



ATTENDANCE COUNTS

“Education Thrives when you keep Under Five”

If my child is absent, what do I need to do to get this absence excused?

All absences require a **written explanation** from the parent/guardian within three (3) school days of return from the absence. It must include:

- Student’s name (first and last)
- Parent/guardian’s full name
- Date(s) of absence(s)
- Documentation of reason for absence
- And **PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE**
- **Teacher’s name**

Can I just call or send an email or text with the reason for absence?

No. Per SC Department of Ed. guidelines, text messages and emails are not acceptable documentation for student absences. Explanations must be in writing with a signature. You can pdf or fax a note that is signed to us.

Is it possible my child may not be promoted to the next grade because of attendance?

Yes, it’s possible. Students in grades K-12 *may not* be eligible for promotion if they have more than 10 absences. The superintendent or designee (principal) shall approve or disapprove any student’s absence in excess of 10 days, whether lawful, unlawful, or a combination thereof, for students in K-12.

What is considered truant?

If a child, who is at least 6 but not yet 17, accumulates 3 consecutive absences or 5 total unlawful absences, the child is classified as truant. Once a child is truant, the child’s parent and school officials have additional responsibilities to improve the child’s attendance.

What is the expectation of a parent?

Parents are expected to make every reasonable effort to have their child in school ON TIME daily.

What is considered chronic absenteeism?

18 absences. If you are absent 2 days a month, you will be considered chronically absent.

What is lawful/unlawful?

Lawful absences are excused. Unlawful absences are unexcused.

What are lawful absences?

These include, but are not limited to:

- Absences caused by a student's own illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health and the health of others; the principal shall require a physician's certificate from the parent/legal guardian of students reported continuously absent for illness.
- Absences due to a death in the family
- Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal (state and national competitions, ceremonies honoring the student)
- Work approved or sponsored by the school, district, department of education
- Suspensions (in and out of school)
- Field trips approved by principal

What are unlawful absences?

These include but are not limited to:

- Absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents
- Absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents

Is it true that my child cannot participate in after-school activities if they don't come to school that day?

Yes, "no student who misses all or any portion of a school day, unless excused by the principal, shall be permitted to participate later that day or evening in any extracurricular or school-sponsored or authorized or related school activity."

What about being tardy?

Arriving late and leaving early do not impact attendance. However, your child is missing out when they are not here and you are forming habits and sending messages to your child if you consistently get to school late (that it doesn't matter if you're on time...) or leaving early (school's not important). Think about the message you want to send to your child. Be on time. Leave when school's over.

What about vacations/travel?

Travel is an amazing opportunity for students. Please note that while travel exposes your child to the world and things that we may not be able to here, they are still missing school

and their absences still accrue. Try to schedule vacations on long weekends, over holiday breaks, and in the summer.