

KILLINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy Statement

Regular, prompt attendance is essential for students to receive maximum benefits from the school's educational program. Important information is shared every day and learning activities and/or interactions between teachers and students or students and students can never be duplicated. In addition to academic development and achievement, regular attendance establishes a foundation of responsibility, the benefit of which will extend beyond the classroom. Regular attendance also establishes peer relations and the connection to or participation in the establishment of a classroom community. All of these experiences contribute to the lifelong development of children.

It is the right of every student to receive a free and appropriate public education. The Board recognizes that the responsibility for regular, daily, punctual attendance is shared by the community, the home, pupils and school personnel. However, it is the legal responsibility of the school system to require students to be present in school each day in order to receive the full benefit of a quality education and to monitor and report that attendance. It is the policy of Killington Elementary School to follow recommended protocol for school truancy as outlined in Title 16 by the Vermont Department of Education and the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.

Procedures

Tardy to School

School hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Students are tardy when they are not in their classroom by 8:10 a.m.

School Notification

Parents/Guardians are responsible for telephoning the office no later than the morning their child is unable to attend school. If the school has not been notified by 8:30 a.m., school personnel will contact parents to verify the student's whereabouts.

Parents/Guardians are also required to send a note, dated and signed, explaining the reason for the child's absence.

Excused Absences

A student not present in class for any reason is considered absent. However, the Killington School Board recognizes the following as legitimate excused absences and in meeting the statutory requirement of the State of Vermont, may ask for documentation to support the determination as to whether absences are excused or unexcused. A student may be excused for

illness, religious holidays, court appearances, funerals, and extenuating circumstances pre-approved by the principal.

Unexcused Absences include:

1. Any student who is absent from school without the knowledge and permission of his/her parents/guardians or school authorities is truant. Truancy may result in legal action.
2. Absences not accompanied by a note from the parent/guardian upon the student's return to school.
3. All absences not covered under excused absences.
4. Student vacations taken outside of the scheduled vacations identified on the Killington Elementary School calendar.
5. A pattern of tardiness or early school departures or failure to attend classes as defined by the school.
6. Unexcused absences exceeding five days are considered to be excessive and will warrant further investigation with the possibility that a written plan be developed between the parent/guardian and the school to ensure that the student meets attendance requirements.

Student Vacation

Vacation days are built into the school calendar. Please schedule all vacation days in accordance with the calendar. The calendar for the upcoming school year is approved by the WCSU Board and the KES Board in April or May of each year. A vacation taken during regular school days is considered an unexcused absence.

In extenuating circumstances, notification of vacation must be in writing to the principal two weeks in advance of the planned vacation. (Principals have the right to deny approval for the vacation on the basis of being injurious to the student's progress.) At the discretion of the teacher/principal, work will be assigned prior to or following the vacation. Students who are away from school for vacation will be asked to read, keep a daily journal and practice math facts. Lesson plans will not be provided. In that lessons are group oriented, context based, collaborative and interpretive, providing lesson plans to parents during extended student absences have not proven to be beneficial to the students. The student will have not more than six days after returning to complete all makeup work and tests/quizzes.

Leaving School During the Day

A student leaving school must have a parent notify the office prior to the student leaving the grounds. If a child needs to leave school for a doctor's visit, he/she should be returned to school for the remainder of the school day.

Procedures for Absences/Truancy:

1. The KES Board will follow the Windsor County Truancy Protocol because Killington Elementary School is included in Windsor Central Supervisory Union, and the location of the superintendent's office is in Windsor County.
2. The KES Board shall appoint a truant office annually and record the appointment with the clerk of the school district by July 3rd of each year.
3. After a student exceeds 5 unexcused absences, the Principal shall:
 - A.- Call parents/guardians to discuss concerns regarding absences/truancy.
 - B.- Follow-up with a letter from the school to parents/ guardians.
 - C.- Include in the letter a list of dates of child's absences/ tardiness.
 - D.- Request a doctor's note for all subsequent illness-related absences.
 - E.- Notify the school guidance counselor to request a meeting between the counselor and the student to determine if counseling may help student attend school as expected.
 - F.- Notify the school nurse to request a meeting take place between the nurse and student and the nurse and parent/guardian to advise on excused absences for "sick days."
 - G.- Notify the superintendent or school directors about the student of concern. 16 VSA 1126
 - H.- Notify the truant officer about the student of concern. 16 VSA 1127 ©
4. After 7 unexcused absences:
 - A.- Notify the truant office again.
 - B.- The truant officer shall:
 - provide written notice to the parent of the concern about non-attendance and provide notice of the need for the child to attend school. 16 VSA 1127 (a)
 - provide copies of the written notice to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) (800-649-5285) the Hartford or Springfield Justice Center, and the State's Attorney (802-295-8870).
 - in collaboration with the Justice Center, shall explore the student of concern and the family, to determine community based restorative strategies for rectifying the problem.
 - C. – The superintendent or truant officer shall:
 - If parent alleges a medical/mental health reason for student's non- attendance, contact outside medical/mental health providers to verify/refute allegation of a medical/mental health reason for absences. 16 VSA 1124
5. If there are 10 unexcused absences:
 - A.- The school shall arrange a Coordinated Services Plan (CSP) meeting

to include the parent, teacher, principal, and if applicable, the guidance counselor and school nurse, for the purpose of making a plan for regular attendance. The team will discuss the fact that chronic absenteeism severely compromises a child's ability to learn, to establish a foundation of responsibility, to develop peer relations, and to connect to or participate in the ongoing establishment of the classroom. Therefore, chronic absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, jeopardizes the student's promotion to the next grade.

B.- If the CSP is not successful, and more formal state intervention is deemed necessary, a formal referral will be made to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCF) Central Intake who will prepare affidavit in support of filing a court case, if appropriate. DCF will also provide all documentation to the State's Attorney for review.

C.-State's Attorney shall:

-Review all materials

- Initiate court process to include one or more of the following:

i. Criminal prosecution in the Criminal Division under 16 VSA 1127

ii. CHINS B alleging educational neglect in the Family Division under Title 33

iii. CHINS D alleging habitual and unjustified truancy in the Family Division under

Title 33

- Notify Truant Officer of decision as allowed by law

Date adopted: January 4

Clerk: