



Attendance & Truancy Policy

At Scholarship Prep, we view every day as an essential learning opportunity and recognize that student attendance directly contributes to academic achievement. Therefore, we expect excellent attendance of all of our students. Students are expected to be in class every day. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children arrive on-time to school each day. The school strongly discourages absences for vacation during the school year. Parents should schedule family vacations outside of the academic calendar so that students do not miss important classroom instruction time. Appointments for physicians, dental, or other related services should be scheduled outside of the school day whenever possible so as not to disrupt the student's instructional day.

Senate Bill 727 – School Finance: Days of attendance limits funding to actual attendance only. That is to say, “excused absences” do not count towards Average Daily Attendance (ADA) funding.

California Education Code:

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to see that:

1) Children, ages six to eighteen, attend school unless exempt or graduated.
(Ed Code #48200, #48403, #48410, #48400)

2) Any child absent from school without a valid excuse for more than three days or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of three or more days in one school year shall be reported as a truant.

(Ed Code #48261, #48262)

Absences

A child is considered absent when s/he is not in school. Acceptable excused absences include:

- Personal illness;
- Quarantine under the direction of a County or City health officer;
- Emergency medical, dental and optometry appointments (verified by a note signed by a physician);
- Serious family emergencies (subject to Principal approval);
- Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family;
- Appearance in court either as a defendant or as a subpoenaed witness;
- Observance of a religious holiday - (the student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four school days per month);
- For the purpose of spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family who is an active duty member of the uniformed services;
- Other unusual circumstances when approved by the Principal or designee and requested in advance.

When a child has a fever or symptoms of illness or has a communicable illness, it is best for the child to stay at home to rest and recover. If your child has a communicable disease, the school office should be informed so that we can notify other parents.

Scholarship Prep

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Procedure for Clearing An Absence

If a student is absent from school, parents must contact the school office to report or clear an absence. Methods of notifying the office of a pending or existing absence include the following:

- Call the office or send an email to attendance@scholarshipschools.org by 9:00 a.m. of each day the student is absent. If the parent/guardian does not make the call or send the email by 9:00 am, the school will notify the parent in an effort to determine if the student has an excused absence.
- Send a note with your child to the school containing:
 - Full name of the student
 - Date(s) or time of absence
 - The specific reason for absence
 - Telephone numbers where parents/guardians may be reached (home and/or work)
 - Signature of parent or guardian.

All absences should be “cleared” within five (5) days of the absence to keep the student from being considered truant. After five (5) days, the “truant” status becomes permanent and CAN NOT be changed.

Truancies and Unexcused Absences

When a parent takes their child out of school early more than three times during the year without a valid excuse, that child becomes truant. When students are truant, parents will receive a truancy letter, and a copy of the letter will be placed in the student’s cumulative file. Other examples of truancies and unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Going to work with a parent or family member;
- Going on a vacation or trip (to the beach, lake, river, mountains, desert, concert, or sporting event, etc.);
- Baby-sitting challenges; and
- Personal problems.

Students are expected to be in class every day. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children arrive on-time to school each day. The school strongly discourages absences for vacation during the school year. Parents should schedule family vacations outside of the academic calendar so that students do not miss important classroom instruction time. **Though we have weekly early dismissal days so that our staff can receive professional development, they are vital days for students.** Often, important assessments and projects are given on these days. Therefore, it is important that your child attends class daily unless an absence is necessary based on the information provided in the sections above.

Procedure for Excessive Unexcused Absences

The Principal or designee shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy. The following procedure will be followed to manage unexcused absences:

- On or after the Third Unexcused Absence – A staff or faculty member will call home to verify the student’s attendance record, review this policy and discuss how the school can help to resolve the problem.

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- On or after the Fifth Unexcused Absence – A staff or faculty member will call the family to verify the student’s absence and a notice of excessive unexcused absences will be sent home and placed within the student’s cumulative record.

- On or after the Eighth Unexcused Absence - Upon reaching eight (8) unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will receive a notification letter and will be required to meet with the Principal or designee. It is the school’s intent to identify and remove all barriers to the student’s success and will explore every possible option to address student attendance issues with the parent(s)/guardian(s). The Principal or designee will discuss the absence problem with the parent/guardian with the goal of developing solutions, strategies, and implementing support services for the student and his/her family to resolve the absence problem.

- On or after the Tenth Unexcused Absence – The Principal or designee may issue a letter informing the parent/guardian of the school’s intent to disenroll the student. This letter shall be sent at least five school days before the effective date of disenrollment set forth in the letter. (“Five Day Letter”). The Five Day Letter will explain the parent’s/student’s due process rights to request a hearing on the decision to disenroll the student for failure to comply with this policy.

Procedure for Excessive Consecutive Unexcused Absences:

We will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet to reach out to families if students are absent for consecutive days without a valid excuse. If a student is absent five (5) or more consecutive school days without a valid excuse, the Principal or designee may issue a Five Day Letter (described above) informing the parent/guardian of the school’s intent to disenroll the student.

If the parent/student does not respond to the Five Day Letter or otherwise does not elect to request a hearing, the student shall be disenrolled and notification will be sent to the district of residence.

Short-Term Independent Study

The Scholarship Prep Short Term Independent Study (STIS) Program is designed to enable students to be out of school as little as one day and up to twenty (20) days and retain attendance credit. Students may be out of school for planned vacations, same-day illnesses, court dates, funerals, religious holidays, missing school for personal field trips, etc. STIS should be scheduled with the Attendance Clerk. Each student is allowed (3) three separate contracts per school year. Requests for same day STIS should be made to the Attendance Clerk no later than 9:30 a.m. For more information about short-term independent study, please speak with the school’s office staff.

Procedure for Early Dismissal

After their arrival on campus in the morning, students may NOT leave campus until dismissal time unless signed out by the parent through the school’s front office. Students leaving campus without permission will be considered truant. If a student requests an early dismissal (for example, if a parent/guardian is picking him/her up for a doctor’s appointment), the parent/guardian reports to the office to sign out the student. Requests for early pickup should be made more than 15 minutes prior to dismissal if possible. Parents may not enter the classroom without approval from the office. In the case of excessive early dismissals, the parent and/or guardian may be required to meet with school administration.

Legal Interventions

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Scholarship Prep reserves the right to involve the judicial system in cases of excessive absences, excessive tardies, and habitual truancy. Once the case is referred to the authorities, the student and parent/guardian may be subject to the sections of the California Penal Code pertaining to truancy.

Tardy Procedure

Classes begin promptly at 8:15am. Students may arrive to school between 7:45-8:15 a.m. **A student is considered tardy if he or she arrives after 8:20 a.m.** After 8:20 a.m., a student must report to the office if he/she is late for school in order to be admitted to the classroom.

Legal Interventions

Scholarship Prep Charter School reserves the right to involve the judicial system in cases of excessive absences, excessive tardies and habitual truancy. Once the case is referred to the authorities, the student and parent/guardian may be subject to the sections of the California Penal Code pertaining to truancy.