

Student Attendance Policy: (approved 11/26/2013, revised 4/26/16)

ARRIVAL, TARDINESS AND ATTENDANCE

Consistent attendance is fundamental to student success. Because Pioneer Springs Community School believes timeliness and attendance positively impacts student learning, we adhere to the following mandates.

ARRIVAL AND TARDINESS:

Pioneer Springs Community School expects students to arrive at school on time. Parents should allow adequate time for travel to the school and anticipate possible traffic problems or weather conditions, transition time, and other factors that may affect promptness. Students who do not arrive by the designated start of school are considered tardy. The administration recognizes that there are occasions when a student may arrive late to school for legitimate reasons. Such reasons may include:

- Illness or injury
- Medical, dental or other appointment with a health care provider
- Necessary religious observances
- Involvement in a traffic or other accident

Procedures for checking a student into school after late arrival are outlined in the PSCS Family Handbook.

ATTENDANCE

When a student misses class or parts of class, s/he does not have the benefit of discussions, demonstrations, experiments, or instruction, which has a tremendous bearing on learning and grades. Repeated absence defeats the purpose of school and jeopardizes the student's progress and chances of promotion.

Attendance guidelines at Pioneer Springs Community School reflect both the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law and the school's policies regarding absences. The *Compulsory Attendance Law* (NC General Statute 115C-378) requires that a student under sixteen must attend school regularly while school is in session. Under this law, the school must report unlawful absences to proper authorities. It is the responsibility of the family (parent/guardian and child) to make sure the student attends school unless the child must be absent for one of the following reasons:

1. Illness or Injury - when the absence results from illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
2. Quarantine - when isolation of the student is ordered by the local health officer or by the State Board of Health.
3. Death in the Immediate Family - when the absence results from the death of a member of

the immediate family of the student.

4. Medical or Dental Appointment - when the absence results from a medical or dental appointment for a student.
5. Court or Administrative Proceedings - when the absence results from the attendance of a student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
6. Religious Observance - if the tenets of a religion to which a student or his/her parent adheres require or suggest observance of a religious event. The approval of such absences is within the discretion of Board of Directors of the school, but approval should be granted unless the religious observance, or the cumulative effect of religious observance, is of such duration as to interfere with the education of the student.
7. Educational Opportunity - when it is demonstrated that the purpose of the absence is to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity such as travel. Approval for such an absence must be granted by the director or designee prior to the absence.

All other absences are legally unexcused. In accordance with the Compulsory Attendance Law, the Director shall adhere to the following procedures in notifying parents after the designated number of unexcused absences:

3 Unexcused Days: notify parents by letter of the situation

6 Unexcused Days: notify parents by certified mail of a potential violation of compulsory attendance requirements and of the duty to report them to the juvenile justice or appropriate state or county agency if the absences cannot be reasonably explained or if they continue.

10 Unexcused Days: notify the parents by certified mail pursuant to #2 above, plus require a conference with the parents to discuss the reasons for the absences, what corrective efforts they are making, and possible disciplinary action. Students with ten consecutive unexcused absences may be withdrawn from the school and would have to reapply through the lottery process to gain readmission.

ABSENCES

School attendance is paramount to academic success. To promote an academic environment in which students have the potential for success - comprehension and mastery of the curriculum - limitations on class absences are enforced and excessive absences may contribute to retention.

Students are expected to miss no more than ten days of the school year unless approved by the Director. A student must be in attendance for at least half of the school day in order to be counted present for the day. In the event a student has excessive absences and/or tardies, additional documentation may be required.

Students must have a written/email excuse from a parent/guardian for absences from school. The excuse must be given to the teacher no later than two days after the child returns to school following an absence, or the absence will be reported as unexcused.