

Attendance Policy And Laws

- Students in grades K-8 that accumulate more than ten absences face the possibility of being retained. Students in grades 9-12 that accumulate more than five absences in a semester class or ten days in a year long class face the possibility of losing credit.
- When your child is absent, you must turn in a medical note or parent note within three days of their return to school.
- A parent note will excuse a maximum of ten days in grades K-8. In grades 9-12, a parent note will excuse a maximum of five days in a semester class or ten days in a year long class: *These notes will only be accepted if the absences are considered to be lawful.*
- If notes are not handed in within the 3 day time frame, your child's absences are considered unlawful.
- There are serious consequences for unlawful absences.

Lawful Absences:

- Absences that are excused by a doctor or other medical professional
- Death in the immediate family (parent, grandparent, or sibling)
- A recognized religious holiday
- Special circumstances approved in advance by the principal. *You must get approval from an administrator. (Teachers do not have the authority to approve absences for special circumstances).*
- If your child has an illness that will cause him/her to be absent in excess of five days, you must call the school to determine if homebound instruction is appropriate. You must have medical documentation verifying the need for homebound.
- A parent note for illnesses may excuse up to ten days in grades K-8. In grades 9-12, a parent note for illnesses may excuse up to five days in a semester class or 10 days in a year long class.

Unlawful Absences:

- An unlawful absence is any absence that is not excused under the conditions mentioned above.

Consequences:

- A total of three consecutive or five total unlawful absences is considered to be truancy.
- Five unlawful absences will result in a referral to Truancy Mediation/Intervention meeting.
- Refusal to attend truancy mediation/intervention meeting and accumulating two or more unlawful absences after the scheduled mediation/intervention meeting date will result in a referral to family court.
- Parents convicted for educational neglect may be placed under court order, fined up to \$50 a day, and/or imprisoned for up to thirty days in jail for each unexcused absence thereafter.
- Students between the ages of twelve and seventeen years of age may be prosecuted for truancy in family court. This could result in the child being placed in a DJJ facility for a period of 30 to 90 days and will result in the child having a criminal record.
A Court Order may remain in effect until a child reaches 17 years of age or completes high school.

Berkeley County School District