
Bridge Creek Public Schools

Student Attendance Policy

2017-2018



Explanation

Bridge Creek Public Schools understands the extreme importance of student attendance. Attendance is widely considered to be a significant factor that can positively effect a students success in school. For this reason one of the district goals for Bridge Creek is Attendance. This is also a goal at the state level. State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister has identified student attendance to be so significant that she has tasks all Oklahoma schools to increase their efforts to improve student attendance.



We have identified two avenues that we believe will help with attendance at Bridge Creek. The first item was to update our attendance policy. (see the below attachment) This new policy changed the definition of an excused absence. With the new policy student, absences will be considered excused if the absence is accompanied with documentation of a medical/ counseling appointment or a funeral. Please make sure documentation is turned in as soon as possible to prevent absences from being recorded as unexcused. All other absences will be recorded as unexcused. Students will be in violation of the policy and lose credit if they have more than 10 **UNEXCUSED** absences in any course. The second effort will be the use of Graduated Sanctions. This service is offered by the Grady County District Attorney's office and is intended to prevent students from losing credit due to attendance. BCMS piloted this program last year. Students with 7 unexcused absences will be referred to this program.

Thank you for your support!

Kenny Ward
BCMS Principal

Attendance Policy

In order to receive credit for a course, a student cannot be absent more than ten (10) days each semester. Oklahoma State law requires school officials to keep attendance records and report excessive absences to the District Attorney's office. Ten (10) unexcused absences within a semester constitutes excessive and thereby may be reported to the District Attorney's office.

Students **with a passing grade**, who exceed ten (10) absences in a semester will receive a "no credit" (NC) on his/her transcript for the semester. Students without a passing grade will receive an F. Continued absences will fall under the district's discipline policy. Exceptions for extenuating circumstances or school-related activities may be requested through the building principal. Reasonable effort will be made to notify the parent before a "no credit" is given due to excessive absenteeism.

ATTENDANCE RELATED INFORMATION

Students must be IN the classroom when the tardy bell has stopped ringing or he/she will be counted tardy. All tardies are counted unless the student has a pass from a staff member.

If a student arrives 15 or more minutes late, that student will be counted absent rather than tardy and will be recorded as absent from the class, and it will count toward the ten (10) days allowed per semester. Students must be in class at least 25 minutes before checking out, or they will also be counted absent. The principal, counselor, or teacher must issue a statement of explanation in order for the tardy to be excused.

Graduated Sanctions

When a student accumulates 7 unexcused absences they will be referred to the Grady County District Attorney's Office's Graduated Sanctions program. When a student is referred to the graduated sanctions program the District Attorney's office will contact the parent/guardian to schedule a hearing.

EXEMPT ABSENCES

The following exceptions will not count against the student with respect to the attendance policy.

Exempt Absences Include:

1. Any event that is approved as a school activity
2. Any medical treatment that is substantiated by a physician's written statement. THE PHYSICIAN'S STATEMENT MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL AND ARE SUBJECT TO VERIFICATION BY A SCHOOL OFFICIAL
3. Any day a student serves as a page for the State or National Legislature (not to exceed five days)
4. A court subpoena
5. Religious holidays or activities
6. Bereavement
7. Forty-eight (48) hours to treat and clear head lice with appropriate medical documentation upon return to school

Family vacations are not exempted and such absences will count toward the maximum absences allowed per semester.

THE PRINCIPAL WILL MAKE THE FINAL DECISION CONCERNING UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Oklahoma Compulsory Attendance Law Title 70 OS Chapter 1 Sect. 10-105

A. It shall be unlawful for a parent, guardian, or other person having custody of a child who is over the age of five (5) years, and under the age of eighteen (18) years, to neglect or refuse to cause or compel such child to attend and comply with the rules of some public, private or other school, unless other means of education are provided for the full term the schools of the district are in session or the child is excused as provided in this section. One-half (1/2) day of kindergarten shall be required of all children five (5) years of age or older unless the child is excused from kindergarten attendance as provided in this section. A child who is five (5) years of age shall be excused from kindergarten attendance until the next school year after the child is six (6) years of age if a parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the child notifies the superintendent of the district where the child is a resident by certified mail prior to enrollment in kindergarten, or at any time during the first school year that the child is required to attend kindergarten pursuant to this section, of election to withhold the child from kindergarten until the next school year after the child is six (6) years of age. A kindergarten program shall be directed toward developmentally appropriate objectives for such children. The program shall require that any

teacher employed on and after January 1, 1993, to teach a kindergarten program within the public school system shall be certified in early childhood education. All teachers hired to teach a kindergarten program within the public school system prior to January 1, 1993, shall be required to obtain certification in early childhood education on or before the 1996-97 school year in order to continue to teach a kindergarten program.

B. It shall be unlawful for any child who is over the age of twelve (12) years and under the age of eighteen (18) years, and who has not finished four (4) years of high school work, to neglect or refuse to attend and comply with the rules of some public, private or other school, or receive an education by other means for the full term the schools of the district are in session.

