

# *Hempfield School District*

## *Attendance Practices*

### *Elementary*

#### *Absences*

All students will be given a booklet of excuse cards at the beginning of the school year. These cards are the official school documents that may be used when a student is absent. Parents are to complete the excuse blank and return it to the school within three days after the absence. Failure to return a properly filled out and signed excuse card within three days after the absence will result in the time missed being counted unexcused/unlawful. (Board Policy No. 204)

#### *Absences: Pre-approved*

In cases where parents schedule an educational trip during the school year, the parent should complete and submit a pre-approved absence form to the building principal at least one week in advance of their planned departure. Parents should contact the school in order to obtain the proper form to make the written request. It is understood that the student is responsible for work assigned during this absence. After returning to school, all assignments must be completed and returned to the teacher(s). Any tests given during this absence must be made up after the student's return. **At the discretion of the building principal**, students may be lawfully excused for educational trips. Any days of absence, which are not excused, will be considered unlawful. Parents are expected to reference our school calendar to avoid scheduling conflicts with our state-mandated (PSSA) testing dates.

#### *Change of Status*

Parents are asked to notify the school immediately should there be any changes in:

- Your home address
- Your home or business telephone number
- Your emergency contact person
- Change in custodial arrangements (or agreements)
- Change to any court documents
- Change in medical condition or medications dispensed at the school

### *Tardiness*

All students arriving late to school must report to the office with an excuse. Students arriving after 11:00 AM or leaving school prior to 1:05 PM will be considered absent 1/2 a day. Parents of students who are excessively tardy may also be subject to prosecution according to the compulsory school attendance laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

### **Middle School**

#### *Absence - Excused*

At the beginning of the school year, each student is provided with a book of excuse blanks. These excuses are to be used for all absences, early dismissals, and tardies.

Students are required to submit a properly filled out excuse form within three days following an absence; failure to do so will result in time missed being counted illegal. Detention could be assigned for failure to bring properly filled out excuse forms to school. Students using all of their excuse forms should secure additional forms in the office. Absences are classified as excused due to the student's personal illness, death of a family member, court summons, physical incapacity, observance of religious days, or trips with parents that have been prearranged with the administration. Students who are absent from school may not attend school functions on the day of an absence. Such activities include dances, athletic practices, and sporting and musical events.

#### *Anticipated Absences*

In cases where parents schedule vacations during the school year and the student has no alternative but to accompany his parents, the student should secure a Pre-Approved Absence Form from the office at least one week in advance of their planned departure. The form must be completed and returned to the office prior to going on the trip.

#### *Early Dismissals and Tardiness*

Students arriving after 11:00 a.m. will be considered absent 1/2 day a.m.; students leaving prior to 11:00 a.m. will be considered absent 1/2 day p.m..

All students arriving late to school must report to the office with an excuse to be admitted to class or homeroom. When a student has accumulated three tardies to a class (including homeroom) or to school, one detention will be assigned. Subsequent tardiness will result in an

additional detention for the 4th and 5th tardy. Two detentions will be assigned for the 6th tardy. Excessive tardiness could result in in-school suspension. The fact that a parent has sent a written explanation to the school does not excuse the absence. An absence becomes excused only when the administration has classified the reason for the absence as such. Under no circumstances is a student permitted to sign a parent's name.

### *Change of Status*

Parents are asked to notify the school immediately should there be any changes in:

- Home address
- Home or business telephone number
- Emergency contact person

## **High School**

### *Daily Attendance / Excuses*

Students are expected to attend school every day that school is in session. Excused absences will be allowed for illness, death in the family, quarantine, court summons, physical incapacity, and special events arranged in advance with the grade level attendance officer. The fact that a parent has sent a written explanation to the school does not excuse the absence. An absence becomes excused only when the administration has classified the absence as such.

An excuse form must be given to the grade level attendance officer the day the student returns to school from an absence. If the student does not return with an excuse the first, second or third day after an absence, the absence will be designated as unlawful (under 17 years of age) or unexcused (17 years of age or older).

