



# Wilton High School

Wilton High School is a community of learners dedicated to academic and personal excellence. Within a nurturing, respectful environment, we foster scholarship, character, and citizenship.

## MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL CANTY WHS ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 3, 2009

Dear parents,

Please be reminded that it is important that you thoroughly review the *Wilton High School Student/Athletic Handbook*. More specifically, please read pp. 25-28 of the handbook for a detailed explanation of updated procedures and consequences for our school's attendance policy.

The most notable changes involve parental notification of absences (there will be no negotiation of an unexcused absence after a one week grace period from the date of the absence) and credit loss (credit loss will occur if a student accumulates eight or more attendance points from qualifying excused absences, unexcused absences, or unexcused tardies in a given course in a given marking period (0.25 credits). Please view a description of the Wilton High School Attendance Policy Codes attached to this letter. These codes are also available on our Wilton High School homepage Website from the "Administration" navigation bar.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's assigned administrator at 762-0381.

Sincerely,  
Tim Canty  
Principal

## WHS Attendance Policy Codes 2009-2010

<b>Non-Qualifying Excused Absences = 0 Attendance Points</b>		
Code	Points	Reason
HH	0	Sent Home Ill by the Health Office
HO	0	Health Office
AI	0	All-Day Illness
DF	0	Death in Family/Critical Family Illness
WC	0	With Counselor
WA	0	With Administrator
BP	0	Band Pullout
FT	0	Field Trip
AD	0	Athletics Dismissal
TE	0	Testing
AE	0	Absent Excused
IS	0	In-School Suspension
OS	0	Out-of-School Suspension
CV	0	Three School Days for College Visits
AN	0	Non-Qualifying Absence Excused by Administrator
<b>Qualifying Excused Absences = 1 Attendance Point</b>		
Code	Points	Reason
LA	1	Late Arrival
ED	1	Early Dismissal
MD	1	Routine Medical/Dental Appointments
DT	1	Driver's Examinations
FV	1	Family Vacations
C4	1	School Days for College Visits beyond cap of three
AQ	1	Qualifying Absence Excused by Administrator
<b>Unexcused Absences = 3 Attendance Points</b>		
Code	Points	Reason
AU	3	Absent Unexcused
<b>Tardy to Class = 0.5 Attendance Point</b>		
Code	Points	Reason
TU	0.5	Tardy Unexcused

**Credit Loss** - The attendance policy at Wilton High School is not intended to deny credit to students who were unable to attend school or a class due to a sanctioned reason beyond the control of the student/parent(s)/guardian(s). However, consistent with the attendance philosophy statement outlined above, **credit loss will occur if a student accumulates eight or more attendance points in a given course in a given marking period (0.25 credit**

## **Change in policy regarding receipt of automated telephone notification**

*Recently, we decided to allow our teachers to have until **11 p.m. each day** to enter their daily attendance information. Therefore, you will receive the automated telephone notification on the school day **after** your student has an unexcused absence. This is a modification from our previous protocol that appeared in the Student Handbook on page 25 that indicated that you would receive a phone call on the day of the absence.*

*We believe that this change in practice, which is based on our observation during the first two weeks of school, will greatly increase our ability to provide accurate daily attendance information.*

## **When was the login and password to view my child's attendance through Parent Portal sent to my home?**

*The login and password information was sent in the student mailing that you received before school that contained your child's schedule. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Debbie Chann at 203-762-0381 Ext. 6309.*

## **Why am I not seeing a P if students are present in class?**

*Please recognize that the default if students are present in class is a blank. Teachers are trained only to enter AU (absent unexcused) or TU (absent excused). Many parents are expecting to see P on their child's report if students are present in class. You will only see a P if an adjustment has been made by the Attendance Office.*

## **Why is the grace period of one week so short?**

*The one week grace period is in fact an honest effort to recognize that our students and parents lead busy lives. Our research indicated that many of our other comparable schools only have a 48 hour grace period. We felt this time period was too short and we wanted to be sure that a weekend was available to parents.*

*Clearly, if we are going to hold to this guideline, we will need to provide timely communication. We will also have to demonstrate understanding of other mitigating variables that may prevent parents from providing prompt follow-through.*

*At the end of the day, parents should be knowledgeable on the front end if their child will miss a class and, as a result, will provide an appropriate reason. If students do not cut their classes, and we do our job to take care of school-related absences that are under our watch, then there should not be a problem. The phone message from school will be key.*

*We also feel that the 8 point threshold will also provide a built in safety-net for any unforeseen concerns. Classes meet approximately 40 times in a marking period. To get to the 20% level of being absent from class would involve major attendance-related issues, unless again, students are deliberately cutting class or arriving late.*

**Recent Attendance Common Questions**  
**September 18, 2009**

**QUESTION: Can the automated phone call message be modified to include the student's name?**

*As of September 17, the automated telephone message includes the first name of the student. Please be reminded that the call is delivered **on the school day** after **your student has an unexcused absence**. **This will be helpful for families who have more than one student at WHS.***

**QUESTION: Is it possible for a parent who has more than one student at WHS to login once to access the records of all students?**

*No, there is currently one login for each child, and no way to assign that login to multiple students. That process has been talked about for future releases of PowerSchool.*

**QUESTION: What is the protocol if a student leaves school due to illness without reporting to and being released by the Health Office?**

*The language in the Student Handbook on p. 27 is clear.*

*"If a student leaves school due to illness without approval from the Health Office, all subsequent absences will be unexcused and the student will be held accountable for leaving campus without authorization."*

***Tim Canty, Principal***  
***Wilton High School***  
***(W) 203-762-0381 Ext. 6201***