



- Continuous Reflection and Improvement
- Academic Excellence and Innovation
- Respectful and Responsible Relationships
- Engaged and Equitable Community

## **RANDOLPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES FOR ALL STUDENTS**

**SECTION 1: REGULAR ATTENDANCE** in all classes, every day, is essential for student's growth and life-long achievement. Regular school attendance is linked to higher graduation rates, lower drop-out rates, higher college attendance rates and higher paying jobs. It is therefore most important that a specific set of expectations be established to ensure a clear understanding of the conditions under which a student may have an allowable absence. All absences must be verified with proper documentation. Failure to submit proper documentation will result in an unexcused absence.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) have a legal responsibility to ensure their child is in school every day school is in session. It is a high priority for the Randolph Public School District to monitor attendance and address the reasons why some students are chronically absent. In addition, it is the mission of the Randolph Public School District to work with families and community partners to ensure students arrive at school on time, every day, ready to learn.

***A student who misses more than 10% of school due to excused and unexcused absences is considered chronically absent. (e.g. school is in session for 30 days and the student is absent a total of 3 or more excused and unexcused days)***

**Chronically absent students may be ineligible to move from one grade to the next. Circumstances surrounding promotion or retention will be considered by the school principal on an individual basis.**

### **SECTION 2: STATE LAWS REGARDING ATTENDANCE**

The following State Laws outline the responsibilities of parent(s)/guardian(s) for monitoring and preventing children's absences from school:

- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts states that parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to ensure children between the ages of 6 to 16 attend school. (*Chapter 76, section 1 of the MA General Laws*)
- School administrators shall implement a Pupil Absence Notification Program as discussed in greater detail below (*Chapter 76, section 1B of the MA General Laws*).
- Educational professionals are mandated to report to the Department of Children and Family (DCF) their reasonable belief that a child is suffering from educational neglect.

- If truancy persists, School Attendance Officers may file a Child Requiring Assistance application with Juvenile Court as appropriate. If a student is in elementary school, a criminal complaint for Failure to Cause School Attendance may be filed against the parent. (<http://www.mass.gov/courts/selfhelp/family/cra.html>)
- Families that receive benefits under Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children are subject to specific attendance requirements.

### SECTION 3: TRUANCY

- A student is considered truant when he/she has an unexcused absence.
- A parent/guardian note does not excuse an absence if the absence does not meet the criteria to be excused.

**Pursuant to School Committee Policy JH, students may be excused temporarily from school for the following reasons:**

- **Illness or quarantine (see further below)**
- **Bereavement or serious illness in family (parental note required)**
- **Weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child.**
- **Religious observances for those religious holidays determined by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (parental note required).**
- With regard to absences for illness or quarantine, please find the following:
  - Absences should be supported by a valid doctor's note specifying the dates to be excused.
  - Sick visits should be supported by a doctor's note specifying the date of the appointment.
  - Routine medical appointments should be supported by a doctor's note specifying the date of the appointment. (Well child visits should be scheduled after school hours, or at the beginning or end of a school day so students can still be in school for as much of the school day as is possible).
  - ***Please note: Doctor's notes will be accepted when submitted to the school nurse within two (2) weeks following an absence. Doctor's notes are legal documents and may not be tampered with or altered in any way. School officials are authorized to verify all information presented.***
- Absences for legal matters involving the student will also be excused. To excuse such absence, ***a note from a court officer or copy of the summons must be provided and filed in the office.***

**Family vacation days that DO NOT coincide with school vacation days WILL NOT be considered excused absences.**

#### **SECTION 4: TARDIES**

A student who is not in his/her school at the start of the school day is considered tardy. Any school delays declared by the superintendent will not count as a tardy for students.

For middle and high school students, unexcused tardies to a class may result in school detention or other school disciplinary infraction.

#### **SECTION 5: DISMISSALS**

All requests for early dismissals must be submitted in writing and given to the principal or designee at the start of the school day or, if possible, the school should be given a 24-hour notice. Teachers are teaching students up to the final dismissal time. While early dismissals are discouraged, it is recognized that emergencies sometimes arise. **Frequent or chronic early dismissals shall result in a parent -school conference to determine whether additional action is necessary.**

#### **SECTION 6: MAKE UP WORK**

Work missed due to an absence shall be made up in a timeframe established by the classroom teacher. Teachers have at least 24 hours to provide students with any makeup work. Pre-established deadlines (i.e., papers, projects, homework) must still be completed on-time by the student. It is the responsibility of the student to make up all work missed because of absence.

Failure to do so may result in a failing grade due to insufficient or unsatisfactory academic performance.

**LONG TERM ILLNESS (3 days or more) necessitates a homework request by the student's parent/guardian. Teachers will be notified by a guidance counselor or the assistant principal in such cases.**

#### **SECTION 7: PRINCIPAL NOTIFICATION**

Each principal will notify a student's parent/guardian within three (3) days of the student's absence in the event the parent(s)/guardian(s) has not informed the school of the absence.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be notified when a student has at least five (5) days in which the student has missed two (2) or more unexcused classes/periods or has five (5) or more unexcused absences in the school year. A reasonable effort will be made to schedule a meeting with the building principal or designee, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the student to develop action steps for student attendance. As appropriate, the school may invite relevant school staff and staff from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

#### **SECTION 8: ABSENCE NOTIFICATION**

On the day a student is absent, the school issues a robocall around midmorning to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) that their child is absent. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to verify and confirm via a phone call, email, or a note regarding the child's absence.

***Please note: The Randolph Public Schools District attendance procedures as set forth in this document supersedes all other school-based handbook and procedures.***