Provided, that this section shall not apply:

1. If any child is prevented from attending school by reason of mental or physical disability, to be determined by the board of education of the district upon a certificate of the school physician or public health physician, or, if no such physician is available, a duly licensed and practicing physician;

2. If any child is excused from attendance at school, due to an emergency, by the principal teacher of the school in which such child is enrolled, at the request of the parent, guardian, custodian or other person having control of such child;

3. If any child who has attained his or her sixteenth birthday is excused from attending school by written, joint agreement between:

a. the school administrator of the school district where the child attends school, and

b. the parent, guardian or custodian of the child. Provided, further, that no child shall be excused from attending school by such joint agreement between a school administrator and the parent, guardian or custodian of the child unless and until it has been determined that such action is for the best interest of the child and/or the community, and that said child shall thereafter be under the supervision of the parent, guardian or custodian until the child has reached the age of eighteen (18) years;

4. If any child is excused from attending school for the purpose of observing religious holy days if before the absence, the parent, guardian, or person having custody or control of the student submits a written request for the excused absence. The school district shall excuse a student pursuant to this subsection for the days on which the religious holy days are observed and for the days on which the student must travel to and from the site where the student will observe the holy days; or

5. If any child is excused from attending school for the purpose of participating in a military funeral honors ceremony upon approval of the school principal.

C. It shall be the duty of the attendance officer to enforce the provisions of this section. In the prosecution of a parent, guardian, or other person having custody of a child for violation of any provision of this section, it shall be an affirmative defense that the parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the child has made substantial and reasonable efforts to comply with the compulsory attendance requirements of this section but is unable to cause the child to attend school. If the court determines the affirmative defense is valid, it shall dismiss the complaint against the parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the child and shall notify the school attendance officer who shall refer the child to the district attorney for the county in which the child resides for the filing of a Child in Need of Supervision petition against the child pursuant to the Oklahoma Juvenile Code.

D. Any parent, guardian, custodian, child or other person violating any of the provisions of this section, upon conviction, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punished as follows:

1. For the first offense, a fine of not less than Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00) nor more than Fifty Dollars (\$50.00), or imprisonment for not more than five (5) days, or both such fine and imprisonment;

2. For the second offense, a fine of not less than Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) nor more than One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00), or imprisonment for not more than ten (10) days, or both such fine and imprisonment; and

3. For the third or subsequent offense, a fine of not less than One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) nor more than Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00), or imprisonment for not more than fifteen (15) days, or both such fine and imprisonment.

Each day the child remains out of school after the oral and documented or written warning has been given to the parent, guardian, custodian, child or other person or the child has been ordered to school by the juvenile court shall constitute a separate offense.

E. At the trial of any person charged with violating the provisions of this section, the attendance records of the child or ward may be presented in court by any authorized employee of the school district.

F. The court may order the parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the child to perform community service in lieu of the fine set forth in this section. The court may require that all or part of the community service be performed for a public school district.

G. The court may order as a condition of a deferred sentence or as a condition of sentence upon conviction of the parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the child any conditions as the court considers necessary to obtain compliance with school attendance requirements. The conditions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Verifying attendance of the child with the school;
2. Attending meetings with school officials;
3. Taking the child to school;
4. Taking the child to the bus stop;
5. Attending school with the child;
6. Undergoing an evaluation for drug, alcohol, or other substance abuse and following the recommendations of the evaluator; and
7. Taking the child for drug, alcohol, or other substance abuse evaluation and following the recommendations of the evaluator, unless excused by the court.

Tardy Policy

The following are the graduated steps for students who violate the tardy policy. All tardies

are cumulative. 1st tardy N/A, 2nd tardy - N/A,

3rd tardy -N/A, 4th tardy - N/A, 5th tardy

parent contact, 6th tardy -1 day lunch detention,

7th tardy -3 days lunch detention, 8th tardy -2

days ISD, 9th tardy -3 days ISD, 10th tardy 4 days ISD. Further tardies will result in severe consequences.

Permission to Leave Campus

When the student boards the school bus or comes to school, then the student becomes the responsibility of the school district. Students are not permitted to leave the campus after they have arrived for the school day without permission from the principal's office. The parent or guardian must contact the office before the student will receive permission to leave campus. A sign-out sheet is to be filled-out before the student leaves the campus. Prior arrangements must be made by the parent or guardian with the school before the student will be allowed to check out. A phone call or written note will meet this criteria.

- Any student who leaves the campus without properly checking out through the office will be considered truant, and the problem will be dealt with by the building principal.
- Parents are not to take students directly from the classroom. Parents, please note: We are a closed campus for the purpose of the safety and security of your students. Truancy Summary

By definition, a student is truant if he/she is absent without a proper excuse and/or not properly checked-out through the office. School attendance officers may excuse absences for the following reasons:

- Illness, accident or injury, medical or dental appointments with documentation, death in the family, religious holidays, or emergency situations. Exceptions may be made by administration. Remember, even though an absence is excused, it will count against the 12 allowed per semester.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school if the student is absent for any reason. This notification is to be made before the absence or the day of the absence. If the school is not notified, the absence will be marked as unexcused, and the school will attempt to contact the parent or guardian to insure the student is not truant..

If a student has 10 consecutive unexcused absences, the student will be dropped from school rolls and may be reported as truant to county authorities. Also, Oklahoma law allows the driver's license of the student to be revoked if the student drops out of school.

Withdrawal Procedure

The procedure for withdrawing from Bridge Creek Schools is as follows:

1. Authorization for withdrawal must be made to the registrar in person or over the phone by the parent or legal guardian.
2. The appropriate form must be picked up in the registrar's office and properly completed.