

## Brandon Middle School 2008-2009

Dear Parents,

Our goal at Brandon Middle School is to educate every child and continue our school wide mission of creating a "Tradition of Excellence." In order to ensure that your child receives the best education possible, it is imperative your child be at school. We know that unforeseen circumstances occur with our children. Your child may get sick, have a doctor's appointment, a death in the family, an educational trip, or many other unforeseen circumstances that may cause your child to be absent from school. **When a circumstance occurs that causes your child to be absent from school it is imperative that you send a written note with your child to excuse the day(s) he/she is absent when he/she returns to school.** Below you will find three sections copied from the RCSD Student Handbook which pertain to attendance

- Section 1: "Written Excuses" is the information the School will need when you are writing your child's excuse when he/she returns to school.
- Section 2: "Excused Absences" Criteria which constitutes a valid excused absence when the proper evidence is provided for your child's absence.
- Section 3: "Truancy" as it relates to unexcused absences that your child may accumulate if a valid written note is not brought in and presented to the school personnel for an excused absence.

### **Section 1** **THE WRITTEN EXCUSE, Page 15**

The student must present a signed written excuse from a parent (to include a signed school generated Parent Excuse Form), guardian, or doctor on the day the student returns to school unless permission to be absent was granted by school officials before the absence occurred.

**The written excuse should contain:**

1. The date written
2. **Full name** of the student
3. The date(s) of the student's absence(s)
4. The cause of the absence
5. The signature of the parent, guardian, custodian, or doctor
6. The phone number where parent, guardian, or custodian can be reached.

### **Section 2** **Rankin County School District Policy Page 14-15** **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Each of the following will constitute a **valid excuse** for temporary non-attendance of a compulsory school age student enrolled in school, provided satisfactory evidence of the excuse is provided to the principal of the school:

1. Authorized school activities
2. Illness or injury of the student
3. Isolation of the student by health officials
4. Death or serious illness of a member of the immediate family of the student
5. Medical or dental appointments
6. Proceedings of a court when the student is a party to the action or is under subpoena
7. Observance of religious events
8. Educational opportunities such as travel including vacations or other family travel with the prior approval of the principal
9. Other emergency or unusual conditions subject to the approval of the principal

Excused absences are granted once the written notes from the parents/guardians or medical/dental excuses are received by the school. **Written notes must be received on the day of return to school if the absence is to be excused.** After three (3) excused absences per nine weeks based on parental notes, a doctor's excuse will be required for excusing an absence. Exceptions can be made by the principal when extreme circumstances arise. Students who are absent for all or part of a day must have an admit to class before re-entering each class missed.

**Section 3**  
**TRUANCY, Page 17**

If a compulsory school age child has not been enrolled in school within fifteen (15) calendar days after the first day of the school year or if a student has **accumulated five (5) unexcused absences during the school year**, the principal shall report such absences to the school attendance officer within two (2) school days or five (5) calendar days, whichever is less. The method prescribed by the State Department of Education shall be followed when reporting such unlawful absences. Forms designated for that purpose by the District shall be used. The parents, guardian or custodian of a compulsory age child is expected to enroll said child in school unless the child is determined by school officials to be incapable of school attendance as based upon medical documentation, a handicapping condition, or documentation that the child is enrolled in a legitimate home instruction program as accepted by school attendance officer. Parents, guardians, or custodians failing to comply with compulsory attendance laws will be subject to punishment within the provision of section 97-5-39, Mississippi Code of 1972.

The first truant offense may bring about a suspension of one day or in-school suspension for two days. The second and subsequent truant offenses may result in up to a three day suspension or one week of in-school suspension. Parents are expected to accompany the student back to school for re-admittance after each act of truancy. Truancy shall be recorded as unexcused absences.

LEGAL REFERENCE: MS Code 37-13-91, 37-13-92.  
JHB 7-12-06

I am the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, a Brandon Middle School student. I have read the following excerpts from the Rankin County School District Student Handbook. I understand the importance of my child being present at school, but in the event my child is absent, I agree to assist the school by writing an excuse for my child the day he/she returns to school following an absence.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date