

Policy Statement

Students are expected to attend and participate in every class in which they are enrolled at Brattleboro Union High School. Further, the BUHS faculty and administration believe it is the individual student's responsibility to get to classes on time. Absenteeism and tardiness of a few can impact instruction to all the students that do attend a given class and do arrive on time. Teachers and administration are committed to providing essential basic education, as well as the most varied and challenging courses they can offer. BUHS also offers a wide variety of student activities, and students may need to make choices about participating in these activities. We believe that students who miss class cannot expect to achieve at the same level as if they were present, particularly in classes which incorporate daily participation into the course grade.

Students may lose the option for a numerical passing grade for a course if they are absent for more than 10 classes in a semester course that meets every day or for 5 classes in a semester course that meets every other day. Students may lose the option for a numerical passing grade for a full year course if they are absent for more than 20 classes. In the event that the student passes the course after exceeding 10 absences, their course grade is recorded as an S and a grade of 60% is used for the purposes of GPA calculation. School sponsored activities are not included in the total.

In order to earn a numerical passing grade after exceeding 10 absences, a student must provide documentation from a health care provider, court clerk, etc. for the additional absences, and must make up the written work. "Participation" grades for missed classes, however, are nearly impossible to make up and this should be a topic of conversation between a student who really must miss some classes and the teacher of the missed classes. Written work must be made up according to a schedule agreed to by the student and the teacher, with 2 days per missed class as a general guide to this process.

When students take responsibility for making up work they miss during an absence, teachers will help them depending on the teacher's availability and the guidelines and limits in each course syllabus and/or published course requirements.

The school will notify parents/guardians when a student has reached 7 non-school sponsored absences in a class.

Definitions and Understandings

"Tardiness" means arriving to class after the end of passing tone is heard over the speakers.

"Absence" means missing more than half of any class for any reason other than school sponsored activities.

“School-sponsored” activities include such things as school trips, school athletic contests, school activity trips, documented college visitations, school music auditions and festivals, restorative justice meetings, required testing, student council events, and other special events advocated or required by approved school activities.

Other “Excused Absences” would include documented illnesses, a death or other tragic family event, a medical appointment, court appearance, or those days associated with a religious holiday not recognized by the school calendar.

Even in cases of excused absences, “participation” aspects of a course may eventually affect the grade earned and awarded.

Absences considered as “unexcused” would include such things as sleeping late, family vacations, private or non-school concerts/performances, non-school sponsored athletics, shopping trips, preparing for other school sponsored activities, and undocumented and repeated illnesses.

Suspensions are neither excused nor unexcused.

Absences based upon a request to participate in a family vacation are strongly discouraged and should not be contemplated unless other absences are at a minimum or unless teachers agree that there is an excellent chance that work will be made up successfully. Students must talk with their teachers to get an understanding of the coursework they will miss before their departure. It must also be understood by students and parents that teachers will not be expected to provide advance work assignments to students who will be missing classes if that work is not yet available for students who will be in attendance.

After School Participation on Days Students are Absent

Students must attend all classes in order to participate in any school sponsored activity scheduled that same afternoon or evening. If a student cuts a class on a Friday, he/she may not participate in any school sponsored activity on a Saturday. If they have an excused absence on a Friday, they can participate in a school sponsored activity on a Saturday.

Decision on How to Make Up Work/Certification of Make Up Work

It is school policy that students are allowed to make up work for the reasons outlined and according to stipulations listed above. The process, schedule, grading, and certification that the work has been made up will rest exclusively with the teacher.

Date Warned: June 8, 2010
Date Adopted: June 28, 2010