

Unexcused Absence

Parents/guardians must provide a written explanation for the absence of their student. All absences should be treated as unexcused until the school district receives a written excuse explaining the reason(s) for an absence. Parents/guardians and students should submit the written explanation within three (3) school days of the absence. If no written explanation is provided, the absence is recorded as unexcused. Likewise, if a written explanation offers an excuse for absence that is not allowable (as outlined in Board policy no. 204 of this attendance manual), the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Unexcused absences may include, but are not limited to, absences from school due to parental neglect, parental consent for reasons other than those specifically excused, illegal employment, and truancy. If a written explanation is questionable in nature, the absence will be investigated. An absence only becomes excused when the school codes it accordingly. Students who are under the age of 17 with an unexcused absence, as per the Pennsylvania Department of Education definition, are considered truant.

Excused Absence

An excused absence from school is broadly defined by the state. Excused absences from school at the Warwick School District include the following:

- ◆ Illness
- ◆ Prearranged medical, dental, clinic, or hospital appointment
- ◆ Court appearances
- ◆ Funeral of relative
- ◆ Educational trips pre-approved by the appropriate administrator - limit of two (2) annually, not to exceed a total of (5) school days
- ◆ Pre-approved annual visits to post-secondary options: (Elementary and Middle School students will not be excused to attend college visits.)
 - Colleges, trade schools or job sites-with a maximum (non-cumulative) of:
 - 9th – 1 day
 - 10th – 1 day
 - 11th - 3 days
 - 12th - 3 days

- ◆ Authorized school activities
- ◆ Family emergencies per principal discretion
- ◆ Observance of student's religious holiday
- ◆ Participation in religious instruction program - maximum of 36 hours annually
- ◆ Attendance at PA State Farm Show - one (1) day only
- ◆ Participation in a 4-H, FFA or combined 4-H and FFA project - upon written request
- ◆ Hunting - maximum of three (3) days annually
- ◆ Performance/Non-school Sponsored Activities - 1-15 pre-approved cumulative school days

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative excused absences verified by parental notification are permitted during a school year. All cumulative excused absences verified by parent note beyond ten (10) days will require an excuse from a physician. Students who have excused absences have the opportunity to make up any work missed. It is expected that students complete the work within the time frame allotted by school staff.

Educational Trips

A student may be permitted to take a limit of two (2) educational trips per school year, with his/her parents/guardians, not to exceed a total of five (5) school days. These trips are to be pre-approved and comply with program requirements as described in the *Student Handbook*. When an educational trip requires an absence of one day from school, an *Educational Trip Request Form* must be completed and given to the building administrator for prior approval. When an educational trip requires an absence of two or more consecutive days, the *Educational Trip Request Form* must be completed and returned to the Superintendent's Office at least one (1) week prior to the trip. See the Appendices section for a copy of this form. The form is also located on the district and school websites.

Educational trips for the first and last ten (10) days of school and during scheduled testing times (for state-mandated assessments – PSSA, Keystone Exams; final exams) are strongly discouraged and may not be approved during these windows. The testing calendar is available in your student's school office.

Educational trips will not be approved for students who are failing their subjects or have unexcused absences. Shopping trips and similar activities will not be approved as educational trips.