



### **Attendance, Tardies, & Early Dismissal Policy 2022-2023**

At Bethel Park Elementary, we are committed to working with you to help remove any barriers that may be preventing your student from attending school on a regular basis and on time. Good attendance is a key part of your student's academic success, as research has shown that:

- Children chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade.
- By 6th grade, chronic absence is a proven early warning sign for students at risk for dropping out of school.
- By 9th grade good attendance can predict graduation rates even better than 8th grade test scores.

### **Our Commitment to Communication and Partnership**

We understand that absences can happen for many reasons, including illness, family stress, transportation issues, among others. We will do everything we can to partner with you, provide you with resources, and otherwise assist you in solving these problems to help your student attend school regularly. Please reach out anytime to the front desk (317-438-5426) and ask for Mrs. Hernandez, school social worker, for assistance.

- **Every absence** = Text message to alert you that your student was marked absent that day. Is everything ok?
- **3 (\* and 13, 23, etc.) unexcused absences** = Text message to alert you and help you track that your student now has 3 unexcused absences.
- **5 (\* and 15, 25, etc.) unexcused absences** = Text message to alert you and help you track that your student now has 5 unexcused absences. Phone call and/or letter from our School Social Worker. How can we help? What do you need?
- **7 (\* and 17, 27 etc.) unexcused absences** = Text message to alert you and help you track that your student now has 7 unexcused absences. Phone call and home visit from the School Social Worker. How can we work as a team to solve the problem? Every minute counts.
- **10 (\* and 20, 30, etc.) unexcused absences** = Per Indiana State law, a phone call to DCS and a possible conference regarding retention

***\* After 10 unexcused absences, we will start over with our accountability/communication measures to continue to help you track your student's attendance and problem solve. Students with chronic absences will be referred for a case conference with Ms. Hernandez, school social worker and Jake Brosius, social worker for the Marion County Prosecutor's Office, to help identify additional resources and further measures to ensure school compliance.***

### **Excused Absences**

Accepted reasons for excused absences:

- Student illness/injury
  - Note from parent/caregiver is required. Absences from injuries/illnesses will only be excused for 2 consecutive days with a parent's note alone. A doctor's note is **required** to excuse absences after that.
- Student doctor appointment/hospitalization
  - Doctor's note required
- Testifying in court
  - Copy of subpoena required
- Family funeral/Death in family

- Obituary/Funeral Program/Memorial Card, etc. required and the excused absence will be for the date of the funeral
- Participation in State Fair or other educational events.
  - Prior authorization from Principal is required
- Positive COVID test for student
  - Proof of positive test required to excuse absences and proof of negative test required to return to school
- Positive COVID test for member of student's household
  - Proof of positive test for household member required. Student can either quarantine with family member or return to school if the student tests negative and has no symptoms. Proof of Negative test is required.
- Student is quarantining due to an exposure to positive COVID case
  - Student will be excused for 3 days maximum while obtaining and waiting for results of a COVID test and proof of negative test is required to return to school.
- Whole class quarantine
  - No documentation needed. Quarantine will be for 7 days, all of those absences will be excused

### **Absence Reporting Procedures**

When a student is absent from school, the following procedure **must** be followed:

1. It is expected that a parent or guardian calls or texts the hotline at (317-759-0713) on the day the absence occurs to notify the school of the absence. The following should be included during the phone call:
  - a. The student's name (first, middle, and last) and grade (Please include the correct spelling of the name.).
  - b. The name of the person making the call and the relationship to the student and phone number so the call can be verified.
  - c. The reason and date(s) for the absence(s).
2. If a parent does not have access to a phone, a note from the parent/legal guardian will be accepted on the day the student returns to school. If the absence is due to a medical, dental, or other professional appointment, a note of verification from the place of business is required. The note should include the date, time, and length of the appointment on a professional letterhead with phone number and address.
3. All phone calls, text messages, and verification notes must be received by the Attendance Office **within 3 days** of the student's return to school in order for the absence to be excused. If a note or phone call is NOT received within 3 days, the absence will be considered UNEXCUSED. The day of return is the first 24 hours. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is the responsibility of the parents to report absences to the school promptly.

### **Tardies and Early Dismissal Procedure**

Bethel Park Elementary strongly believes that punctuality and presence is a learned skill that will serve our students well as they strive for success. Our school wide expectation is for students to arrive on time to school each day and remain in school for its entirety of the day. There is a need to stress punctuality. A tardy is excused for the same reasons that an absence is excused. You will receive notice if your child is consistently tardy. (Excused and unexcused absences and tardies will be noted on the student's progress report.)

- A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives in class after 9:00 a.m. These students need to report directly to their classroom. Students arriving after 9:00 am **must** be escorted to the main office and signed-in by their parent or caregiver. If students are not signed in, the tardy will count as unexcused (3 unexcused tardies = 1 unexcused absence).
- Any student that is dismissed early for an appointment **must** be picked up no later than 2:30 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and no later than 1:00 p.m. on Wednesdays. Students being picked up for early dismissal must be signed-out in the main office by their parent or caregiver. Early dismissals will be counted as unexcused unless they meet the criteria for excused absences above (3 early dismissals = 1 unexcused absence).