Students who are absent for 3 or more consecutive days must submit a valid doctor's excuse upon return to school. A doctor's excuse is a notification on an excuse form signed by a medical practitioner verifying that the student was treated by the practitioner during the absence for an illness requiring absence from school.

### *Early Dismissals*

The school will excuse early dismissals only for events which absolutely cannot be scheduled at another time. A request for early dismissal should be submitted to the attendance office before 1st period on the day of dismissal. At the approved time for the dismissal, the student should

report to the grade level attendance officer and sign out and sign back in upon return. No student is permitted to leave the school building or school grounds without parent and administrative permission.

### *Anticipated Absences*

Absences for educational reasons such as family trips and college visitations require the completion of an Anticipated Absence Request Form from the grade level attendance office. This form must be completed by the parent and taken to the grade level principal to request an excused absence at least one week prior to the scheduled event. If the trip is excused by the grade level principal, the student should then take the form to each teacher to gather assignments for the days to be missed. All homework, class work, tests and quizzes should be scheduled for make-up within five days of the student's return to school. Should plans change, the student should notify the appropriate attendance office to rescind the absence request.

### *Excessive Absences*

After each unexcused day, the parent or guardian will be sent a letter. After 3 unlawful absences, a student under the age of 17 may be subject to prosecution and fines for non-compliance with state compulsory attendance laws. After a student has been absent from school for 10 days, the parent or guardian will receive a letter confirming the days of absence and restating the policy of attendance. After the student has been absent from school for a total of 10 days, a second letter will be sent to the parent requiring a doctor's excuse for all future absences. All absences after this communication for which doctor's excuses are not submitted will be classified as illegal or unexcused (depending on the age of the student).

Any student over the age of 17, with more than 10 consecutive days of absence, will be dropped from the rolls. Any student over the age of 17 with more than 45 unexcused days absent will also be removed from the rolls. Any student who compiles 10 unexcused absences for the school year will begin to lose School Privileges on an incremental basis for violating the Hempfield School District's Attendance Policy (Policy #204). School Privileges include but are not limited to the following: parking, field trips, school dances (including the prom), graduation, etc.

### *Activity Eligibility*

To be eligible to participate in an activity, students must be in attendance by 9:30 a.m.. Students who are absent from school on Friday may participate in Saturday or Sunday activities at the discretion of the coach or advisor. Any student who has been prosecuted under Act 29 (see Act

29 of 1995 in this section of the handbook) will not be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the following marking period.

### *Make-Up Work*

Students who are absent for excused reasons are responsible for the completion of all missed work within a reasonable amount of time. It is the student's responsibility to discuss missed work with each teacher and schedule make-up tests, quizzes or assignments upon his/her return to school. Students who are absent for unexcused reasons may receive a failing grade for missed work and are responsible for all academic information presented on the day of an illegal or unexcused absence.

### *Tardiness – School & Class*

Students who are not in their assigned classrooms by 7:40 a.m. must report to their grade office and sign in as tardy. For all students who arrive after 8:10 a.m. (10:10 a.m. for a delayed opening), a regular excuse form completed by a parent/guardian must be submitted. If the student does not return an excuse within three days, the tardy will be designated unexcused or illegal.

After the student has accumulated a total of 10 tardies to school during the school year, a letter will be sent to the parent confirming the dates. For students who accumulate 15 tardies to school during the school year, a letter will be sent to the parent requiring a doctor's excuse for all future tardies. All tardies after this communication for which doctor's excuses are not submitted will be classified as unexcused and academic credit may be reduced for the time missed because of these tardies.

Students who arrive after 11:15 a.m. will receive one- half day of attendance. Students arriving after 1:30 p.m. will be considered absent for the full day on the date in question.

Tardiness for reasons such as oversleeping, missing the bus, and car problems are not excused tardies. Assignments missed due to unexcused tardiness may receive reduced credit.

For unexcused tardies, detention will be assigned beginning with the third tardy to school. Students tardy to class will be assigned detentions after the third tardy to the same class