

## ATTENDANCE

- 1) See ATTENDANCE in District section.
- 2) Excused Absences (illnesses, family emergencies, parental requests and medical-type appointments approved by the high school office). All doctors notes must be submitted within one week of the original appointment in order to be considered for exempt status.
  - a) To be excused, the office must receive a phone call by 9:00 a.m. from a parent/guardian.
  - b) After 9:00 a.m. the office will call the home listed on the student directory.
  - c) \*If no contact is established with parents/guardians on the day of the absence, this absence will be recorded as unexcused or truant. (If parent/guardian is unavailable, a call must be received before 9:00 a.m. the following morning to be excused or the absence will be considered unexcused/truant).
  - d) Students may only excuse their own absence if they no longer live at home and documentation of emancipation is on file at the high school office. Such documentation will eliminate contact between school and parent/guardian regarding attendance, etc.
- 3) Parental Request Absences: Any absence requested by the family and approved in advance by the administration. Parental requests will not be accepted for over-sleeping, missing the bus, repair of vehicles, shopping without parents, employment or babysitting outside of the home, recreational trips and vacations without parents, or missing class to study for another class. Students will be allowed two additional absences in the attendance policy for a college or technical school visit, and/or a military physical. Students may be excused for the periods missed while on a college campus visit or for a military physical provided the student receives permission from the high school office prior to the absence, has a prescheduled appointment with an official representative of the institution, participates in all orientation activities and submits a signed verification of attendance from the campus official or military recruiter. These three days are to be cumulative over the course of a student's attendance record and may be used at the beginning of the junior year. This does not allow for three days each semester, but rather for three total additional days during a student's last four semesters. Students may be excused for family vacations or to attend South Dakota High School Activities state events. Grouping is not allowed for parental request absences. All such absences will be counted as one-for-one. Lessons assigned and class discussions for the duration of a parental request absence becomes the responsibility of the student and should be made up in advance or immediately upon return to school. If a student is failing a course, a parental request will be granted providing the student makes up the time after school, before school or in Saturday School working on that subject.
- 4) In order for a student in grades 9-12 to participate in or attend an extracurricular activity, the student must be in class three consecutive periods prior to dismissal time on the day of that activity unless approved by the principal. A violation of this rule will be considered truancy.
- 5) In cases of suspension, absence not excused or truancy, the student may not be able to make up work and may receive a zero, at the discretion of the administration.
- 6) All absences, excused or unexcused, at Brandon Valley High School will be processed as follows:
  - a) Nine (9) or more absences in a semester are considered to be excessive by the Brandon Valley School District. After nine absences from any one class period in a semester, a contract will need to be signed by the parent, student, and administration. A copy of the contract will be provided to the parent. The parent will be informed of the consequences of additional absences. Example of contract:

### Brandon Valley Attendance Contract

#### Attendance Contract Expectations

- I agree to come to school every school day and report to my first class on time.
- I agree to stay in school the entire school day and attend all class periods.
- I agree to be on time for each class period.
- I agree to complete any assigned Saturday Schools, in-school suspensions (ISS), and out-of-school suspensions (OSS).

- The parent(s) agree to structure the home environment to improve school attendance. This includes arranging a reliable source of transportation to and from school for the student.
- A medical professional or school official must excuse all future absences. Medical notes must be provided to the school's attendance secretary immediately upon return to school.
- If absences continue without medical documentation or the approval of a school official, a legal petition of truancy may be filed on the student and/or parent(s) with the State's Attorneys' office in accordance with the state compulsory attendance law. If a petition is filed, the student and parent(s) may be summoned to a juvenile court hearing.

In accordance with District Policy, this Attendance Contract will carry over from the current year to next year and supersedes the provision in this Regulation that 9 absences are considered excessive. Any/all absences in violation of this Attendance Contract will be considered excessive.

