

## 3. Attendance

### 3.1. Attendance

California law requires that all children ages 6-18, not otherwise exempted or excluded, attend school full time. Parents are legally responsible for their child's attendance at school during the entire school year. Parents of truant students may be held civilly and criminally accountable for their child's truancy.

### 3.2. Absences

When your child is absent from school, please phone the school office as soon as possible. Some school sites have separate phone numbers to report absences. When leaving a message regarding your child's absence please provide the following information:

- Student's name
- Date(s) absent
- Reason for absence
- Grade/teacher
- Your name and your relation to child
- Daytime phone number

Please be aware that the State does not reimburse the District for any absence. Every day a student is absent results in a loss of revenue to the District. The District is still required to keep accurate records of student attendance and reasons for absences. Per Education Code 48205, excused absences include absences due to: illness, medical appointments, funeral services for a member of the immediate family, jury duty, time with a member of the immediate family who is on active duty, and for justifiable personal reasons upon written request by the parent/guardian and approval of the principal. Absences for justifiable personal reasons may include, but are not limited to, religious holidays, attendance at religious retreats (four hours per semester maximum).

When a student has had excessive absences due to illness, the parent/guardian may be required to have a physician verify subsequent absences due to illness.

Unexcused absences may affect a student's academic standing.

Please contact your child's principal, vice-principal, or dean if you know that s/he is going to be absent for an extended period of time of a week or more. Short-term independent study may be approved by the Principal, depending upon the circumstances. Short-term independent study for a period of more than 21 calendar days must be requested in writing, indicating 1) the reason for request 2) the date of departure 3) and the date of return. The request must be submitted to the Director of Student Services for consideration. Completion of independent study will help your student's academic achievement and will allow the District to collect ADA funds for the student. **Note: the District discourages families from taking vacations at times that cause students to be absent from school and will not approve independent study for purposes of vacations or other family trips that are not urgent.**

### 3.3. Dismissal Due to Illness

A child may be sent home early from school if s/he is ill or appears to be suffering from an infectious or contagious disease. Parents/guardians or emergency contacts listed will be contacted to pick up the child.

### 3.4. Truancy

State law requires that a child between the ages of 6 and 18 attend school. Pursuant to Education Code 48260, any student subject to compulsory full-time education or to compulsory continuation education who is 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, is a truant and shall be reported to the District's attendance supervisor.

- **Habitual Truant:** A pupil is deemed a *habitual truant* if s/he is reported as a truant three or more times per school year. However, no pupil shall be deemed a habitual truant unless an appropriate district officer or employee has made a conscientious effort to hold at least one conference with a parent or guardian of the pupil.
- **School Attendance Review Board (SARB):** Any student deemed a habitual truant shall be referred to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB). The purpose of the SARB is to work collaboratively with the students and their families, and explore and utilize suggested interventions that will be successful for the pupil involved. Should SARB determine that its intervention services are insufficient or inappropriate to correct the truancy, or the pupil does not follow SARB's directions, then a referral may be submitted to the district attorney or county probation office.

### 3.5. Student Records

The District shall maintain a complete, permanent cumulative record on each student. These records are housed at the student's current school and maintained by the school secretary, registrar, or records clerk. Parents/guardians of students under eighteen (18) years of age have the right to inspect all of the school records of their children, including cumulative, guidance, and health records.

### 3.6. Emergency Cards

It is vitally important that parents fill out new student emergency cards every fall in order to have the most current contact information as well as the current status of any health conditions or medications. **A separate form is required for each medication.** Please contact the school office for the required forms, and update these forms should any of the information change during the school year.

### 3.7 Family Preparedness Plans

Every family should have a Family Preparedness Plan. Have a plan so that a trusted adult can care for your child if you cannot. This plan should include emergency numbers, a list of important contact information and a file with important documents. On the District website, as well as at your school, there is a copy of a Family Preparedness Plan you can adapt for your family's needs, with a special section that addresses the concerns of immigrant families.

<http://www.berkeleyschools.net/resources-for-immigrant-families/>