

Attendance Policy:

Regular school attendance matters because students learn best through consistent instruction, daily engagement, and ongoing relationships with teachers and peers. Studies consistently show that students who attend school perform better than those who don't. Missing even a few days can cause students to fall behind academically and disrupt classroom progress. The School encourages families to prioritize attendance and communicate early when challenges arise so that we can work together to support student success. The School expects students to be present every day school is in session, except when there is a valid reason to be absent. This policy explains what counts as an excused or unexcused absence, how parents should communicate with the School, and what steps the School takes when attendance becomes a concern.

1. Compulsory Attendance

Students between the ages of 6 and 16 are required to attend school regularly. Students who are 16 or 17 must also attend unless they complete a formal withdrawal process with signed parent consent. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school daily and arrives on time.

2. What Counts as Being "In Attendance"

A student is considered present when they are physically at school or participating in a school-approved instructional activity off campus. Students must be in attendance for a minimum of four (4) hours of instructional time to be considered present each day. The School records attendance every day and maintains accurate records throughout the year.

3. Excused Absences, Unexcused Absences, and Truancy

The School will excuse an absence when the parent provides a written or digital explanation within 48 hours of the student's return, regardless of whether the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, or whether the school is in session.

The School monitors attendance closely to identify early signs of a problem. An issue arises if the total number of absences, excused or unexcused, is greater than the truancy amount, the student is subject to dismissal. A student is considered truant for intervention purposes when he or she has: 5 unexcused absences within a 30-day period, or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-day period, or shows a pattern of nonattendance (which may include excessive excused absences).

When this happens, the School will reach out to the family to discuss what's going on and develop a plan to improve attendance. This may include meetings with the parent, an attendance improvement plan, support services, or referrals for outside help.

If attendance does not improve after reasonable efforts, the School may take further action as allowed by state law, including but not limited to dismissing the student.

Absences are excused for reasons such as:

- Illness, injury, or medical appointments
- Illness or death in the immediate family
- Recognized religious holidays or religious instruction

- Legal or court appointments
- Pre-approved educational activities or family trips of educational value
- Therapy or treatment appointments, including services for autism
- Emergencies, natural disasters, or other significant family hardships
- Pregnancy- or parenting-related absences when medically documented
- Unique circumstances. This requires the principal's written approval and is on a case-by-case basis.

Parents should provide documentation when possible, especially for repeated medical absences. The principal has the final say on whether an absence is excused. Documentation may include a parent written note or email, or other written explanation. The School may verify documentation when needed.

If a student has frequent absences for medical reasons, the School may request medical documentation to better understand the student's needs and ensure appropriate support.

4. Unexcused Absences

An absence will be marked unexcused when:

- No explanation is provided
- The reason does not fit the School's excused categories
- The student misses class without permission
- The student leaves campus without approval

Repeated unexcused absences may trigger the School's intervention process. When an absence is initially recorded as unexcused, the School will notify the parent and provide an opportunity to submit appropriate documentation. If no documentation is received within the required timeframe, the absence will remain unexcused.

5. Tardies and Early Pickups

Students are expected to arrive on time and stay for the full school day.

Tardies and early departures may be excused for the same reasons as absences. Repeated unexcused tardies or early checkouts may be counted toward a pattern of nonattendance.

Frequent early pickups and late arrivals disrupt learning and should only occur when necessary. Families are encouraged to schedule appointments before or after school hours whenever possible. Parents should provide a note, email, or other written explanation for excused tardies or early departures. Phone calls may be accepted for same-day notice when appropriate, but written follow-up may be requested.

6. Make-Up Work

Students will always have the opportunity to make up work they missed during an absence. As a general rule, students receive at least one school day to complete make-up work for each day they were absent, with more time available when appropriate. Work missed during suspension must also be allowed. Teachers will provide or post missed assignments within a reasonable time after the student returns. Major tests or assessments may be scheduled at the teacher's discretion to maintain the integrity of the curriculum while still giving the student a fair opportunity to complete the work.

7. Hospital/Homebound Students

Students approved for Hospital/Homebound services are still expected to participate regularly in their individualized instructional program. Eligibility for Hospital/Homebound services requires a physician's certification stating that the student is unable to attend school for an extended period due to a medical, physical, or psychiatric condition.

8. Religious Release Time

Parents may request that their child be released during the school day for religious instruction or observance. These requests must be submitted in writing ahead of time. Students will have the chance to make up any missed work. The School will work with families to accommodate religious observances to the extent permitted by law, while maintaining academic and operational standards.

9. Approved School Activities

Students participating in school-approved field trips, school events, or instructional activities away from campus are considered present for attendance purposes. The supervising teacher or staff member must confirm that the student participated in the activity in order for the student to be marked present.

10. Withdrawal and Non-Enrollment

If a student withdraws from the School and does not enroll in another school within five school days, the School may begin nonattendance procedures. Parents are encouraged to notify the School promptly when their child transfers. If the School does not receive a records request from the student's new school within five school days after withdrawal, School staff will attempt to contact the parent to confirm the student's new enrollment. If the family cannot be reached, the School may begin appropriate nonattendance procedures.

11. Communication and Publication

This Attendance Policy will be shared with families through the School's registration materials and website. Parents are encouraged to contact the School with any questions or attendance-related needs. Parents are responsible for keeping their contact information current so they can receive attendance messages, reminders, and important school updates.

This Policy on Dismissal of Students was approved by a majority of a quorum of the Governing Board of School at a duly noticed meeting held on 11-20-25

Rachel Costa
Board Secretary Signature
Rachel Costa
Print Name
2-6-24
Date