

Tulpehocken Area School District Attendance Policy

School Hours

Bethel & Penn-Bernville Elementary: 8:50AM - 3:35PM

Middle School: 7:40AM - 2:42PM

High School: 7:40AM - 2:37PM

Students should not arrive before 7:30AM to the Middle School/High School buildings and not before 8:30AM to the Elementary School buildings. Students will be marked tardy if they are not in their designated classrooms by start time listed above.

Attendance Responsibilities and Regulations:

➤ STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1) Attend school regularly
- 2) Submit a written excuse signed by the parent/guardian and/or a licensed healthcare provider to the main office upon return from absence
- 3) Check with teachers for missed work
- 4) Be aware of the school attendance policy and consequences of noncompliance

➤ PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1) Make sure that student attends school regularly, in accordance with the Pennsylvania Compulsory School Attendance Law
- 2) Within three (3) days of the student returning to school from an absence, a signed excuse note must be submitted to the main office or the online absence form must be completed. False and/or forged excuses will not be accepted
- 3) Be aware of the school attendance policy and the consequences of noncompliance
- 4) Ensure the student completes and submits all missed assignments
- 5) Provide appropriate information and/or documentation to the nurse's office regarding known medical problems that could require a student to be periodically absent from school

Attendance Reporting

If for any reason a student is absent from school, a parent/guardian must report the absence through one of three ways: complete an online absence form on Sapphire, e-mail building attendance, or call the student's school building for each day of their absence. A note will still be required if the absence is reported by phone.

➤ **How to Report A Student Absence**

- 1) **Website/Sapphire Parent Portal:** www.tulpehocken.org
 - a) Click “*Student Attendance*” on homepage
 - b) Log into Sapphire Parent Portal
 - c) Click on “*Student Data Forms*” on left of screen
 - d) Click on “*Student Absence Form*” under “On Demand Forms”
 - e) Complete the form, attaching any relevant documents, and click “*Submit*”
- 2) **Attendance E-Mail:**
 - a) Bethel: Bethelattendance@tulpehocken.org
 - b) Penn-Bernville: PBattendance@tulpehocken.org
 - c) Middle School: MSattendance@tulpehocken.org
 - d) High School: HSattendance@tulpehocken.org
- 3) **Attendance Voicemail** (*written excuse note must be submitted upon return*):
 - a) Bethel: (717) 933-4131
 - b) Penn-Bernville: (610) 488-6248
 - c) Middle School: (717) 900-3400 ext. 5099
 - d) High School: (610) 488-6286 ext. 2099

Excused Absences (EXC)

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by written parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days require a note from a licensed healthcare provider.

➤ **Examples of Excused Absences:**

- Board Policy #204: “Attendance” can be found on Tulpehocken’s webpage by clicking “*School Board*” and “*TASD Policies*” or at:
<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/tulp/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CN8MY75CD820>

➤ **Educational Family Trips (EFT)**

Requests by parents to have their children excused from school for educational trips must be evaluated under the authority of the State Board of Education, Chapter 11, Pupil Attendance, Section 11.26 “Educational Tours and Trips, Not School Sponsored”

➤ **Guidelines:**

- An educational trip form must be submitted to the building principal no less than five (5) days prior to the trip
- The student’s academic standing, attendance record, effect of absence on student’s educational welfare, and exceptionality of the request will be taken into consideration by the principal when granting permission
- A maximum of five (5) total days may be used, unless approved by the Superintendent or other designee
 - Unused educational trip days will **not** carry over into next school year

- Educational trips will not be permitted during PSSA or Keystone testing
- Decisions may be appealed to the Superintendent or designee
- Students are responsible for completing all work missed during the educational trip

➤ **College Visits**

High school juniors and seniors are encouraged to explore postsecondary options by visiting and touring colleges, universities, or other programs of interest

➤ **Guidelines:**

- Students must complete a college visit request form (available at the main office) at least one day prior to the visit
- Upon returning to school, the student must present documentation of the visit or absence will be marked unexcused
- Approved college visits are considered lawful excused absences and are included in the ten (10) parent-excused absences permitted each school year

Unlawful/Unexcused Absences (UNL/UNX)

Unlawful and unexcused absences occur when a student has not met the criteria for an excused absence. The terms are used interchangeably, but are coded differently in Sapphire based on compulsory school attendance age (ages six to eighteen). Absences are coded as “**unlawful (UNL)**” if a student is under 18 years of age and the absence cannot be excused. Once a student turns 18 years of age, absences unable to be excused will be coded as “**unexcused (UNX)**”.

