

## TO OUR BASSETT FAMILIES

### Changes to School Attendance Law (HB 410)

Dear Bassett Families,

I am writing to notify you of recent changes to school attendance law. Specifically, House Bill (HB) 410 was passed by the Ohio General Assembly in December 2016. The changes are intended to encourage and support a proactive approach to minimizing excessive absences and truancy.

Regular attendance at school contributes to student success. Absences, even when excused due to illness, family obligation, and vacation requests, do accumulate throughout the school year and can negatively impact learning and student engagement. It is important for every student to attend school every day and on time. In an effort to support academic success for all students, HB 410 requires districts to partner with families to identify and reduce barriers to regular school attendance.

HB 410 requires schools to make several changes to attendance procedures for the 2017-18 school year. The first change relates to tracking of student attendance to the hour. All absences including illness, late arrival, early dismissals, appointments during the school day, planned vacation requests, etc. are required to be tracked.

A second change required by HB 410 is parent notification of excessive absences and truancy.

A child is considered to have "EXCESSIVE ABSENCES" when he/she has accumulated **excused and/or unexcused** absences totaling 38 hours in one school month or 65 hours in one school year. When a student reaches this mark the district must:

- Notify the student's parents in writing within seven days of the triggering absence;
- Convene the building absence intervention team (including the parent/guardian and student if appropriate) and implement the building or district developed plan for absence intervention; and
- Consider a referral to community resources on behalf of the student/family.

A child is considered to have been "HABITUALLY TRUANT" when he/she has accumulated 30 consecutive hours of unexcused absences, and/or unexcused absences totaling 42 hours in one school month, or 72 hours in one school year. Based on HB 410, the following will occur:

- Notify the student's parents in writing within seven days of the triggering absence;
- Convene the building absence intervention team (including the parent/guardian and student if appropriate) and implement the building or district developed plan for absence intervention; and
- If progress is not made on the absence intervention plan OR if the student refuses to participate a complaint will be filed with juvenile court

A third change introduced by HB 410 is that districts can no longer suspend or expel a student as a result of excessive absences or truancy. Instead, options including intervention, community service or referral to a community agency to remove barriers to attendance must be considered.

As always, we look forward to working with you and your child/children throughout the school year and are confident that, together, we can promote regular and timely attendance.

Sincerely,

**Mr. Jim Sanfilippo**  
**Principal**