

A LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

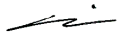
September 2017

Dear Parent/Guardians:

Recently, Ohio law on how school districts record and monitor student absences changed. Our district has spent the summer working to align our policies and practices to the changes in law and the recently released guidance from the Ohio Department of Education. Information contained within this brochure identifies our past practice as compared to the new law that we are required to follow, beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

If you have any questions on the changes regarding the recording and monitoring of student absences, please contact your building principal or me (330-335-1301 or ahill@wadsworthschools.org).

Sincerely,



Andrew J. Hill, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Wadsworth

City Schools

STUDENT ABSENCES

*Recording & Monitoring
Student Absences*



WADSWORTH CITY SCHOOLS

524 Broad Street
Wadsworth, OH 44281

Phone: 330-336-3571

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PAST DISTRICT PRACTICE VS. NEW LAW

Past District Practice: Absences recorded by half day or full day

New Law: Absences recorded by hour

Past District Practice: Doctor appointments, where a student missed two (2) hours or less of school, did not count as an absence for the student.

New Law: All instructional time missed counts as an absence. The only time during the school day that does not count as instructional time is a student's lunch period.

Past District Practice: Letter sent to parent/guardian(s) when a student was absent, without *legitimate excuse, for ten (10) days

New Law: Letter sent to parent/guardian(s) when a student misses thirty-eight (38) hours in a month or sixty-five (65) hours in a year, with or without a *legitimate excuse.

New Law: A student who misses thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, forty-two (42) or more hours in a month, or seventy-two (72) hours in a school year without a *legitimate excuse is considered habitually truant and is referred to an Absence Intervention Team.

*Legitimate excuse = excused absence

TERMINOLOGY

The following is the terminology our district will use:

Excused Absence: An excused absence is one that falls into one (1) of the following categories, as found in Wadsworth City School District Board of Education Policy 5200, *Attendance*, and is communicated by the parent/guardian to school officials:

1. personal illness (a written physician's statement verifying the illness may be required);
2. illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child;
3. quarantine of the home;
4. death in the family;
5. necessary work at home due to absence or incapacity of parent/guardian(s);
6. observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday;
7. out-of-state travel (up to a maximum of twenty-four (24) hours per school year that the student's school is open for instruction) to participate in a district-approved enrichment or extracurricular activity;
8. such good cause as may be acceptable to the superintendent;
9. medically necessary leave for a pregnant student in accordance with Policy 5751; and
10. service as a precinct officer at a primary; special or general election in accordance with the program set forth in Policy 5725.



Please note: Vacations fall under No. 8, provided the process identified in the student handbook for the student's school was followed.

Unexcused Absence: An unexcused absence occurs when a parent/guardian notifies the school of an absence but it does not fall into one (1) of the categories listed under *Excused Absence*.

Truant: A student is marked truant when a parent/guardian does not contact the school and does not respond when a call is placed notifying the parent/guardian that a student is not in school.

Tardy: The mark of tardy, if applicable, is defined in the student handbook for each building. Time tardy counts toward the hour totals listed under *Past District Practice vs. New Law*.

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