

School LOGO

(Parent/Guardian Name)

(Address)

(Date)

Dear Parent/Guardian of (Student Name),

(---) School is committed to supporting your students' success and ensuring they have full access to their education. Our school diligently tracks attendance on a daily basis, and in the event of any absences, we make it a point to communicate our concerns and offer support to help overcome any challenges your student may face. Please be assured that we genuinely care about your student's well-being and academic progress.

We are reaching out to inform you about your student's unexcused absence on [insert date]. For your reference, your student's attendance to date is:

( ) unexcused/( )excused = ( )% of the school year.

We kindly remind you that you have up to 5 school days to communicate with us regarding any approved excused absences. You can notify us in any of the following ways:

- Bring a note signed by a parent or guardian to the attendance office.
- Provide a doctor's note or appointment summary to the attendance office.
- Have a parent/guardian call or email your schools attendance office at ( ).

In order to ensure the safety of your student, we kindly request that you ensure your contact information is up to date in our Skyward system. If you require any assistance in accessing Skyward or updating your information, please do not hesitate to contact our office at [contact information at school].

It is important that you familiarize yourself with our school policies and procedures, as well as Washington State Law, regarding attendance. Please see the back of this page to learn more about RCWs, and/or our Student Handbook to learn more about what qualifies as an excused absences which is located on our website: (school/district website)

Please remember that there are numerous individuals within our school who are ready and willing to offer assistance should you or your student encounter any challenges. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Sincerely,

(Principal Name)

(Principal Signature)

**Why is attendance important? Research shows:**

- By being present at school, your child learns valuable social skills and has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with other students and school staff.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with schoolwork, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- Missing 10 percent (just two days a month or about 18 days in a year) increases the chance that your student will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- By 6<sup>th</sup> grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- By 9<sup>th</sup> grade, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8<sup>th</sup> grade test scores.

**RCW 28A.225.010**

The state law for mandatory attendance, called the Becca Bill, requires children from age 8-17 to attend a public school, private school, or a district approved home school program. Children who are under 7 years old are not required to be enrolled in school, *however*, once a child is enrolled after the age of 5, the student must attend full-time. To learn more, visit: (school website or OSPI)

**Why are we notifying you?** This summary is not intended to capture the full details of the law; please refer to the RCWs for the full extent of the requirements.

- After 1 unexcused absence, the school must inform the parent/guardian in writing or by telephone. RCW 28A.225.020
- After 3 unexcused absences in a 30-day period, the parent/guardian and school must have a conference discussing absences and the support needed. RCW 28A.225.020
- Between 2 and 7 unexcused cumulative absences in a school year- Our school needs to take data-informed steps to eliminate or reduce student absences. RCW 28A.225.020
- Not later than the 7th unexcused absence in a month- Our school shall do one of the following:
  - Enter into an agreement with the student and parent establishing attendance requirements, OR
  - Refer student to a Community Engagement Board (CEB), OR
  - File petition under subsection (1) of RCW 28A.225.030
- After 7 unexcused absences in a 30-day period and not later than 15 cumulative in a school year - File truancy petition with Juvenile Court. RCW 28A.225.035
- After 5 excused absences within a 30-day period or 10 excused absences within a school year, our school must schedule a conference with the guardian of an **elementary** student identifying barriers to attendance and offering support and resources to assist. RCW 28A.225.018
- After 15 excused absences within a school year, District Policy requires a conference to be held with the guardian and student to establish an academic plan and attendance requirements. Each absence after fifteen absences will be considered unexcused without principal approval.