

### Why is attendance important? Research shows:

- By being present at school, your child learns valuable social skills and has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with other students and school staff.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with schoolwork, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- Missing 10 percent (just two days a month or about 18 days in a year) increases the chance that your student will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- By 6<sup>th</sup> grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- By 9<sup>th</sup> grade, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8<sup>th</sup> grade test scores.

### RCW 28A.225.010

The state law for mandatory attendance, called the Becca Bill, requires children from age 8-17 to attend a public school, private school, or a district approved home school program. Children who are under 7 years old are not required to be enrolled in school, *however*, once a child is enrolled after the age of 5, the student must attend full-time. To learn more, visit: <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/> or <https://www.bremertonschools.org/domain/1674>

This summary is not intended to capture the full details of the law; please refer to the RCWs for the full extent of the requirements.

- After 1 unexcused absence, the school must inform the parent/guardian in writing or by telephone. RCW 28A.225.020
- After 3 unexcused absences in a 30-day period - Our school needs to schedule a conference with parent/guardian and student for the purpose of identifying barriers to the student's regular attendance and identify supportive steps and resources that may be made available to the family and student. RCW 28A.225.020
- Between 2 and 7 unexcused cumulative absences in a school year- Our school needs to take data-informed steps to eliminate or reduce student absences. RCW 28A.225.020
- Not later than the 7th unexcused absence in a month- Our school shall do one of the following:
  - Enter into an agreement with the student and parent establishing attendance requirements, OR
  - Refer student to a Community Engagement Board (CEB), OR
  - File petition to juvenile court under subsection (1) of RCW 28A.225.030
- After 7 unexcused absences in a 30-day period and not later than 15 cumulative in a school year - File truancy petition with Juvenile Court. RCW 28A.225.035