



Cromwell Public Schools

"Placing Students First"

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

This is a reminder that the Connecticut State Board of Education, effective July 1, 2012, adopted definitions of excused and unexcused absences. These definitions are for us by all Connecticut school districts and schools for the purpose of carrying out the provisions in Connecticut General Statute 10-198a and the reporting of truancy. This change required the Cromwell Public Schools to adjust practices in how we report truancy. This letter is to inform you of the state definitions and describe some changes in practice.

The state defines excused absences as follows: Parents/Guardians can excuse up to nine (9) student absences when the *"parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation, i.e., a written note."*

Any additional absence is considered excused for the following reasons:

- a.) Student illness. This must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional, regardless of the length of the absence;
- b.) Student's observance of a religious holiday;
- c.) Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond control of the student's family;
- d.) Mandated court appearance. This must be verified with written documentation;
- e.) The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one student attends;
- f.) Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by the district's administration in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance; (***Please note that family vacations are also deemed as unexcused absences unless they meet this criteria.***)
- g.) Student absences that are the result of the school or district disciplinary action are excluded from the definition of excused and unexcused absences.

Under these definitions, parents are required to submit written documentation for an absence to be excused. This means that a phone call without **timely, written follow-up** will automatically be coded as **unexcused**. Unexcused absences are considered to be any absences that do not meet the above definition or for which the appropriate documentation has not been submitted.

It is imperative that your child attend school consistently to be able to succeed. Cromwell Public Schools will do everything possible to support you in getting your child to school. However, parents have a responsibility to alert the school administration should an issue arise that is preventing your child from consistently attending school. Please do not hesitate to contact your school principal should you have any questions or concerns regarding student absence.

Sincerely,

Paula M. Talty, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools.