

Students are expected to treat each other with respect at all times. Students who use abusive language verbally or in writing or who participate in any activity that offends other people will receive up to three (3) days of suspension. As described more fully in the harassment policy, comments that offend a person on the basis of their race, sex, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation are completely unacceptable and will be judged as extremely offensive. Language should be appropriate at all times in all parts of the building even if a student is speaking to him/herself.

Attendance Policy

(Pilot testing for semester I upon direction of the Belmont Public School Committee)

Key Points

- Students should be in school every scheduled day from 7:35 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.
- To be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity offered by the school, students must be in school from 7:35 a.m. – 2:25 p.m. on the day of the activity. Attendance on the final school day before a weekend or school vacation will be used to determine a student's eligibility to participate in an extracurricular activity during the weekend or vacation. Special circumstances will be reviewed by the assistant principal.
- Students are expected to attend every class meeting; attendance records are maintained on a course-by-course basis.
- The parent/guardian must leave a return telephone number, and a reason for the absence. Only the student's parent/guardian may excuse an absence.
- Grade penalties will be imposed for unexcused absences.
- All absences due to school-sponsored field trips are considered excused.
- When a student arrives to class without a pass and is tardy more than fifteen (15) minutes after formal instruction has commenced, he/she is considered absent unexcused. The student should still go to class to receive credit for the work done in the portion of the class he/she attended.
- In extenuating circumstances, a student may appeal absence-related consequences to the Attendance Review Panel to resolve attendance issues.
- Appeals must be in writing to the student's assistant principal within one (1) week of the incident. Appeals submitted after this time will not be accepted. Special circumstances will be reviewed by the assistant principal.

Individual Responsibilities

Student's Responsibilities

- It is each student's responsibility to be aware of his/her attendance status in class, to make responsible decisions about attending all classes on a regular basis, and to miss no more than five (5) classes during a quarter.
- The student should monitor his/her own attendance and speak with his/her teachers if he/she has any questions about attendance records.
- The student must obtain and make-up class work missed due to absences. It is the student's responsibility to see his/her teachers to obtain missed work.

Parent/Guardian Information and Responsibilities

- The parent/guardian should monitor his/her son's/daughter's attendance in each of his/her classes.
- We encourage parents to discuss the importance of good attendance with their children.
- To excuse a student's absence, the parent/guardian must call the high school attendance office the night before, or the day of the student's absence at (617) 993-5999 prior to 2:00 p.m. Messages left after 2:00 p.m. will not be considered, and the student will be marked unexcused for the day. Special circumstances will be reviewed by the assistant principal.
- When leaving a message on the attendance line, please leave the following information:
 - Student's name
 - Student's grade
 - Reason for absence (see below)
 - Return telephone number
- **Phone calls submitted after 2:00 p.m. of the day of the absence will not be accepted.**

Faculty, Staff, and Administration Responsibilities

- Record each student's attendance in Grade Quick for each class on a daily basis.
- Submit the daily attendance records by 2:00 p.m. each day.
- Submit all adjustments to a student's attendance no later than 2:00 p.m. the following day.
- Maintain accurate attendance records in the event disputes arise related to a student's attendance.
- Notify the student, parent, guidance counselor, and assistant principal when a student reaches three (3) undocumented excused absences, one (1) unexcused absence, and/or three (3) unexcused tardies.
- Submit electronic attendance forms to the student's assistant principal within two (2) school days. Forms submitted after this time will not be considered.

- Assistant principals will address all submitted electronic attendance forms within two (2) school days.
*If teachers and/or administrators are not present in school, forms will be processed at the earliest convenience.

Attendance Policy Guidelines and Protocols

Students are expected to attend every class meeting unless excused according to procedures described here. Six (6) or more absences in a quarter will result in grade reductions and potential failure of a course or courses.

Documented Excused absences

- The following absences are considered documented excused and do not count towards the maximum five (5) allowed absences, however documentation must be provided and missed work must be made up:

Reasons	Required Documentation
• Religious holidays	- Parent note
• Mandatory court visits	- Court documents
• Testing (Special education, etc.)	- Evaluator note
• Field Trips/School-sponsored-events	- None required
• Extended illness (4 or more consecutive)	- Doctor/ Nurse practitioner note
• Family funeral/emergencies	- Parent note
• Health professional visits	- Doctor/Nurse practitioner note
• College visits (3 maximum)	- Parent or College note

Routine health professional appointments should be scheduled after school. If this is unavoidable, parents/guardians must notify the main office or submit a note in advance of the appointment. Notification after the fact will not be excused.

