

Absence from School

Absence is defined as the nonattendance of a student on a day that school is in session. It is expected that a parent/guardian notify the school about the student's illness or family emergency on the day of the absence.

Unlawful Absence (under 17 years of age)/ Unexcused Absence (17 years of age or older)

Parents/guardians must provide a written explanation for the absence of their student. All absences should be treated as unlawful 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/unlawful. 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/unlawful. If a written explanation is questionable in nature, the absence will be investigated. An absence only becomes excused when the school codes it accordingly.

When students under the age of 17 have an unexcused absence, the absence will be counted as unlawful. As per the Pennsylvania Department of Education, all unlawful absences are considered truant.

Unexcused absences include absence from school due to parental neglect, parental consent for reasons other than those specifically excused, illegal employment, and truancy.

Lawful Absence

A lawful 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

- Student visits to colleges - maximum of three (3) days annually
- Authorized school activities
- Family emergencies
- 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

The building administrator may require a doctor's certificate in situations where frequent absences are occurring and/or it appears absences are unexcused and/or unlawful. This requirement may remain in effect for the remainder of the school year.

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification are permitted during a school year. All cumulative lawful absences verified by parent note beyond ten (10) days will require an excuse from a physician. Students who are legally absent 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.