

## Attendance

There is strong evidence of a direct correlation between good attendance and student achievement. Parents should stress to their children the importance of attending school regularly. At the beginning of the school year, parents and students are notified by each school of its attendance policy. Parents and guardians are responsible for seeing that their children attend school each day it is in session, according to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education Policy JHBB and the NC Compulsory Attendance Law (N.C. G. S. – 115C-378). Under this law, a parent may be prosecuted in a criminal action if a student between the ages of 7 and 16 has more than 10 unexcused absences. The maximum penalty provided by law upon conviction is 120 days imprisonment and/or a fine of \$200, at the discretion of the judge. In addition, a child between the ages of 7 and 16 could be referred by the school to the Department of Juvenile Justice for the filing of a petition asking the court to find the child to be undisciplined.

A student must attend school for at least half of the day to be counted present. Parents will be contacted by a school representative when their child accumulates 3, 6 and 10 unexcused absences. After 10 unexcused absences, the principal's designee or attendance official will issue a 10-day letter stating that the student is in violation of the NC attendance law and parents may be referred for prosecution.

### **The following absences are school initiated and principal approved:**

- Field trip (school-initiated activity)
- Verified interview—College Day (high school juniors and seniors)
- Special programs (community program sanctioned by the school District or approved by the principal that is of educational value)
- Explorers (secondary schools)
- Internship (includes pages—secondary schools)
- Junior Achievement (secondary schools)

### **The absences listed below are considered excused once school personnel have received verification:**

- Illness of student
- Death in the immediate family
- Quarantine
- Approved educational opportunity (Form 5123.21, available at school)
- Doctor appointment
- Court or administrative proceedings
- Religious holiday (approved religious observances; must be approved in advance)

### **The absences listed below and all other absences not listed above are unexcused:**

- Bad weather
- Missing the bus
- Car trouble
- Lack of heat, water or electricity
- Shopping
- Babysitting
- Lack of clothing or shoes
- Oversleeping

Parents are encouraged to contact the school when their child is (or will be) absent. The school may also notify parents about the child's absence. Parents can request information from their school office regarding requests for valid educational opportunities.

When a child returns to school following an absence, the student must assume the responsibility for contacting individual teachers immediately about making up any missed work. Arrangements must be made no later than five school days after the student returns to school. If the work is satisfactory, full credit should be given for the completed work.

## ***Independence High School Attendance Procedures***

There is a direct correlation between attendance and student achievement. At the beginning of the school year, parents and students are notified by each school of its attendance policy. Parents and guardians are responsible for seeing that their children attend school each day it is in session, according to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education policy and the Compulsory Attendance Law (GS-115C-378). Under this law, a parent may be prosecuted in a criminal action if a student under the age of 16 has in excess of 10 unlawful absences. The maximum penalty provided by law upon conviction is 20 days imprisonment, a fine of \$200, or both, at the discretion of the judge. In addition a child between the ages of 6 and 16 could be referred by the school Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for the filing of a petition asking the Court to find the child to be undisciplined. A notification letter is sent that legal action will be taken when a student has 10 unexcused absences. Parents can request a copy of Form 5123.21 from the school office which requests excused absences(s) for valid educational opportunities. A student must be in attendance for **at least half the school day** in order to be counted present for the day.

### **High School Guidelines for Attendance and Recovery**

A student in grade 9-12 missing eleven (11) days, excused or unexcused, per class in a course for any reason other than a school initiated and Principal approved absence, will receive a grade of "F" for the course. Students with more than ten (10) absences from a class must work directly with that teacher to complete recovery. Each class period missed requires an hour and a half of recovery. Again, a student will receive a grade of "F" no matter what grade they have earned unless they make up each absence over 10 for a course.

### **Absence from school**

When students are absent from school, they should bring a note from their parent, guardian, or health care professional stating the students' legal name (not nickname), CMS student ID number, the reason for the absence and the date(s) absent from school. Students are responsible for submitting absence notes directly to the Attendance Office within three days of returning to school. Also parents can send this information through email to the attendance secretary. According to CMS guidelines, the Attendance Office will code the absence as excused or unexcused and notify teachers.

- The teacher's grade book is the "official" attendance record for recovery purposes.
- Parent/Guardian will receive a voice recording at home indicating that your student has missed one or more classes for that day regardless if the absence is excused or unexcused or if you submitted a note.

**NOTE:** For students who will miss more than 11 days because of extenuating circumstances, such as hospitalization, extended illness, death in the family, etc., a specialized recovery program has been instituted to give every opportunity for students to complete the course requirements and receive credit. Waiver forms should be obtained from the guidance department for excessive absences due to extenuating circumstances.

### **Please check the boxes and sign:**

- I understand that if I miss more than 10 days in a class I cannot receive credit for that course.**
- I understand I must work with my teachers to keep absences under the maximum allowed by law.**
- I understand that I must attend attendance recovery for absences above the maximum allowed by law (10) with my teacher or through the school attendance recovery program.**
- I must contact my counselor as soon as possible if there are documented extenuating circumstances that have led to my absences.**

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Student Signature

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Parent Signature