

OTHS Attendance Policy 2016-2017 School Year

ATTENDANCE: The process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study in order for students to reach their educational potential. Students with poor attendance risk losing class credit.

All students are required to attend all classes, advisory periods, and study halls except in cases of illness or emergencies. The following procedures regarding attendance apply:

- All students more than 5 minutes late to any class must report to the Attendance Office for a pass to class. Tardy and/or skipping penalties may apply.
- Students who miss more than 25 minutes of a class period will be counted as absent for that class and must report to the Attendance Office.
- One-period absences may result in disciplinary consequences (See Absences, page 17).
- When a student withdraws from OTHS and re-enters without attending another high school, his/her previous record of attendance will apply.

An absence will not count toward truancy for the first 5 absences of a semester if a parent or guardian informs the school of the student's absence within 2 school days. Parents are encouraged to provide documentation for the first 5 absences, but documentation is not required until the 6th absence. Parents should contact the OTHS 24-hour phone line to report an absence: 632-OTHS (632-6847). Please provide the following information within the 35 seconds allotted for a recorded message:

1. The person calling and his/her relationship to the student.
2. The student's name and grade.
3. Why the student is absent and how long he/she will be out.

The phone line has a caller I.D. unit with name and number to confirm the caller. Parents requesting homework for students who will be absent 2 or more school days should call the Attendance Office by 10:00 a.m. The Attendance Office will also accept a parent note on the day the student returns.

A parent or guardian must contact the school about each absence. Absences in excess of 5 per semester are allowed for the reasons listed below, but will require official third-party documentation to support the absence. If documentation is not provided, the absence will be counted toward truancy:

- Illness or medical excuse
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Death in immediate family
- Family emergency and/or circumstance which cause reasonable concern for the safety or health of the student
- Approved college visit or other approved educational experience

Truancy: Any absence not reported by a parent or guardian will count toward truancy. Absences in excess of 5 absences in a semester will also count toward truancy unless documented per the previous section. Skipping class or classes will count toward truancy. Absences resulting from suspension will not count toward truancy. OTHS will keep students and parents informed about semester attendance as it relates to truancy. If students accumulate semester absences toward truancy, notification will be as follows:

- 3 days absent toward truancy – Letter and phone call to parents/guardians
- 6 days absent toward truancy – Letter mailed home from district office stating time, date and location of parent/guardian appearance at a local truancy review board.
- 9 days absent toward truancy – Letter mailed from Regional Office of Education, if appropriate, stating date and location of parent/guardian appearance at a regional truancy review board. Students will not be able to attend OTHS events for the remainder of the current semester and the subsequent semester. (Students participating in athletics/extracurriculars will be subject to the Extracurricular Code of Conduct page 46. Students having 9 days of absences counting toward truancy during any semester of their junior or senior year will lose the privilege of participating in the OTHS graduation ceremony.
- After 9 days absent toward truancy and an appearance before the Regional Truancy Review Board, a petition may be filed with the St. Clair County State's Attorney and both student and parents may be held accountable in accordance with truancy laws.

Parents/guardians have the legal responsibility of ensuring that their student attends school regularly. A parent/guardian who knowingly permits their student to miss school without valid reason or who gives false information regarding the student's absence is in violation of the law and may be referred to the States Attorney Office.