



## **Learner Attendance Policy**

Board Approved: September 8, 2020

Believing that children benefit from regular attendance in school, our school expects each child to attend school every day. If a child cannot attend school, the office staff should be notified of all absences by a telephone call, email or other digital notification, visit to the office, or written note from the parent/guardian on the day that the learner is absent for the required attendance tracking by the State of California.

### Excused Absences for Classroom Based Attendance

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law or Board policy.

A learner's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness;
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer;
3. Medical, dental, ophthalmologic, or chiropractic appointments;
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family:
  - a. Excused absence in this instance shall be limited to one day if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state.
  - b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/ daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any relative living in the learner's immediate household.
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law;
6. Justifiable personal reasons, when accompanied by a written request by the parent or guardian and approved by the School Director or his/her designee, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Appearance in court
  - b. Attendance at a funeral service
  - c. Observance of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion

- d. Attendance at religious retreats
  - e. Attendance at an employment conference
  - f. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization
7. Serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Elections Code § 12302.
  8. Spending time with a member of the learner's immediate family, who is an active duty of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this section shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the School Director.
  9. If a learner is the custodial parent of a child, his/her absence shall be excused when the child is ill or has a medical appointment during school hours.
  10. For the purpose of attending the learner's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.

Attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed four hours per semester.

Learners absent for the reasons deemed "excused" shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence that can be reasonably provided and, upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time, shall be given full credit therefor. The facilitator of the class from which a learner is absent shall determine which tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the learner missed during the absence.

In the case of a State declared emergency which requires distance learning attendance will be as follows:

#### Excused Absence

Excused absences in distance learning will follow the attendance guidelines outlined above and may also include reasons that are deemed by the school administrator, based on the learner's circumstances, as constituting a valid excuse such as the absence was due to lack of connectivity or equipment over which the learner does not have control or any other reason outside of learner's control.

#### Method of Verification

When learners who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods may be used to verify learner absences:

1. Written note or email from parent/guardian, parent representative, or learner if 18 or older;
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the learner's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
  - a. Name of learner;
  - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative;
  - c. Name of verifying employee;
  - d. Date or dates of absence; and
  - e. Reason for absence.
3. Visit to the learner's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method, which establishes the fact that the learner was absent for the reasons stated. A written recording shall be made, including information outlined above.
4. Physician's verification
  - a. When excusing learners for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, school staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
  - b. When a learner has had 14 absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed in #1-#3 above, any further absences for illness must be verified by a physician.

Insofar as class participation is an integral part of learners' learning experiences, parents/guardians and learners shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

In grades 7 through 12, school authorities may excuse any learner from school to obtain confidential medical services without the consent of the learner's parent/guardian.

Learners in grades K-6 should not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency. Learners in grades 7-12 should not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency or confidential medical appointments.

#### Unexcused Absences/Truancy for Classroom Based Attendance

The School Director, or designee, shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy and unexcused absences.

A maximum of fourteen excused absences are allowed per year. After the 14th excused absence, an illness will be considered excused only if it is documented by a licensed medical physician. Absences beyond the 14th that are not excused by a physician's note will be considered unexcused absences.

A learner's grades may be affected by excessive unexcused absences.

When the learner's attendance problems cannot be resolved or is habitual, a learner, parent and/or guardian may:

- receive formal written notice of truancy;
- be compelled to require the learner to attend school as mandated by public schools and laws;
- meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the learner's truancy;
- meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss social emotional or academic support for the learner in regards to school;
- look to develop a joint plan to improve the learner's attendance;
- look to seek alternative educational programs may be available through the school;
- be recommended that the parent/guardian accompany the learner to school and attend classes with the learner for one day.

In the case of a State declared emergency which requires distance learning attendance will be as follows:

#### Unexcused Absence

An unexcused absence under distance learning would be when no excuse is provided, or when the excuse that is provided is determined not to be valid based on the policy listed above or based on the discretion of a school administrator.