

## Attendance and Truancy Policy

To be successful at YB and to maintain postsecondary success, students must attend **on time and consistently**. Historically, students who attend 80% or more days of school have a 99% graduation rate. YB's attendance policies are designed to help support students in building habits that will set them up for success both in school and in college and careers after graduation, while helping them navigate challenges and barriers that arise.

### Attendance Expectations:

- Students are expected to be seated in class and ready to learn by 8:00 AM every day.
- Students are expected to attend and be on time for **all** classes and programming on their schedule until student dismissal at 3:30pm on Monday through Thursday and 1:00pm on Friday.
- Students should arrange personal appointments to happen outside of school hours as much as possible
- Students are expected to proactively communicate with their teachers, advisor, and attendance coordinator if they will be late, absent, or need to leave early.

### Daily Attendance Policy

- Daily Attendance Codes
  - **Present**: Students who arrived at school on-time and attended their scheduled classes will be marked present for the day. School starts at 8:30 each day.
  - **Late**: Students who arrive late to school and do not check in to advisory/study hall before 9:00am will be marked late for the day.
  - **Unexcused Absence**: All absences are considered unexcused until a written note is submitted to the attendance coordinator.
  - **Excused Absence**: YB may excuse absences or early dismissals under certain circumstances including after receiving official documentation for: Doctors' appointments, childcare closure, funerals, court, or religious observance. YB may also excuse up to 3 non-consecutive absences of up to 1 day with a written note in place of official documentation.
  - **Extended Leave**: Requests for extended leave for things like parental leave, significant health issues, housing challenges, caregiving, legal situations etc. should be submitted to the Principal and may be approved at the discretion of the Principal. Depending on the specific situation, an extended leave may delay graduation until after summer school or the following school year. While YB does not have a virtual option for completing school, **some** virtual interventions may be considered to support students on leave temporarily.
  - **Suspended**: Students will be marked using this attendance code while suspended.
- Consequences for Daily Absences and Lateness
  - After 10 consecutive unexcused absences, students will be dropped from enrollment and marked inactive. Students must successfully complete a re-engagement plan (see below for details) in order to re-enroll.

- Students who are frequently late or absent may be required to attend additional school time (after school, on weekends, during summer school etc.) in order to get back on track towards graduation
- Students with lower than 70% attendance (absent more than 52 total days, excused and unexcused, over the course of the school year, which is over 13 days per session) may be required to attend summer school in order to graduate and will receive their diploma after completing summer school instead of walking at the June graduation ceremony.
- Students with lower than 60% attendance (absent more than 70 total days, excused and unexcused, over the course of the school year or ~17 days per session) will be assigned an attendance hearing with the Principal to determine whether graduation this year is possible or if the student needs to apply to re-enroll in the fall of the following year

### Attendance/Truancy Supports

Absence (Unexcused)	Supports
1st	<b>Automated Student/Family Contact</b> - Repeated for each additional absence
3rd	<b>Truancy Notification Letter</b> - Sent within 10 days of 3rd unexcused absence in the family's preferred language
6th	<b>1st Student Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC)</b> - Student and family invited to student attendance improvement conference to make a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) to improve student attendance
10th	<b>2nd Student Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC)</b> - Student and family invited to student attendance improvement conference to update Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) to improve student attendance
15th+	<b>3rd Student Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC)</b> - Student and family invited to student attendance improvement conference to update Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) to improve student attendance  <b>Additional Supports</b> - Student Assistant Program (SAP) referral, potential home visit, potential referral to outside agencies.

### Re-engagement:

If a student is interested in re-engaging after being dropped from enrollment they should reach out to their Student Advisor who will connect with the Director of Success and Principal to determine whether it is possible for the student to re-enroll and meet graduation requirements or not. Students who are dropped from enrollment a second time may not re-enroll again for the same school year.

- If the Principal determines that graduation is still possible, the student will meet with their advisor to complete the re-engagement form and determine what follow up support, if any, the student needs to be successful.
- If the Principal determines that graduation that year is not possible, the Student Advisor can help connect them to alternative programming options if interested. If the student is age eligible, they could also re-apply for the following year.

### Individual Class Attendance Policy

- Individual Class Attendance Codes
  - Present: Students who arrive to class during the 5 minute transition period prior to the start of class will be marked present.

- Late: Students who arrive more than 5 minutes late will be marked late.
- Absent: Students not present in class will be marked absent.
- Cut: Students who are present in school, but do not attend a class, or who leave a class early and do not return, will be marked cut.
- **Consequences and Supports**
  - Missing class time results in lower grades which may result in mandatory summer school, missing graduation, or needing to reapply for the following school year if eligible
  - Students who are frequently late or absent may be required to attend additional school time (after school, on weekends, during summer school etc.) in order to get back on track towards graduation
  - School staff will work with students and families to help them improve their attendance by connecting students to resources, helping students navigate barriers, and helping students build skills.

### **Compulsory Education and Truancy**

Pennsylvania's Compulsory School Attendance Law mandates that all children until the age of 18 attend school. Every parent/guardian of a school-aged child is responsible for the child's attendance at school. Failure of a child to attend school has certain legal consequences for parents and, possibly, for the student. In Pennsylvania, truancy is defined as when a child of compulsory school age is absent from school for three (3) or more days without a valid excuse. Absences without a valid excuse are considered unexcused absences.

YouthBuild Philly's approach to truancy-prevention prioritizes support and collaboration with students and families first and foremost. As such:

- Students will not receive exclusionary consequences such as suspensions or expulsions for truant behavior.
- A Student Attendance Improvement Conference will always take place prior to any referral to a legal entity.

### **Updated COVID-19 Guidance**

For the 24-25 school year, YouthBuild Philly will no longer require a 5-day isolation period for those who test positive for COVID-19. This shift to treating COVID-19 like other respiratory viral illnesses is in alignment with guidance from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH), and comes as the data in our region has shown greater immunity against the virus, with declining hospitalizations and deaths. That said, it is still important to be careful. Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should still take the following precautions:

- Stay home if you have symptoms and remain home until are symptom-free and fever-free for at least 24 hours (without medication).
- Wear a well-fitted mask for 5 days after their return to school.
- Practice good hygiene – wash hands regularly with soap and water or hand sanitizer, and cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
- Parents/guardians should notify the school nurse if their child tests positive for COVID-19 or is diagnosed with any contagious illness.