

**ABSENCES AND EXCUSES**

**Excused Absences**

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness (Education Code 48205)
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer (Education Code 48205)
3. Medical, dental, optometrical, or chiropractic appointments (Education Code 48205)
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family (Education Code 48205)
  - a. Excused absence in this instance shall be limited to one day if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state. (Education Code 48205)
  - b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/ daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any relative living in the student's immediate household. (Education Code 45194, 48205)
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law (Education Code 48205)
6. Participation in religious instruction or exercises in accordance with District policy
  - a. In such instances, the student shall attend at least the minimum school day. (Education Code 46014)
  - b. The student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four school days per month. (Education Code 46014)

In addition, a student's absence shall be excused for justifiable personal reasons. Advance written request by the parent/guardian and approval of the principal or designee shall be required for absences for: (Education Code 48205)

1. Appearance in court
2. Attendance at a funeral service
3. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion

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- 4. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours during a semester
- 5. Employment interview or conference

In addition, if a student is the custodial parent of a child, his/her absence shall be excused when the child is ill or has a medical appointment during school hours. (Education Code 48205)

**Method of Verification**

When students who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

- 1. Written note from parent/guardian, parent representative, or student if 18 or older (Education Code 46012)
- 2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
  - a. Name of student
  - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative
  - c. Name of verifying employee
  - d. Date or dates of absence
  - e. Reason for absence
- 3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. A written recording shall be made, including information outlined above.
- 4. Physician's verification
  - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, District staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.

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**Truancy**

1. Students shall be classified as truant if absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. Such students shall be reported to the Superintendent or designee. (Education Code 48260)

The parent/guardian of a student classified as a truant shall be notified of the following: (Education Code 48260.5)

- a. The student is truant
- b. The parent/guardian is obligated to compel the student to attend school
- c. The parent/guardian who fails to meet this obligation may be guilty of an infraction of the law and subject to prosecution pursuant to Education Code 48290-48296
- d. The parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the student's truancy
- e. Alternative educational programs are available in the District
- f. The student may be subject to arrest by a probation officer, a peace officer, a school administrator, an attendance supervisor or his/her designee under Education Code 48264 if found away from home and absent from school without a valid excuse
- g. The student may be subject to suspension, restriction or delay of his/her driving privilege pursuant to Vehicle Code 13202.7
- h. It is recommended that the parent/guardian accompany the student to school and attend classes with the student for one day

**Maximum Number of Absences for Grades 7 and 8**

Attendance accounting for maximum number of absences for students in grades 7 and 8 shall be based upon the semester and is not meant to penalize students for absences, but to emphasize the importance of school attendance.

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The maximum number of allowable absences, excused or unexcused, in any one semester is fourteen days. Attendance is recorded on a period by period basis; therefore, each class is considered on an individual basis. The staff shall develop appropriate alternatives for students who exceed the maximum number of absences allowed. The student may be required to repeat the course; in extreme circumstances, the student may be retained at a grade level.

A student who has an injury or a serious illness which requires an absence of ten days or more shall be dropped from the regular attendance rolls and be placed on home or hospital teaching. Such a student shall not have these days counted in the cumulative total of absences.

All absences for any reason shall count toward the fourteen days maximum allowable, except as described in the paragraph above.

Absences that count toward the maximum allowable are

1. Illness absences;
2. Medical or dental appointment absences;
3. Suspension absences;
4. Family vacation absences; and
5. Unauthorized absences.

As soon as it becomes apparent that a student is having an attendance problem, the guidance specialist will send the first of three progressive letters to the parents indicating the nature of the problem and possible consequences for continued absences.

A student who accumulates more than fourteen days of absence because of a legitimate medical reason, a special religious holy day, or a personal family tragedy, may present documentation and a request for a waiver for the absence in question to the principal or guidance specialist. A review panel will be convened to determine the alternatives in ameliorating the problem. The waiver request and documentation will be evaluated and approved by the principal and review panel with valid documentation. The decision of the panel will be conveyed to the parents and they will be given an opportunity to respond to the decision that is rendered. Parents/guardians may appeal the decision of the panel to the superintendent/designee if they feel that a mutually agreeable solution was not reached.

**ABSENCES AND EXCUSES****Maximum Number of Absences Grades 9-12**

Attendance accounting for maximum number of absences for students in grades 9 through 12 shall be based upon the semester and is not meant to penalize students for absences, but to emphasize the importance of school attendance.

The maximum number of allowable absences excused or unexcused, in any one semester, is fourteen days. Attendance is recorded on a period by period basis; therefore, each class is considered on an individual basis. Any student who is absent more than fourteen times from a class cannot earn a grade or credit in that course. An alternative for such students may be enrollment in adult and/or summer school or continuation education.

A student who has an injury or a serious illness which requires an absence of ten days or more will be dropped from the regular attendance rolls and be placed on home or hospital teaching. Such a student shall not have those days counted in the cumulative total of absences.

All absences for any reason shall count toward the fourteen days maximum allowable, except as described in the paragraph above.

Absences that count toward the maximum allowable are

1. Illness absences;
2. Medical and dental appointment absences;
3. Suspension absences;
4. Activity absences;
5. Family vacation absences; and
6. Unauthorized absences.

Where there is a problem, the home and school must work together to improve attendance. Thus, the following notification schedule will keep parents informed about the student's attendance and the consequences of excessive absence:

1. Four days of absence: letter to parent;
2. Eight days of absence: letter to parent requesting a parent/school contact;

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- 3. Twelve days of absence: letter to parent pointing out the approaching limit and consequence;
- 4. Fourteen days of absence: letter to parent indicating the student has reached the limit; final warning and conference with the student;
- 5. Fifteen days of absence: student, dropped from class; no grade or credit; schedule rearranged; alternatives determined.

A student who accumulates more than fourteen days of absence because of a legitimate medical reason, a special religious holy day, or a personal family tragedy may apply for a waiver, in writing, to the principal. The application must have documentation signed by the doctor. The waiver request will be evaluated and approved by the principal and team guidance with valid documentation.

Students who are dropped from a course (and who are earning a passing grade) may complete the work by attending approved adult education courses, by completing the course in summer school, or by repeating the course in a subsequent semester.

**Tardy Policy for Brea Olinda High School**

Teachers will determine when students are tardy and will mark attendance sheets to indicate tardiness. On a student's first tardy, the teacher will inform the student both orally and in writing of the potential for serious consequences of continued tardiness. A written tardy citation outlining all the steps of the policy will be provided to the student. Subsequent unexcused tardiness will result in the following steps:

- 2nd tardy: Teacher assigns student to after school detention and notifies the guidance department.
- 3rd tardy: Mailer will be sent to parents notifying them of the accumulated tardies and outlining the consequences of continued tardiness.
- 4th tardy: Teacher conferences with student and phones parent.
- 5th tardy: Attendance office phones parents; mailer sent notifying parents of student's status.
- 6th tardy: Counselor calls parent.

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7th tardy: Counselor conferences with parent and student, notifying them that the student will be dropped on next tardy.

8th tardy: Student dropped from class--no grade, no credit. In cases with legitimate extenuating circumstances, the parent may appeal in writing to the principal and, at the next two levels, to the superintendent and the Board of Education.

The Superintendent or designee shall gather and transmit to the County Superintendent of Schools the number of referrals and types of referrals made to the school attendance review board and the number of requests for petitions made to the juvenile court. (Education Code 48273)