

**BELMONTE MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

1. During each marking term at Belmonte Middle School, the Assistant Principal will send a warning letter to the parent/guardian of each student who has accumulated four (4) unexcused absences in a class. A student must be present in class for at least one half (1/2) the class time to receive attendance credit for that class. (Approved by the School Committee on 6/28/90). The parent is urged to contact the Assistant Principal upon receipt of this letter. Upon six (6) unexcused absences in any given subject area, a second letter will notify the parent/guardian of the unexcused absences and will further note that said student will receive an "Attendance F" in the given subject(s). An "Attendance F" is defined as a grade of 59%. Students will have a right to appeal the "Attendance F" under provisions stated below. Further, said letter will request that the parent/guardian contact the Assistant Principal to discuss the matter. If a student has earned an academic grade of less than 59%, he/she will receive the earned grade.

2. At the end of each academic term the Assistant Principal will impose **M.G.L.A. Chapter 76, Section 1 and 603 C.M.R., Section 28**, which states "any child who has been absent without medical excuse more than fifteen school days in any quarter must receive a letter indicating whether a referral for IDEA services is appropriate at that time. A CHINS petition may also be activated in the courts or a 51A filed with the Department of Social Services. Every effort will be made to determine and solve the cause of these many absences. School attendance is the responsibility of the Parent or Guardian and the School Administration.

3. Any student who is absent six (6) or more times from any subject during an academic marking term will be issued a "Progress Report" by the teacher indicating excessive absences from class. This report will be submitted to the Assistant Principal.

4. Parents should call the school secretary when their child is absent. A dated note (with appropriate phone numbers) excusing these absences must be delivered to the homeroom teacher on the day the student returns to school. Failure to bring in a note usually results in a session. Absences due to vacation will not be excused. If a student is absent, all work must be made up.

On returning to school after 7 or more consecutive days absence, students must obtain an admit slip from the main office.

A doctor's certificate is required for students who have been absent for suspected cases of ring worm, impetigo, and streptococcal infection (scarlet fever, strep throat, etc.)

Questions should be referred to the nurse.

If a student is absent for three consecutive days, the home may be called. Only the following reasons/excuses will be acceptable for an absence:

- a. Illness (Medical documentation maybe requested).
- b. Observance of religious holidays.
- c. Absence due to death of a family member, immediate or otherwise.
- d. School sponsored activities, which were approved by the administration.
- e. Private school visits (with previous approval from the administration).
- f. Court appearance.

These notes will allow for an excused absence to be recorded on the student's attendance file. These absences do not have to be appealed unless they are not accepted.

All notes documenting absences must be taken in to the respective Assistant Principal for approval within 48 hours of an absence. Documents received after the 48 hour period may be determined to be unacceptable.

5. Suspension days are unexcused absences and are therefore not appealable. Any student who has cut a class during the term or is truant during the term, and exceeds the maximum absence limit, is not entitled to an appeal.

6. When a learning disabled student is absent six (6) or more days in a term, the student's special needs liaison will review the reasons for such absences to determine if they are related to the student's disability. If the liaison determines that the absenteeism is due in part or in full to the said disability, he/she will institute an appeal of the notification of failure. He/she, along with the parent, will advocate on behalf of the student.

7. To insure fairness, the Principal will meet with the Assistant Principal and the parent to evaluate extenuating circumstances pertaining to absences prior to final marks of the quarter being recorded.

Approved by the School Committee:

8/14/03

Amended and Approved by the School Committee:

3/11/10