



03-102—Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is required by law and is a major key to students' success. Frequent absence of students from day-to-day classroom instruction disrupts the learning process. A quality education requires a continuity of instruction, class participation, learning experience, and study. Activities, discussions, simulations, and presentations take place every day and cannot be duplicated even by after-school instruction or make-up work.

Pacific Heritage Academy makes every effort, within the following guidelines, to encourage regular attendance for all students and to assist parents in their responsibility to have their children attend school regularly.

Guidelines

1. Students are expected to be in attendance every school day in order to receive maximum benefit from their education experiences.
2. Parents or guardians have primary responsibility for regular student attendance at school, although students also share in this responsibility. Parents or guardians are expected to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time as well.
3. Administrators shall work cooperatively with students, parents or guardians, teachers, and staff to improve student attendance. Administrators shall use earnest and persistent effort, including parent notification, to deter excessive and unexcused student absences.
4. Administrators will notify a parent or guardian as well as the involved student concerning possible consequences for excessive absenteeism, including academic consequences or District Court referral. Notification will be in the form of state mandated truancy letters, phone calls, or conferences, or disciplinary meetings. Habitual truant citations may be issued to students consistent with Section 53A-11-101.7.
5. A student will be considered "truant" if that student has missed school at least five (5) times without a valid excuse or, in other words, for reasons other than those authorized under school policy. A student will be considered "habitually truant" if that student is twelve (12) years of age or older and has missed school at least ten (10) times without a valid excuse.
6. Administrators will meet with school-age minors and their parents or guardians to resolve disputes whenever parents or guardians contest notices of truancy, the designation of absences as "unexcused," or the implementation of academic or disciplinary consequences due to absences. Unresolved disputes may be appealed to the Board of Trustees.

7. Parents must notify the Executive Director in advance of legitimate absences so that the absence is not designated "unexcused" (absences due to illness and emergency are an exception).
8. An "unexcused absence" is a student's absence from school for reasons other than those authorized under School Policy.
9. Students may be legitimately absent from class because of an "excused absence." An absence is designated as "excused" for illness, medical and dental appointments that cannot be reasonably scheduled after school, unusual opportunities for educational experiences beyond the classroom (pre-approved), family events such as reunions, weddings, religious events, and the like.
10. An absence will also be designated as "excused" when such an absence is consistent with student's IEP, Section 504 Accommodation Plan, even if it falls outside the regular "excused" absence category according to general school policy.
11. Whenever possible, a student anticipating an excused absence should contact the teacher in advance of the absence in order to acquire guidance for study and work while absent.
12. If a student has been legitimately absent from class, he/she must contact the teacher regarding make-up work when he/she returns (a younger student may utilize the help of a parent or guardian in this process).
13. If a student must leave school during the school day, parents or guardians must telephone the office to confirm an early checkout prior to the student's departure during the school day. The student must check out with the main office and there record his/her name, indicate the reason for early departure, and indicate the time of early departure.
14. The Administration will notify teachers in advance of excused or unexcused absences for which the school has been given notice.
15. Classroom teachers are required to record and verify daily student attendance. Classroom teachers will notify the Administration if a student's attendance is irregular or excessive (more than two consecutive or more than five total), or if the absence seems to be "unexcused" or inexplicable.
16. Individual teachers will, in accordance with school policy, develop grading and credit guidelines that promote attendance, class participation, and academic achievement.
17. Individual teachers will, in accordance with school policy, record tardiness and report the excessive tardiness of any student to the Administration. At the discretion of the Executive Director, excessive student tardiness will receive academic and/or disciplinary consequences in accordance with school policy.
18. The Administration and individual teachers shall develop attendance plans and procedures that comply with state and board policies. The plan and procedures shall include:
 - a. Responsibilities for students, parents, classroom teachers, and school administrators,

b. Procedures for managing attendance issues, i.e., illness, check in/out, school activity absences, etc.,

c. An acceptable range of school and teacher consequences for unexcused absences and tardiness; and

d. Guidelines for making up work.

19. The Attendance Policy shall be available for review by parents or interested parties. The Administration and the Board of Trustees shall review attendance data and the Attendance Policy annually in order to consider revisions to the policy in an effort to encourage student attendance.