

## **REVISED ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

There have been significant changes in the focus of our attendance policy and procedures for the 2010 – 2011 school year in response to the VT Legislature's passage of Act 44, Section 46, *An Act Relating to Miscellaneous Amendments to Education Law*. Specifically, this act requires schools to develop a comprehensive truancy policy, which shifts our efforts from a reactive and punitive approach (if you exceed 10 absences, you will lose credit) to an intervention model (what resources can the school provide to help the student and family improve attendance). In response to this legislation and with the guidance of the Department of Education, Oxbow High School has developed a comprehensive School Attendance Policy and Protocols. A flowchart showing the complete detail of this new policy will appear in the Parent Student Handbook and on our website (<http://oxbowhs.org/drupal/>).

In brief, here are the key components of our new attendance policy:

- A series of interventions will take place when a student reaches 5, 10, 15, and 20 absences in any period during the course of a school year. The start of a new semester no longer means a student starts with 0 absences – their first semester absences are carried over to the second semester.
- Interventions include parent/guardian contact, guidance and core team meeting(s) with the student and/or parent/guardian, Educational Support Team (EST) meeting with student and parent/guardian with the development of an action plan, intervention and support by and from our Home School Coordinator, referrals to DCF, the judiciary and Family Court, and involvement of a Truant Officer.
- Procedurally, our new policy requires students who return to school after an absence to provide the school with a signed and dated note from the parent or guardian that states the reason for the absence and, if the absence was due to an appointment, a note from the provider (doctor, dentist etc.). A phone call from the parent or guardian on the day of the absence can take the place of this note.
- “Unexcused absences” – absences for which a note, phone call, or other documentation have not been provided, will be considered as truancy and a disciplinary consequence will be given.

- Tardiness to school after 5 occurrences in a semester will result in a detention for each additional tardy.

The Attendance Review Board (ARB) will no longer exist. If our EST feels that our resources and interventions haven't worked and that the family is not willing to work with the school to improve their child's attendance, then a truancy petition will be filed with the State's Attorney. It is our belief that our new policy and protocols will help families and students improve attendance and learning.