

Attendance Policy

SY20-21 Term One – Virtual Learning

To report student absences, email brentelementary@k12.dc.gov or call Brent's main office at 202-698-3363

DCPS Attendance Policy

At DC Public Schools (DCPS), we know that every student achieves academic success by being present at school every day and on time. Students who have regular school attendance learn more and are more successful in school. DCPS has shifted focus from monitoring only unexcused absences to all absences by tracking In-Seat Attendance (ISA). Some absences are unavoidable, but when children miss too much school - excused or unexcused - they can fall behind.

Is Attending School Required?

Yes, attending school is required by law! All students who reach five years of age on or before September 30 of the current school year must attend school every day until they meet high school graduation requirements or reach their 18 birthday. During the virtual learning periods, the curriculum will be accessed via Canvas, DCPS' online learning management system, which allows for a more user-friendly, efficient and organized approach to virtual learning.

How will student attendance be recorded?

Students (or parents on behalf of younger students) are expected to sign into Canvas daily, and daily attendance will be recorded through this action. Students will be expected to log into Canvas each school day at least once between 6 am and 11:59 pm. Students who do not log in to Canvas will be recorded as absent for the day. Absences will be imported into Aspen automatically overnight. There are no additional steps required for school staff to ensure that absences from Canvas import into Aspen each night.

What will Brent's Attendance Outreach Look Like?

Students are expected to engage in live lessons, including morning meetings, daily. Brent staff will reach out to the families of students who did not participate in morning meeting or are not engaged in instruction or learning activities though out the day. Like the Spring, Brent will maintain a student engagement tracker. Brent's attendance team will use engagement data to implement support and inventions for families to ensure students are engaged in instruction and meeting academic growth goals.

Will students be considered absent for the day if they do not participate in synchronous instruction?

No. While it is important that students are engaging with their teacher during live instruction, attendance will not be taken at the course level. Students' daily attendance expectation is that they log into Canvas at least once a day. If this requirement is met, students will not be considered absent.

What if students are experiencing technology issues at home and cannot log into Canvas?

If students do not have access to technology or are having internet connectivity issues, the student or their parent/guardian will be expected to call Brent's main line, 202-698-3363 or email brentelementary@k12.dc.gov.

What absences are considered excused, and how should excuse note documentation be submitted to the school?

Except for the addition of required immunization related attendance codes, DCPS legal excuse reasons remain the same as the 19-20 School Year. During the period of virtual learning, excuse notes may be submitted electronically to brentelementary@k12.dc.gov. If a family is unable to submit documentation electronically due to challenges with technology, the family should contact Brent via the main office number at 202-698-3363 and maintain a copy of the documentation for record reconciliation when health conditions allow.

Which Absences Are Excused vs. Unexcused?

Excused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school with a valid excuse and parental approval. Excused absences include: student illness (a doctor's note is required if a student is absent for more than 5 days); death in the student's immediate family; observance of a religious holiday; medical reasons such as a doctor's appointment (a doctor's note is required). Unexcused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school without a valid excuse, with or without parental approval. Examples of unexcused absences include: family vacation, doing errands and parent's illness.

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What Happens if My Child Accrues Unexcused Absences?

Brent's student support team will follow-up with families of students with unexcused absences. Brent is also required to follow the DC law on school attendance. This law pertains to students in grades K - 12th. At three unexcused absences, parents will receive an official attendance notification letter. At five unexcused absences, parents are required to attend an attendance intervention meeting and work with staff to develop an attendance intervention plan to improve attendance. At ten unexcused absences, families are referred to Child and Family Services for family support services.