

SECTION: STUDENTS

TITLE: ATTENDANCE

<p>1. Purpose</p>          <p>2. Definitions</p>	<p>The Wilson Area School District expects all students to attend school on a regular basis and all parents to abide by State and local regulations regarding attendance. Absenteeism and tardiness interrupt the student's educational program and interfere with academic success.</p> <p>The School District encourages cooperation and communication among parents, teachers, and administrators in upholding the laws regarding attendance, enforcing District policy, and providing the maximum benefits of education to our students.</p> <p><u>Excused Absences</u></p> <p>Excused absences are administrative authorized absence from schools and granted for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Personal illness</li><li>2. Death in the immediate family</li><li>3. Major religious holidays</li><li>4. Emergencies – parents should contact the school as soon as possible</li><li>5. Educational family trip – excused absences may be granted by the building principal, not to exceed five (5) days in the school year, for educational family trips. At the discretion of the Superintendent, up to ten (10) additional days in the school year may be granted by the Superintendent, with prior approval. Consecutive days beyond fifteen (15) total days will require that the student be withdrawn from the District.</li></ol> <p>Permission to be absent for an educational trip will be granted only under the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The parent or guardian must complete a</li></ol>
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“Request for Excused Absence” form, available in each school office, prior to the trip.

2. Approval for excused absences, not to exceed a total of five (5) days for the school year, will be at the discretion of the building principal and granted to students who do not have attendance issues.
3. Consideration will be given to the student’s attendance record and academic progress.
4. Requests for additional excused days, not to exceed ten (10) days for the school year, must be submitted to the Superintendent in writing, prior to the trip.
5. Absences for educational family trips, which have not received prior approval, will be deemed unexcused.

Truant

Three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year by a child subject to the compulsory school attendance law.

Habitually Truant

Six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year by a child subject to the compulsory school attendance law.

Unexcused Absences

Absences other than for the reasons already explained will be considered to be unexcused. When a student is charged with an unexcused absence, parents are liable to legal action under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania. Examples of unlawful absences include: cutting classes, skipping school, missing a bus, illegal employment and any other excuse that is not acceptable according to the School Code. Failure to provide a doctor’s excuse, when required, will also be considered to be unexcused.

School time missed, due to chronic tardiness to school without a written legal excuse, may be accumulated and converted to an equivalent number of days of unexcused absence.

When an absence is determined as unexcused, the parents or

guardian will be notified electronically, by phone or by letter after each of the first two offenses.

The District will notify parents or guardians in writing within ten (10) school days of the student's third unexcused absence that the child has been truant.

When a student has reached six (6) days of unexcused absences the District will notify parents or guardians in writing within ten (10) school days of the student's six (6) unexcused absences that the student is habitually truant. The student will also be required to participate in an attendance improvement conference. This conference is defined, under law, as a conference where the child's absences and reason for absences are examined in an effort to improve attendance.

The following individuals will also be invited to the conference:

- The student
- The person in parental relation to the student
- Other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource
- Appropriate school personnel
- Recommended service provider
- Magisterial District Judge

The District is required to make meaningful attempts to encourage parent participation in attendance improvement conferences by advance written notice and attempts to communicate via telephone. The District will hold the conference even if the parent and/or the student declines to participate or fails to attend. A written attendance improvement plan will be developed during the conference. Any further offenses after the attendance improvement conference could result in legal action against the parent or guardian.

When a student's absence is unexcused, the student may not have the opportunity to make up missed schoolwork

#### Returning to School Following an Absence

When a student is absent from school, the District requires that a written excuse accompany the student upon his/her return to school. The excuse must indicate the dates of absence, give the reason for the absence, and should bear the date on which it was written. Failure to produce a written excuse could result in an unexcused absence.

When a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, a

doctor's excuse may be required when the student returns to school. Doctors' excuses may be required for all absences if a student is excessively absent from school. Excessive absenteeism shall constitute absences exceeding ten (10) days for the school year. Doctor's excuses and request for excused absence shall not be counted toward the days specified above. Parents will be notified when doctor's excuses are required.

Participation in School Related Activities

Students who are absent from school will not be permitted to attend or participate in school-sponsored activities held the day or evening of the absence. This would include field trips, dances, concerts, plays, sporting events, etc. The only exception is absence due to approved trip/activity involvement as a representative of the school (student field trips, conferences, etc.) or planned pre-approved college trips that cannot be otherwise scheduled. The District will approve up to three (3) days per year for college trips for Juniors and Seniors. Any additional college visits will be counted as unexcused absences. Attendance on Friday is required for school-related activities scheduled on Saturday or Sunday, unless otherwise pre-approved by the principal.