

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

It is essential to teach our students that education is a priority in their lives. Through regular school attendance, students learn personal responsibility with emphasis on the importance of education as a lifelong foundation.

NOTIFICATION:

Parents are required to notify the school office before 8:30 a.m. on the day of a child's absence.

On the first day that the student returns to school after an absence, the student is required to present his/her teacher an absentee note properly completed and signed by a parent or physician.

A medical excuse from a doctor is required for three (3) or more consecutive days of absence.

Parents may write up to 10 cumulative absentee notes for a student per one school year. Every absence thereafter requires a doctor's verification of illness. Failure to provide the required **Doctor's Excuse** will result in the absence being recorded as unlawful. A **Doctor's Excuse** means that the physician must certify that the student was under his/her care for the period of the absence and must include all dates for which the student is to be excused.

It is mandatory for a parent to send a note reporting an absence and/or tardy and reason.

If a written excuse is not provided within 3 days of the absence, the absence will be permanently counted as unlawful.

TARDY:

Students who arrive at school after 8:00 a.m. but before 10:00 a.m. will be considered tardy.

There are two types of tardies.

1. *Medical tardies*: Student had a medical or dental appointment or was ill in the morning prior to arrival. Parent must provide medical professional late slip or note to inform school office of medical tardy upon arrival to school.

2. *Non-medical tardies*: Student was tardy to school for any reason other than medical or dental. Parent must provide a note to state why student was late to inform the school office upon arrival to school.
If a student accumulates 5 non-medical tardies, the school will change them to one unlawful absence.

ABSENCE:

Absences with a note from a licensed practitioner or health care provider will be considered a **LAWFUL** absence.

Absences due to illness, family emergency, injury, quarantine, required court attendance, death of a family member, medical and dental appointments, authorized school activities, and educational travel with prior principal approval are considered LAWFUL absences.

All absences will be treated as UNLAWFUL until the school receives a written excuse explaining the reason(s) for an absence.

HALF DAY:

Students who arrive after 10:00 a.m. will be considered absent for half day. Parents must provide note if it was a medical or a non-medical absence.

If a student leaves after 10:00 a.m., due to illness or a medical/dental appointment and doesn't return to school will be considered absent for half day.

Early dismissals will be monitored for frequency.

Five (5) early dismissals for medical/dental appointments may be changed to one (1) day lawful absence.

No student is permitted to leave the school after arrival in the morning or at any time during the day before the regular dismissal except in the case of a doctor's appointment, sickness, or similar emergency. In such cases, the student is permitted to wait in the waiting area outside of the school office until the parent or person authorized by the parent arrives. No student will be permitted to wait outside the building or leave with an individual other than the one who has been designated through a note or phone call by the parent. Parents are encouraged to make doctor and dental appointments after 3 p.m. to avoid interruption of the school day.

A student will not be dismissed early for reasons other than sickness unless the homeroom teacher and the school office receive a written statement from the parent explaining the reasons (e.g., doctor's appt.) for the early dismissal request. Upon arrival at the school, the parent must sign the student out in a book provided for this purpose.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS/VACATIONS:

If a student is going to be absent from school for more than two (2) days for a non-medical reason, a written request must be submitted to the principal for approval at least five (5) days prior to the absence.

Non-medical reasons include but are not limited to: non-school athletic competitions, Take Your Child to Work Day, and vacations.

Parents are requested not to plan vacations during the school term, as this is disruptive to both the class and student.

Any student who is out of school will be marked absent and is responsible to make up any work that is missed.

Students who participate in or attend extra-curricular or school sponsored activities must be present in school for the full day in order to participate.

School work that is missed must be made up upon return to school.

Only after **two (2) days** of absence, parents may request missed assignments to be picked up at the office.

Truancy and Habitually Truant Students

According to The Pennsylvania Department of Education, a child is “truant” if the child incurs three (3) or more school days of unexcused/unlawful absences during the current school year.

A child is “habitually truant” if the child has incurred six (6) or more school days of unexcused/unlawful absences during the current school year.

CONSEQUENCES:

A Friendly Reminder will be issued the first time the student returns without a absent or tardy note.

Extensive absences may be reported to the Diocesan Department of Education and/or Children and Youth Services. The student’s school district of residence remains responsible for complying with the authorities and obligations related to enforcing compulsory attendance laws.

Diocesan policy states that five (5) tardies for non-medical reasons will be changed to one (1) day unlawfully absent. Parents will be notified within 10 days of the child’s third (3) unexcused absence that the school district of residence has been notified of the truancy.

When a child withdraws from the non-public school or has been absent three (3) days or more without a lawful excuse, the non-public school is required to report the absence or withdraw at once to the child’s district of residence.

The resident school district may properly enforce the attendance and truancy requirements. For a student enrolled in a nonpublic school, the student’s school district of residence remains responsible for complying with the authorities and obligations related to enforcing compulsory attendance laws. The non-public schools must continually report unexcused absences to resident school districts throughout the school year.

If a person is convicted of a violation of compulsory attendance laws they may be (1) sentenced to pay a fine for the benefit of the school, (2) sentenced to perform community service, or (3) required to complete an appropriate course or program designed to improved school attendance. This decision is at the discretion of the judge imposing the sentence.

This attendance policy has been updated to comply with Act 39 of 2018 Basic Education Circular issued November 28, 2018 by Pennsylvania Department of Education.