Belmont High School Attendance Policy

The **N** in a particular course indicates a student has not met the school's attendance expectations. An **N** reflects an academic grade of 59% due to a lack of attendance. Students are afforded the opportunity to recover a grade of **N** with the students' earned grade. The policy and procedure is listed below:

- Semester Courses
(2 quarters Grade Reduction and Buyback)
- Grade Reduction
 - A student with six (6) or more undocumented excused and/or unexcused absences in the first quarter of a semester course (half year) will receive an N for a

grade. As a result, the original grade earned (60% or higher) is replaced with a 59%. The comment of "Failure due to attendance" will be noted on the student's report card. Grades earned below 59% will not be replaced with an N but will be recorded according to what the student has earned.

- Grade Buyback
 - A student who earns an N in the first quarter can pass a semester course if he/she meets the attendance expectations in the following quarter and has no discipline concerns. If the student meets the discipline and attendance expectations in the following quarter, his/her grade of N (59) will be replaced by the student's original grade earned. Both earned grades are then calculated to determine a final grade.
 - If a student does not meet the attendance expectation in the second quarter, the grade of N (59) is not replaced and is used to determine a final grade for the course.

Full-year courses

(4 quarters Grade Reduction and Buyback)

- Grade Reduction
 - A student with six (6) or more undocumented excused and/or unexcused absences in a single quarter of a year-long course will receive an N for a grade. As a result, the original grade earned (60% or higher) is replaced with a 59%. The comment of "Failure due to attendance" will be noted on the student's report card. Grades earned below 59% will not be replaced with an N but will be recorded according to what the student has earned.
 - A student cannot exceed two (2) quarters earning an N for a grade. If the student does exceed the limit, they will then receive a failing grade for the year. Required courses would need to be repeated in the following school year.
- Grade Buyback
 - A student who earns an N for a single quarter in a year-long course can pass for the quarter if he/she meets the discipline and attendance expectations in the following quarter. The N is then replaced by the original grade earned by the student and used when calculating the final grade for the course.

Seniors

- Seniors who have five (5) or more undocumented excused/unexcused absences during term four (4) in a given

subject will receive a 59% for that quarter even if the their earned grade is 60% or higher. The comment "failure due to attendance" will be noted on the report card.

**** Students will not be allowed to change or drop classes to avoid the consequences of poor attendance. Those who do change classes for legitimate reasons will have their attendance record follow them to the similar class. ****

Incompletes

Students who are absent for an extended period of time due to an illness and are able to make-up the work may receive an Incomplete (I) for the term. All work must be made-up within two (2) weeks after the end of the quarter. Teachers must change the Incomplete to a grade within two (2) weeks after the end of the quarter.

Medical Exemption

A doctor or nurses practitioner's note will excuse absences for an ongoing, chronic, or long-term illness (***long-term illness is defined as four (4) or more consecutive days of absence***) provided that the note is written on the doctor's or nurse practitioner's stationary, showing the name of the student and stating that the student was under his/her care for a particular time interval. If the illness impacts the quarterly grade, the student's assistant principal, in consultation with the guidance counselor, will review his/her situation and determine if the student will receive an Incomplete (I) for a grade.

Skip Days

There are NO sanctioned "skip days" at BHS. Student organized "skip days" undermine the educational process. The school will not accept parental excuses to participate in "skip days". Students involved in a "skip day" will be considered absent unexcused.

Dismissals

Once the school day has commenced and a student is in attendance, he/she may be dismissed via a parent/guardian phone call or written note **prior to the dismissal**. Notification after the fact will not be excused and will be recorded as an unexcused absence. When a student is dismissed, he/she is expected to leave school grounds or wait for his/her ride in the main lobby. In the event of illness while the student is in school, dismissal will be arranged by the school nurse. The student will wait for his/her ride in the nurse's office. A dismissal request without good cause (see "Documented Excused Absences" on p. xx) will be denied. A student is not to be dismissed from a class to stay in school and do work for other classes. Any student found on school grounds while dismissed, will be marked unexcused for all missed classes.

If the student returns to school for a portion of the day, he/she must immediately report to the main office for an office pass prior to going to class.

When a student misses a class due to a dismissal in which a test/quiz is given, he/she will be expected to take the test/quiz later that day, if the teacher is in agreement. The student bears the responsibility of making these arrangements around the convenience of the teacher's schedule.

Standing Early Dismissals

Some students' classes are completed at 2:00 p.m. Parents/guardians may choose to submit a letter requesting a standing dismissal for their student for such days. A standing dismissal letter permits students to leave campus no earlier than 2:00 p.m. If a student with a standing dismissal remains on school grounds after the 2:00 p.m. dismissal, they remain subject to all school rules. The administration retains the right to revoke a standing dismissal.