➤ **Reasons for Unlawful/Unexcused Absences:**

- Absence due to a reason not listed in Board Policy #204: *Attendance*
- Student failed to submit written excuse within three (3) days of returning to school from absence
- Educational family trip or college visit was not approved prior to absence
- Student has exceeded ten (10) total excused or unlawful/unexcused absences for the school year and did not submit a note from a licensed healthcare provider within three (3) days of returning to school from absence

➤ **Attendance Procedures for Excessive or Unlawful Absences:**

- Three (3) unlawful absences: First notice letter will be issued and school will contact home
- Four (4) unlawful absences: School will contact parent/guardian to schedule a Student Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) with the purpose of developing an attendance improvement plan
- Six (6) unlawful absences: Letter of notification will be sent home with a reminder that a note from a licensed healthcare provider will be required after ten (10) absences. Parent/guardian will be referred to the District Magistrate to be charged with violation of PA Compulsory School Attendance Law

- In accordance with PA school law, students with six (6) or more unlawful absences will be prohibited from transferring to a cyber charter school during the school year without court approval
- Ten (10) cumulative absences: Notification letter will be sent home reminding parent/guardian that all future absences require documentation from a licensed healthcare provider
- **High School Students**: Excessive unlawful absences may result in forfeiture of ability to participate in sports, school activities, field trips, and/or school dances. Continued absences beyond the initial ten (10) days will result in the following:
 - **20 cumulative absences** - loss of parking pass and ability to park on school property
 - **25 cumulative absences** - loss of privilege to participate in sports, school activities, field trips (non-curriculum based), and attend all dances, including prom
 - **30 cumulative absences** - Seniors will lose the privilege to participate in the Commencement ceremony
- Students will have the ability to earn revoked privileges back upon completion of Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) goals, as determined by the building principal during the Student Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC).

Late Arrival/Tardy (T)

Students are considered tardy if they are not in their appropriate classrooms by the start of the school day. If a student arrives late to school, they must be dropped off at the main office to check in and submit a note from a licensed healthcare provider, if applicable.

- Students will be permitted up to three (3) parent-excused tardies per school year without consequence. Parent note for tardy must be submitted the same day as the late arrival.
- Minutes tardy may accumulate to result in unexcused absences, school consequences, Student Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) and/or referral to the Magisterial District Judge.
- Students may have the ability to regain previously revoked privileges upon completion of Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) goals, as determined during the SAIC.
 - **Elementary Guidelines:**
 - Student arrival times:
 - 8:51 - 9:49 = Tardy
 - 9:50-12:12 = Half day absence
 - 12:13 and after = Full day absence

➤ **Middle School/High School Guidelines:**

Student arrival times:

7:41-8:39 = Tardy

8:40 - 11:09 = Half day absence

11:10 and after = Full day absence

- 3 Tardies - student warning & parent contact
- 4 Tardies - parent contact, detention, detention for each occurrence after
- 15 Tardies - SAIC, ISS, additional consequence & intervention at principal discretion

Early Dismissal (ED)

Students who leave school prior to the end of the instructional day are considered early dismissals. A parent/guardian must provide written documentation or communicate directly with the school office prior to the student's release. When applicable, documentation from a licensed healthcare provider should be submitted upon the student's return to school.

Dismissals after the designated time for each building will not be counted as a half-day absence; however, these missed minutes may accumulate and result in a full-day absence once they equal a full school day. Students who leave school for an appointment and plan to drive themselves must provide a note from a parent/guardian explicitly granting permission for the student to drive to the appointment.

➤ **Elementary School:**

- Dismissals before 1:55PM will be counted as a half-day absence

➤ **Middle School/High School:**

- Dismissals before 1:00PM will be counted as a half-day absence

Extracurricular Activities

Students with an unexcused absence may not participate in school activities that day. Eligibility may be restored only with a licensed healthcare provider's note approved by the principal or designee before participation. Students absent due to illness may not participate until the date specified on the note. Students absent due to injury may attend events but may not participate until medically cleared. Students who are tardy or have an unlawful absence on the school day following an extracurricular activity may lose eligibility to participate in future activities, in accordance with school disciplinary procedures.

Absences and Making Up Work:

Make-up work policies apply to all absences, regardless of the reason. Students who are truant may complete missed work, tests, or projects, but their grade may be reduced. It is the student's responsibility to initiate and complete all make-up work. Students who anticipate an absence must notify teachers in advance and make arrangements for missed work. Students who are suspended for disciplinary reasons are still responsible for all missed work.

- **Elementary Students:** If a student is absent, making up tests and quizzes should be prioritized. Any missed assignments must be made up before the end of the trimester in which they were assigned.
- **Middle & High School Students:** Students are responsible for completing any work missed due to an absence. Late work must be accepted, but up to the teacher's discretion for penalties associated with turning work in after the deadline. The teacher's late policy must be clearly communicated at the beginning of the course.