

Students

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Excused Absences

A student'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, optometrical, 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 student's immediate household.
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law
6. Exclusion from school, for up to five school days, for failure to present evidence of immunization
7. Participation in religious instruction or exercises in accordance with district policy
 - a. In such instances, the student shall attend at least the minimum school day.
 - b. The student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four school days per month.

A student's absence shall be excused for justifiable personal reasons including but not limited to the following. Advance written request by the parent/guardian and approval of the principal or designee shall be required for absences for:

1. Appearance in court
2. Attendance at a funeral service for a person other than a member of the student's immediate family.

3. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion
4. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours during a semester
5. Employment interview or conference

In addition, if a student 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.

When students 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 student absences:

1. Written note from parent/guardian, parent representative, or student if 18 or older
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
 - a) Name of student
 - b) Name of parent/guardian or parent representative
 - c) Name of verifying employee
 - d) Date of dates of absence
 - e) Reason for absence
3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. A written recording shall be made including information outlined above.
4. Physician's verification
 - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, district 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 student has had 14 absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed in #1 - #3 above, a principal may request that any further absences for illness must be verified by a physician.

Tardiness to Class

Tardiness on the part of any student is a very serious matter. Tardiness is considered to be a disruption of school policy. Promptness to class is extremely important. Students are expected to be in their places ready for work, at the bell. The district policy for K-8 and 9-12 students is as follows:

K-8 and 9-12

Each K-8 and 9-12 (excluding El Camino High School) principal, with the assistance of his/her staff, shall establish a system of specific procedures to promote student promptness to class. Each K-8 and 9-12 site tardy procedure shall be compatible with related district procedures and policies for attendance and discipline. Each site's tardy procedures shall:

1. Provide a definition of excused tardies.
2. Require the principal/designee to determine if a pupil's tardiness is unexcused tardiness.
3. Specify a procedure for notifying parents of each incident of unexcused tardiness.
4. Establish a progressive consequence for a student's first unexcused tardy.
5. Establish a progressive system of consequence for subsequent tardies.
6. Require enforcement of procedures by each teacher.
7. Establish a definition of persistent tardiness and a procedure for resolving the problem with the parent and student.
8. Establish a criterion for judging habitual tardiness as truancy and a procedure of referral to the School Guidance Team or School Attendance and Conduct Review Board as appropriate.

El Camino and Phoenix High Schools

1. "Productive Hours" is a component of many courses at El Camino and Phoenix High Schools. Tardiness reduces the potential for Productive Hours, and therefore, slows progress toward earning credits.
2. Habitual tardiness may result in counseling, detentions, schedule changes and parent conferences.

Requests for Early Dismissal

Permission must be granted by the principal or designee according to each individual case.

Truancy

1. Students shall be classified as truant if absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than any 30 minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. Such students shall be reported to the Superintendent or designee.

The parent/guardian of a student classified as a truant shall be notified of the following:

- a. That the student is truant.
 - b. That the parent/guardians obligated to compel the student to attend school.
 - c. That the parent/guardian who fails to meet this obligation may be guilty of an infraction of the law and subject to prosecution pursuant to Education Code 48290-48296.
 - d. That the parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the student's truancy.
 - e. That alternative educational programs are available in the district.
 - f. That the student may be subject to arrest by a probation officer, a peace officer, a school administrator, an attendance supervisor or his/her designee under Education Code 48264 if found away from home and absent from school without a valid excuse.
 - g. That the student may be subject to suspension, restriction or delay of his/her driving privilege pursuant to Vehicle Code 13202.7.
 - h. That it is recommended that the parent/guardian accompany the student to school and attend classes with the student for one day.
2. Upon his/her first truancy, a student may be given a written warning by a peace officer. A record of this warning may be kept at school for at least two years or until the student graduates or transfers from the school. If the student transfers, the record may be forwarded to the new school.
 3. Upon his/her second truancy within the same school year, a student may be assigned to an after school or weekend study program within the county. If the student fails to successfully complete this study program, he/she shall be subject to item #5 below.
 4. Upon his/her first or second truancy within the same school year, an appropriate district staff member shall make every effort to hold at least one conference with the student and parent/guardian and may discuss resources available for achieving regular school attendance, which may include:

- a. Program changes
 - b. Referral of family to community agency
 - c. Referral to school psychologist or student study team
 - d. Modified day
 - e. Independent study
 - f. Special school projects, special programs
 - g. School furlough
 - h. Work experience education
 - i. Alternative education
 - j. Referral for health checkup, medical examination
5. Upon his/her third truancy within the same school year, a student may be referred to, and required to attend, an attendance review board, a truancy mediation program established by the district attorney or the probation officer, or a comparable program deemed acceptable by the Superintendent or designee. If the student does not successfully complete the truancy mediation program or other similar program, he/she shall be subject to item #6 below.
6. Upon his/her fourth truancy within the same school year, the student shall be classified a habitual truant. A habitual truant may be referred to a school attendance review board or to the probation department.
- When a student is referred to a school attendance review board or to the probation department, the Superintendent or designee shall provide the student and the parent/guardian, in writing, the name and address of the school attendance review board or probation department and the reason for the referral. This notice shall indicate that the student and parent/guardian will be required, along with a district staff member, to meet with the school attendance review board or probation officer to consider a proper disposition of the referral.
7. If a student in grades 7-12 has been judged by the county juvenile court to be a habitual truant or habitually insubordinate or disorderly at school, or if a student has been required by the court to attend school as a condition of probation, the principal or his/her designee shall inform the juvenile court and the student's probation or parole officer within 10 days, whenever that student is insubordinate, disorderly at school, or truant or tardy without a valid excuse.

The Superintendent or designee shall gather and transmit to the County Superintendent of Schools the number of referrals and types of referrals made to the school attendance review board and the number of requests for petitions made to the juvenile court.

