

RIVERSIDE LOCAL SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is a major component of the State Report Card for our school and the academic success of individual students. **Strict and consistent adherence to State and School policies regarding attendance will be enforced.** It is impossible to foresee every issue regarding attendance that may occur, therefore, if there are any uncertainties concerning a particular situation it is recommended that they be addressed prior to the absence. Administration reserves the right to appropriately alter enforcement of policies in extreme situations.

The statutes governing school attendance are very specific and leave little option for school authorities to excuse children from school. Senate Bill 181, the "Truancy Bill", prescribes punishments for both students and parents when a student is deemed a "habitually" or "chronically" truant by the courts. **Habitual truancy is defined as any unexcused absence for "five (5) or more consecutive days, seven (7) or more days in a thirty (30) day period or fifteen (15) or more school days in a school year."**

Parent/Guardian Responsibility When a Student is Absent

- Call the school (585-5981 ext. 425) before 9:00 am to report their student's absence. Voice mail is available 24 hours/day. Calls from students (even if they are 18 years old) or siblings are not sufficient.
- If the absence is due to a medical, death in the family, or court appearance the absence is excused as long as official documentation is turned in to the school office no later than five days after the absence.

School Responsibility When a Student is Absent

- In compliance with the Missing Child Law, the Attendance Office will attempt to call parents at home/work whenever a student is absent and notification from parents has not been received.

Student Responsibility When Absent

- The student is responsible for collecting, completing, and turning in all assignments given during an excused absence and up to the seven (7) day allotment per semester.

Excused Absences

1. Personal illness...professional documentation is required within five days of the absence.
2. Death of a relative...limited to 3 days unless circumstances warrant an extension. Student must bring in the obituary of the loved one who has passed.
3. Court hearings...professional documentation is required.

ALL OTHER ABSENCES WILL BE UNEXCUSED

High School Tardies

- Students who are not in their assigned seat when the bell rings at 7:45 are tardy.
- Late students must use the main entrance only and report to the Attendance Office.
- **Students, who fail to sign in by 8:30am, will be given a ½-day absence.**
- Missing more than ½ of a period without an excused reason will result in an unexcused absence for the entire period.

- **Students are allowed only four tardies per semester and two tardies in a nine week period.**

Consequences for unexcused late arrivals to school per 9 week grading period:

- 1st and 2nd - warning
- 3rd – one detention
- 4th – two detentions
- 5th - Thursday School
- 6th – One day of ISS (in-school suspension)

Further tardies will result in elevation of consequences at the discretion of administration.

Unexcused Absence

- An absence is unexcused when:
 - a. The reason for the absence is unexcused.
 - b. Official verification has not been submitted as required by the 5-day limit.
- An unexcused absence means work due in all periods missed will receive no credit and the grade of zero. Missing more than half of a class period will result in the entire period recorded as unexcused.

Referral to Court

Students are permitted 7 days of unexcused absences prior to their absences being considered excessive. It is extremely important that students and parents realize and understand that 7 days of unexcused absences per semester built into this attendance policy are not to be considered as approved days to miss school. These days should be thought of as a *sick bank* to be used only when absolutely necessary. Excused absences will not count toward the 7 day allotment per semester.

- Students will be referred to Juvenile Court if their unexcused absences become habitual.
- The court defines “habitual absence” as:
 - 5 or more consecutive unexcused absences, or
 - 7 or more unexcused absences in a month, or
 - 14 or more unexcused absences in the school year.
- The Truant Officer may be sent to a student’s home for absences that in the judgment of the Principal are questionable.

College Visitation

- Notify Attendance Office one week prior to visit in writing, unless circumstances warrant other consideration.
- Limited to 2 days for seniors and 2 days for juniors.
- Official verification from the college must be submitted to excuse the absence and will also exclude the days missed from the 5 day rule as described above.

Vacation Days

- Though school policy allows for 5 days absent for family vacations, **it is highly discouraged to use these days unless unavoidable.**

- **Students must complete the following steps to obtain approval for the vacation days at least 5 days prior to the vacation absence.** These steps must also be completed for early dismissals and late arrivals due to vacation.
 1. Submit parent note requesting the vacation to the School Office.
 2. Obtain and have teachers complete the Vacation Assignment form.
 3. Submit completed Vacation Assignment form to the Attendance Office for approval by the administration.
- Upon completion of the above steps, parents will be promptly informed if there are any concerns to discuss relating to the vacation request.
- Failure to follow the above steps will result in the absences being recorded as unexcused and no credit for work missed.
- **No vacation days may be taken during exam or state standardized testing time.** Vacations should not be scheduled during possible make-up days at the end of the school year.
- Absences for hunting and to attend state tournaments must be requested as vacation days.

Early Dismissal

- No student may leave during the school day without first submitting a note from their parent/guardian unless the parent will be signing out the student. The note must indicate the date, time and reason for the early dismissal and a telephone number where they can be reached for verification.
- Students must sign out at the Attendance Office and only use the main entrance to exit the building.
- **Students who become ill at school must report to the main office. They will be referred to the school nurse for evaluation. The school nurse will then notify you if your child should be picked up due to illness. They are not allowed to call home first or leave without permission, this will result in an unexcused absence.**

Attendance Requirements for Extra-Curricular Participation

- Students must be present for at least 3½ hours in order to participate in an activity after school hours. This policy applies to illness, vacation days, and any unexcused absences. For example: 11:15 – 2:45 = 3 ½ hours or 7:45 – 11:15 = 3 ½ hours

Field Trip

- Does not add to student's absence record.
- Parent permission form must be filed before being allowed to attend.

Job Shadowing

- Only excused if assigned by a teacher. Secure paperwork from teacher in advance.
- Verification of attendance from the job shadowing supervisor must be submitted to Attendance Office following the experience.
- Does not add to student's absence record if proper procedures are followed.

Vacation Assignment Form

Student must complete this form with all proper signatures and return it to the main office for official approval of vacation days.

| | Assignments to be completed | Teacher Signature |
|----------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |

Student Signature

Administrative Secretary