

BAHS Attendance Procedure for Withholding Credit- - Updated 8/22/23

Good school attendance sets the stage for students to fully benefit from the many learning resources our schools offer. Children and families may face challenges that impact regular attendance. Recognizing and responding to those challenges can help keep students on track academically. The Office of School and Student Supports provides resources and guidance to help schools monitor and reduce chronic absenteeism. While assisting in the implementation of Maine's truancy statute dealing with unexcused absences is an important aspect of that work, research clearly shows that frequent excused absences – for genuine health or family reasons – are equally important to the work of making school a place where all students thrive. The office supports school attendance and intervention teams.

-DOE Office of School and Student Supports

Belfast Area High School is “standards based” but awards credit based on a numerical point system and a “Carnegie Unit” based on the number of classes that are attended in a semester. Grades are awarded on a 0-100 scale. If a student earns a score of 70 or higher at the end of each semester then they are eligible to be awarded .5 credit(based on the Carnegie Unit) for that amount of work if they have been physically present in the class for more than 85% of the semester. Being present for class discussion, receiving and providing feedback as well as participating in the social development of the class culture is just as important as scoring well on individual assessments.

BAHS acknowledges that there are times when attendance in school may not be attainable. However, students must be responsible for being present and accountable. Once a student misses 6 classes in a semester the accountability of the learning relationship in the class comes into question. Our credit withholding procedure is outlined below. It is a fair balance between recognizing that students may have some unforeseen obstacles to attendance while also holding a high standard for the integrity of awarding credit.

Credit withheld at BAHS

- All students have 6 class absences allowed before credit will be withheld from that course. Each class is counted as 80 minutes, therefore, after 480 minutes are missed in a

particular class credit will be withheld at the end of the semester unless the total number of missed minutes decreases below 480 (an option to decrease missed minutes will be explained).

- Academic Coaching is awarded .5 credit at the end of the 10th and 12th grade years. Missed time from homeroom, where academic coaching takes place, can also be made up once a student exceeds 15% of the total number of minutes in the semester.
- A student's GPA will **NOT** be adjusted but credit will be withheld if the student has more than 480 missed class minutes in a semester. *
- Each time a student is tardy to class, the missed time will accrue and be tallied toward the total number of allowable missed time.

EXCEPTION Since Academic homeroom only meets for 25 minutes a day, 15% of the total homeroom minutes calculates at 315 for the semester

Procedure for Students when they are late to school or a class

- In the beginning of a class period, after 5 minutes have been allowed for transition time, teachers will take attendance and mark any student NOT present as absent. Any student arriving after attendance has been taken should report to the office for a late slip.
- All students must check in at the office when arriving at school after 7:40 AM, or returning from lunch after 11:30 AM. If a student does NOT have lunch and/or study hall privileges they will be marked tardy and given a late slip from the front desk in the office. If a student arrives to a class more than 5 minutes after the appropriate bell rings marking the end of the last period, OR they arrive more than 5 minutes past the time marked on the late slip they should be sent to the main office for verification.

Excused absences

- School Administration appreciates when a parent or guardian can verify a student's absence. However, BAHS can only exempt missed time for a state approved reason for being absent from school. Any excused absence is one that can be verified for the following reasons:

Personal illness, an appointment with a health professional (must provide a written appointment note for verification), Observance of a recognized religious holiday, an absence that has been given prior approval by an administrator for an educational

purpose(field trip, college visit, internship-related) a disruption due to homelessness, or a family emergency that has been verified with an administrator.

If a student is sick for more than 3 days in a week or has accumulated more than 10 sick days in a semester, administration may request a note from a doctor to verify the health of the student in order for the student to continue to have missed days due to illness exempt from the allowable total missed time of 480 minutes per class period.

When a student is not present by 9:00 AM BAHS will send an auto generated email to inform the guardian that their child is either not present or arrived tardy to school. At 12:00 PM BAHS will send another auto generated email to inform the guardian if their child is not present or arrived late to an afternoon class. Any absence that can be verified with a parent or guardian as “excused” will not count toward the 480 allowable minutes of being absent from a class.

Appeal for Attendance verification

- Any student or parent of a student may request an appeal for a review of their attendance record at any time during the school year. The request must be made in writing and received by an administrator within two weeks after the semester marking period ends and grades have been posted. If the appeal fails to be made in that time period the decision to withhold credit will stand.

Options for Recovering missed class time

- A student may recover a missed class period in increments of one hour sessions during the school year immediately after school from 2:30 -3:30 PM. Students must make a request and arrangement with a school administrator for staying after school prior to the requested day. Once a student exceeds 480 minutes, recovery time will be attainable in intervals of one hour. If a student has multiple classes that have exceeded the 480 minute limit then the student is responsible to determine which class' lost minutes they are intending to make up.

For Example: Total Missed time in a class is 480 minutes: No credit withheld

Total Missed time in a class is 482 min: requires **one** hour of time

Total Missed time in a class is 520 min: requires **one** hour of time

Total Missed time in a class is 541 min: requires **two** hours of time

- In order for a make up session to count toward reducing missed minutes and reinstate credit, a student must be present for at least a full hour and a written reflection on a school issued document must be completed in full and turned in before leaving the make up session.

Tracking and Reporting Attendance

- Infinite Campus will be able to track the missing minutes for an individual class. Students, parents and teachers will be able to see how many missed minutes are accruing for a student for each particular course.
- Administration will run a report at the end of each marking period (progress reports and end of the semester) to determine which students may be in danger of exceeding the “6 missed class period allowance.”
- Efforts will be made to report to a student and parent when there is concern, however the responsibility for being in good standing with the BAHS attendance requirements is ultimately the responsibility of the student.