendance and effort in the class.
3. The day a student returns from an excused absence(s), it is the student's responsibility to arrange for make-up work. The individual teacher will determine make-up work policy.
2. Students who have an **unexcused absence** from class will receive a **zero** for that class and a zero for any assignments or assignments due that day in the class.
3. Unexcused tardiness to class will be subject to disciplinary action.
1. Students missing classes due to any school events must get assignments ahead of time to avoid late work. This is the **student's** responsibility.
2. Students leaving on a planned vacation with their parents must fill out a pre-approved form BEFORE the absence.
3. Any student missing more than 6 classes (excused or unexcused) in a quarter may be asked to have parent(s)/guardian(s) come in to meet with teacher(s), Guidance Counselor, and Administration.

#### **PERFECT ATTENDANCE**

**Perfect attendance is desired by most, sought by some, achieved by a few, and respected by all. To achieve perfect attendance, a student must be in school everyday of the school year for at least four class periods. The only exception is if the student is away from school for the day because he or she is involved in a school-sponsored activity.**