

Blairstown Elementary School Attendance Procedures

As a result of a mandated NJ State educational code, we are **required** to redefine "excused" and "unexcused" absences.

1. **"Excused absence"** is a student's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for the observance of a religious holiday pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16; for Take Your Child to Work Day, or any other absence determined to be excused by the New Jersey Department of Education.
2. **"Unexcused absence that counts toward truancy"** is a student's absence from school for a full or a portion of a day for any reason that is not excused as defined above or for any unexcused absence that does not count toward truancy listed below.
3. **"Unexcused absence that does not count toward truancy"** is a student's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for the reasons listed below:
 - a. The student's illness supported by a written letter from the parent upon student's return to school
 - b. The student's required attendance in court
 - c. Where appropriate, when consistent with Individualized Education Programs, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. § 794 and 705(20), and individualized health care plans
 - d. The student's suspension from school
 - e. Family illness or death supported by a written letter from the parent upon the student's return to school
 - f. Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day
 - g. Family vacations
 - h. An absence for a reason not listed above, but deemed unexcused that does not count toward truancy by the Principal upon a written request by the student's parent stating the reason for the absence and requesting permission for the absence to be an unexcused absence that does not count toward truancy.

In order to avoid issues of truancy and possible retention it will be necessary to identify the reason for an absence. **A written note will be required for each absence, which will need to be sent to school when your child returns to school. All notes used for consideration for the BES Attendance Policy must be turned into the Attendance Office within one day of the absence.**

Late to School/Early Dismissal

Students who arrive after the bell rings at 8:35am are considered late to school. If the student is late to school five times, a meeting with the principal may be required. The school day starts at 8:25 a.m. Students who are dismissed before the end of the day (prior to 3:15), must have a parent note presented to the attendance secretary (Ms. Hardy) or must call the attendance secretary directly before they are allowed to be dismissed from school.

The following times are used for recording Late to School/Early Dismissal occurrences:

Early Dismissal- Student leaves school after 1pm but before 3:15pm

Half Day AM- Student arrives between 10:30am-12:00pm

Half Day PM- Student leaves after 12:00pm but before 1pm

Tardy- Student arrives after 8:35am but before 10:30am

It is very important and helpful that you call the attendance secretary when your child will be absent from school. **Ms. Hardy's number is 908-362-6111, ext. 105 in the Main Office.** If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call our office at 908 362-6111 ex.104. *Additional information including consequences for truancy can be found in Attendance Policy 5200.*