Students' schedules frequently change from first to second semester. Therefore, all requests for standing dismissals must be re-submitted within one week of receiving their schedule.

Standing Late Arrivals

Some students' classes start after 7:35 a.m. Students are allowed to arrive no later than 8:00 a.m. with parent/guardian approval. A letter from the parent/guardian requesting the late arrival must be submitted to the student's assistant principal in advance.

Students' schedules frequently change from first to second semester. Therefore, all requests for standing arrivals must be re-submitted within one week of receiving their new schedule.

Unexcused Absences

When in school, students are expected to attend all classes unless excused by an administrator or the nurse. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to:

- If a student is in school and fails to attend a class
 - If a student arrives more than 15 minutes late to a class without a pass
 - If a parent/guardian fails to call the attendance office by 2:00 p.m. to excuse the student's absence
- First unexcused absence in a term:
- student will receive zeroes for work due or completed in class
 - student will be assigned one (1) administrative detention
 - parent will receive notification from the teacher and administrator
- Second unexcused absence in a term:
- student will receive zeroes for work due or completed in class

- student will be assigned two (2) administrative detentions
- parent will receive notification from the teacher and administrator
- student will have three (3) percentage points deducted from their quarter average
- Third unexcused absence in a term:
 - student will receive zeroes for work due or completed in class
 - student will be assigned no less than three (3) administrative detentions or suspended from school
 - parent will receive notification from the teacher and administrator
 - student will earn a failing grade for the term

A student can only receive a failing grade if the above protocol is followed

Truancy

An unexcused absence from school occurs when both parents and the school expect the student to be in attendance. For students under 16 years of age, in addition to school disciplinary action, the truant officer may be involved.

Make-up Work after an Excused Absence

Students are responsible for make-up work associated with excused absences. Students are allowed twice the number of days they were absent to make up missed work (weekends and vacation days count towards this allowance). In addition to their availability during the school day, faculty members will establish and post times when they are available to assist students with make-up work. If a student is unable to meet with the teacher at the established time, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher and establish a mutually agreeable time for assistance with make-up work. If a student is excused for an extended period, the teacher, in consultation with the parent and/or guidance counselor, shall determine an appropriate and reasonable time period for the completion of make-up work. Teachers will make every reasonable effort to help students make up missed work. However, students and parents must understand that time lost from class is irretrievable.

Excused Late Arrivals

If a student has a professional health appointment or other obligation that requires him/her to arrive late to school, the parent/guardian must call the main office **prior** to the student's arrival to school to excuse the late arrival. A student who arrives late must immediately report to the main office for an office pass, prior to going to class. When a student misses a class due to a late

arrival in which a test/quiz is given, he/she will be expected to take the test/quiz within 24 hours, and at the convenience of the teacher. It is the student's responsibility to make these arrangements. It is the student's responsibility to follow up with the teacher regarding missed work if he/she has missed a class due to a late arrival.

Tardy to Class

If a student arrives to class without a pass after formal instruction has commenced, he/she is considered tardy. Students should still go to class even if they do not have a pass. Students will receive credit for the work done in the portion of the class during which they are present. Teachers will inform students when they are tardy, and may assign teacher detentions. With the third (3) tardy, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of academic consequences to be imposed for additional tardies. For the fourth (4) and each subsequent tardy, one (1) percentage point will be deducted from the student's quarter average and the student will be referred to his/her assistant principal for disciplinary consequences.

When a student arrives to class without a pass and is tardy for more than fifteen (15) minutes after formal instruction has commenced, he/she is considered absent- unexcused. The student should still go to class to receive credit for the work done in the portion of the class he/she attended.

When a student arrives late to class with a pass, then he/she will be considered excused for the tardy.

Field Trips

Students must get prior approval from the teachers whose classes they are missing. If approval is not given and the student participates in the field trip, the student is considered Absent Unexcused from the class.

Extracurricular Activity Participation

To be eligible for participation in any extracurricular activity offered by the school, the student must be in school from 7:35 a.m. – 2:25 p.m. that day. The student must be in school for the entire day on scheduled half-days and early dismissal Wednesdays. If a student's first class begins at 8:00 a.m. and he/she has been approved by his/her assistant principal for a late arrival, he/she must be in school by 8:00 a.m. If a student's last class of the day ends at 2:00 p.m. and he/she has been approved by his/her assistant principal for an early dismissal, he/she must remain in school until 2:00 p.m. Attendance during the final school day before a weekend or a vacation event will be used to determine a student's eligibility to participate in an extracurricular activity during the weekend or vacation. A student who does not attend school for the entire day prior to a weekend or a vacation will not be allowed