

Attendance & Absences

Attendance

Good attendance is a habit we want to encourage in all students. Regular attendance gives children the best opportunity to learn and succeed in school and in life. When a child is absent, they miss important instruction that cannot be duplicated through make-up work. Too many absences, excused or unexcused, can keep students from succeeding in school. Research shows missing 10% of the school year—18 missed days or 2 days a month—can knock students off track socially and academically. NC Compulsory Attendance Law requires students to attend school every day unless the student has a valid excuse. Excused absence reasons are listed below. Parent of students who are absent 10 or more days without a valid excuse can be found in violation of the attendance law and face court action. Parents must notify their child's teacher within two days of returning to school from an absence of the reason for the absence in order to be excused.

Tardy to School

Students are expected to be in their seat, focused, and ready to learn by 7:50 am. Being absent, tardy in the morning, checked out of school early can put pressure on a child, will cause them to miss important class instruction, interrupts class time, and is often embarrassing for the child. Please make every effort to have your child arrive at school on time each day.

Excused Absences

Board Policy excused absences for the following reasons: 1) illness or injury, 2) quarantine, 3) death in the immediate family, 4) medical, dental, or other health care provider appointments, 5) court or administrative proceedings, 6) religious observances, 7) educational opportunity, 8) local school board policy, 9) absence related to deployment activities.

If my child is sick:

Students should not be sent to school with fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. If a student is absent, a parent/guardian is requested to call the school as soon after 7:30am as possible to report the absence. Students who become ill at school will remain in the office while a parent/guardian is contacted. In order to avoid exposing other students to germs, students who are ill should be picked up immediately after parent notification. Students who have been sick may not return to school until they have been symptom free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours without medication in order to prevent the spread of illness. **Parents must send a note or email to their child's teacher explaining the child's absence in order for the absence to be excused. This note does not have to be from a doctor but can be a note or email from the parent.**

Emergencies at School:

Although it is rare, students sometimes have medical emergencies at school and local emergency services are needed. These emergencies can include incidents such as seizures, asthma attacks, allergic reactions, etc. If emergency services are called for your child and EMS determines a hospital visit is not required, parents will be required to pick their child up from school in order to monitor their health issue at home.

Please note that a student must be present until 11:30am in order to be counted present for the day. Also, please be sure we have updated contact information in case of sickness or emergency. This includes new home phone numbers, cell numbers, and emergency contact numbers.

****If you move during the school year, please inform the front office as well as your child's teacher immediately of your new address. You will be asked to provide proof of residence for your new address so that the Data Manager can update your child's existing contact information. Accurate contact information is critical for timely communication.*

Medical Appointments:

Absences due to medical appointments must be documented with a note from the doctor's office to verify the absence/tardy.

When my child returns:

When the student returns to school after an absence, a written note and/or email should be sent in within two days of his/her return to school. Text and Dojo messages will not serve as a form of documentation for student absences. The written note or email should include the following: 1) name of child, 2) reason for absence, 3) date(s) of absence, and 4) signature of parent/guardian. Absences that are not documented by a parent note within two days will be coded as unexcused.

Excused Educational Absences:

Excused absences for educational opportunities will be approved in accordance with the above board policy. Parents must provide a written request using the appropriate form to Mrs. Wroblewski at least two weeks in advance in order for a team review of the request. Please contact the front office for an Educational Absence Request Approval Form or visit our website.

The decision to excuse (in part or in full) will be documented with the child's homeroom teacher and data manager for accurate record keeping. Requests received during or after the trip will be denied. For all parents, especially parents of 3-5 students, please do not plan vacations during the weeks of benchmark testing, EOG testing or remediation/retesting weeks. This is highly disruptive to the student and the overall testing process.

How to make a request:

Obtain an Educational Absence Request Approval Form from the front office or the Highland Elementary School website. Requests should provide details on how the trip will reinforce the curriculum under study in the current grade of the child. While many experiences are educational, the parameters for an excused absence are intended to reinforce curriculum standards or afford a unique opportunity such as an academic or athletic competition. Please visit the curriculum section of the ABSS website for current grade level standards to align your reason for requesting the time away to grade level standards. Note: Family trips to Disney, long weekends at the beach or mountains as well as family reunions and celebrations are not reasons to request excused absences for educational opportunity.

The following information will be needed in order to fill out the request form.

1. *Name of Student*
2. *Home Room Teacher*
3. *Date(s) of trip and number of school days that will be missed*
4. *The educational opportunity that the student will participate in*
5. *Specific grade level standards the trip will reinforce*
6. *Specific activities the child will be engaged with that align with the standards*
7. *Parent contact information*
8. *The request must also acknowledge that nothing could replace the contact time in the classroom and that additional parental support may be needed to complete missed assignments. Missing direct classroom instruction may lead to misunderstandings of content ultimately impacting grades on assessments.*