



# Attendance Policy

## 1. Purpose

The goal of Wasatch Charter School is to awaken a love of learning in young people, and provide them with the tools needed to be successful, responsible members of society. Because of the hands on learning style used at Wasatch Charter School, many educational activities cannot be duplicated when a child misses school. Therefore, attendance is deemed of the utmost importance to ensure the success of your child.

Parents are expected to take a proactive role in ensuring their children attend school. We recommend families plan their vacation schedule around the existing school calendar. When possible, medical and dental appointments should take place outside of school hours, and parents should notify the school in advance of any absence. The School intends for this policy to be consistent with the provisions of Utah's compulsory attendance laws, Utah Code 53A-11-101 through 53A-11-105.

## 2. Definitions

"Absence or Absent" means: Failure of a school-age minor assigned to a class or class period to attend the entire class or class period.

"Valid Excuse" means:

- An illness
- A family death or emergency
- An approved school activity
- A medical appointment
- Excuses consistent with student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or accommodation plan

"School year" means: the period of time designated by the Governing Board as the school year for WCS.

"School-age minor" means: a minor who is at least six years old, but younger than 18 years old and who is not emancipated.

"Truant" means: Absent without a valid excuse.

### 3. Policy Content

Attendance Requirements: School-age minors are expected to regularly attend class in accordance with Utah's Compulsory Education Requirements, Utah Code 53A-11-101 et seq. School-aged minors who are truant more than five (5) times may receive a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation, as described more fully below.

Ten consecutive absences from school without a valid excuse may result in un-enrollment.

Excused Absences: The student's parent/guardian must provide the School office with a verbal or written notification of a valid excuse for an absence within one (1) business day of the absence in order for the absence to be excused. School administration may request further documentation of the excuse for the absence at its discretion.

Tardiness: A student is tardy if they are not in the classroom at the designated start time for class. Any late student must be signed in by a parent in the front office. If a student is chronically tardy, they may be referred to the administration for intervention. A school-age minor who is tardy by one (1) hour or more without a valid excuse will be deemed absent for purposes of the compulsory education requirements under Utah Code 53A-11-101 et seq.

Early Checkout: Excessive early checkouts will be managed, and may be referred to the administration for intervention. A school-age minor who leaves school one (1) or more hours prior to the end of the school day without a valid excuse will be deemed absent for purposes of the compulsory education requirements under Utah Code 53A-11-101 et seq.

Notice of Compulsory Education Violation: The School's Administrative Director may issue a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation to a parent or guardian of a school-age minor if the student is absent without a valid excuse at least five (5) times during the school year. This notice shall:

- Direct the parent or guardian to meet with School's Executive Director and/or Administrative Director to discuss the student's attendance problems and to cooperate with the Governing Board to secure regular attendance by the student.
- Designate any additional school personnel with whom the parent or guardian is required to meet regarding the student's attendance problems.
- State that it is a class B misdemeanor for the student's parent or guardian to intentionally or recklessly fail to meet with the designated school authorities to discuss the student's attendance problems, or fail to prevent the student from being truant an additional five (5) more times during the remainder of the school year.
- Be served on the parent or guardian by personal service or certified mail.

Intervention: The School's Intervention Program is established to encourage good attendance and document efforts made to resolve student's attendance issues. It is the duty of the Governing Board of Wasatch Charter School to hold students and parents to the policy set forth in Utah Code 53A, and work toward resolving student attendance problems. Wasatch Charter School's intervention plan is as follows:

- Attendance Policy will be made readily available on the website, and a physical copy of the policy will be made available at back-to-school night.

- When a student's poor attendance is negatively affecting the student's learning, the classroom teacher will notify the student and or the parent or guardian of the concern. The teacher will work with the parent or guardian to improve attendance and offer solutions to get the student caught up in their learning. The student's progress will be monitored.
- If the teacher's efforts in working with the parents or guardians do not adequately address the problem, the Executive or Administrative Director will request a meeting to discuss further intervention in correcting the attendance issue. This may be in the form of a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation, depending on the number of absences and facts specific to the case at hand.
- Upon the Director's request, the parent or guardian may be asked to meet with the Governing Board for an attendance hearing to discuss the ongoing attendance issues and additional intervention.
- Honest efforts shall be made in working with parents and/or guardians to secure attendance that is in conformance with Utah Code. This process will include the following, as appropriate: Counseling of the student by school authorities, counselors, and resource officer; issuing a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation to a parent of a school-age minor; making adjustments to the curriculum and schedule to meet the needs of the student; considering alternatives proposed by parents; suggesting community resources available to help the family; exploring other enrollment alternatives that may better accommodate the student's attendance issues.

## 4. Relevant Procedures, Guidelines & Restrictions

### CHECKLIST FOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE & COMPULSORY EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The **Attendance Policy** shall be included in registration packet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. After five (5) or more absences without a valid excuse, a **Notice of Compulsory Education Violation** may be sent to parents or guardians of school-age minors, requesting parent or guardian involvement. A copy of the **Attendance Policy** will be included with the Notice. School staff will issue this notice by Certified Mail or Personal Service to the parent or guardian.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. If a Notice of Compulsory Education Violation has been served, and the parent or guardian:
  - a. fails to prevent the school-age minor from being absent without a valid excuse five (5) or more times during the remainder of the school year, or
  - b. fails to meet with school authorities as designated in the Notice of Compulsory Education Violation to discuss the student's attendance problems,a **Pre-Court Hearing with the Governing Board** will be scheduled.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. If, at the Pre-Court Hearing with the Governing Board, the Board determines that the parent or guardian intentionally or recklessly failed to prevent the school-age minor from being absent without a valid excuse five (5) or more times after being served with the Notice of Compulsory Education Violation, or intentionally or recklessly failed to meet with school authorities as designated in the Notice of Compulsory Education Violation, the Board shall report a violation of Utah Code 53A-11-101.5 to the district attorney for prosecution.

## 5. Policy Owner

## 6. Exhibits / Appendices / Forms (next page)

## 7. Supporting Information

## 8. Document History