South Dakota Codified Law 13-27-1 State Law: 13-27-1: "Any person having control of a child, who is not younger than five or older than six years old by the first day of September, or any child who, by the first day of September, is at least six years old, but who has not exceeded the age of eighteen, shall cause the child to regularly attend some public or nonpublic school for the entire term during which the public school in the district in which the person resides, or the school to which the child is assigned to attend, is in session, until the child reaches the age of eighteen years, unless the child has graduated or is excused as provided in this chapter. However, the requirements of this section are met if a child who is at least sixteen years of age enrolls in a general education development test preparation program that is school-based or for which a school contracts and the child successfully completes the test or reaches the age of eighteen years."

Truancy is defined as any absence not approved by the school, classified according to the following categories:

**Excused/Exempt:**

- Death in the family/funeral
- Family emergency (serious illness)
- Court Summons with court note
  
- Illness of student with medical note
- Illness when student is sent home by school official
- Dental or medical appointments that cannot be made on Saturday (exempt with doctor note, excused without doctor note)
  - Four or more consecutive illness-related absences will require a doctor's note to be exempt
- Religious holidays
- Hazardous weather
  
- Principal authorized absence

**Unexcused:**

- Skips
- OSS – Not in attendance
- Student illness without parent communication
- Parent/Guardian request\*
- All other absences

Medical documentation from a doctor, dentist, or other professional must be specific, including the date of the appointment and the duration of the absence. Example: "Chuck had an appointment at the clinic on January 14. Please excuse him from school on January 14 and 15." An absence from school without the authorization of the parents or the school prior to the absence shall be considered truancy. All doctors notes must be submitted within one week of the original appointment in order to be considered for exempt status.

- b) When a student has been absent from any class eleven (11) times during a semester, he/she may lose credit in that course and will be dropped from the course with an "F" recorded. A student may be referred to the board of education for long term suspension in the event a student no longer has at least three (3) valid classes.
- c) Exceptions to the above policy are:
  - i. A student may lose credit for the 11th absence if he/she has a truancy or suspension.
  - ii. For excused absences 11-15, the student would be given the option of making up time as designated by the principal.
  - iii. Grouping. Grouping is the combining of related absences. Student/parent should arrange to meet with the principal to discuss the grouping of absences. Grouping will take place only if a student exceeds ten (10) absences and will only return a student's attendance back to ten (10). A doctor's note or similar documentation is necessary for grouping.
  - iv. Any truancy, out of school suspension or in-school suspension will automatically exclude a student from grouping absences. An unexcused absence may exclude a student from grouping.
- d) Absences will be counted in the following manner:
  - i. School sponsored activities do not count as absences. This includes school sponsored athletic contests, music, debate, field trips, and any other activity approved by the school administration. Absences for school sanctioned activities are not exempt.

- ii. Absences due to prolonged illness, hospitalization, counseling or a series of medical treatments may be grouped whenever the condition is supported by a physician.
  - iii. Absences due to bereavement or serious illness in the student's immediate family may be grouped.
  - iv. Students may be excused and counted for school attendance up to five (5) days per year to attend events of state or nationally recognized youth programs of educational value.
  - v. All other absences, excused or unexcused, will count one-for-one days missed (vacation, hunting trip, tournament, work, truancy, parental request).
  - vi. Students must be in attendance at least 40 minutes of the period in order to be considered present.
  - e) Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the administration.
  - f) Students may be excused for any other exceptional reason with approval by the Administration (Detention Center, Child Abuse Center, severe weather as to endanger the health or safety of student).
  - g) In the event a student needs transportation while at school, such transportation arrangements will be reviewed by the school with the parents. The solicitation of transportation by the student with another student will not be approved.
7. Unexcused Absences: Absences not excused by the administration include (but are not limited to) oversleeping, car trouble, bad roads, missed ride, inclement weather, staying home to study for a test in another class and cutting a class.
8. Truancy is defined as any absence not approved by the school. One day, or any part thereof, equals one violation.