Attendance

Attendance at high school is a little different than Elementary through Junior High. The students have a bit more freedom that reflects their status as maturing young adults, while respecting the parents’ need to know to help them if the wheels fall off.

* Basically, **if a student is absent or is going to be absent, we do ask that you let us know.** This is helpful on a number of levels that you will appreciate as your student navigates their high school years. The difference lies in the communication to accomplish this. At the high school level we do **all the attendance reporting in writing**. You can email, the address is on the website, or the student can bring in a note in with them. *There is no safe arrival line.*
* How it works: The **teacher marks the student either in front of them** or not…this is essential for the teachers’ records to know when a student has missed a test or other urgent class information. The teachers can mark them Late, Left Early, Present or Absent. If a student misses more than 20 minutes of class time- which is a significant portion of the class- they will be marked absent, usually with a note regarding the timing of their absence. This practice has evolved through a wide variety of experiences and you will find is very helpful in the end. **Attendance is not punitive**. It is meant to be an accurate physical reflection of your child’s journey in that specific class.
* **When you communicate with the school** it is a good idea to **include the teacher** but the actual changes are made in the main office. Please make sure to let the office know of your travel plans or appointments so we can update your students’ attendance to be as accurate as possible.
* **You will get a call at home for any classes**, or large portion of a class, that were missed that day without parental acknowledgement. If your note excuses them for last class, and they missed both afternoon classes, you will get a call.
* **There are three times you might get a call even when you are not expecting one**. Often enough through the month we get a busy time in the office and aren’t able to enter attendance. If you know you sent a note in please just wait a day or so and it will be entered. You are encouraged to **check attendance on Powerschool once per week** every week to tidy up attendance. Usually Sunday is a good day as any catch up is done on Fridays. If you need help accessing your Powerschool that is something any of us in the main office or student services are happy to help with.
* Another instance to be aware of is **group attendance**. When they participate in a sport or group that attendance will be entered when the coach or leader gets the information to the office of who actually attended. It is not done in advance or live. It might take a few days. You will very likely get a robocall on co-op days, on sports nights or after a large school event. If you are aware of it please don’t worry. It will be corrected as soon as possible once the actual attendance list has been provided.
* **One last common occurrence is a mistake**. The beginning of a semester, a sub teacher...these things happen. This is not fixable by mom or dad. The student will clear this up directly with the teacher or come to the main office and we will show them how to rectify it. It involves them going to the teacher involved and negotiating. It happens. Please expect it, rectify it but don’t be offended by it. These are good to stay on top of as they can build up. **Checking Powerschool each Saturday or Sunday will catch those.** Daily is not as much help as teachers can go back 24 hours to fix mistakes on their own. Weekly checking is really the way to go for parents unless a **serious attendance issue arises.**
* **Speaking of which**…If you are going through a phase where your student needs a bit more help than the average bear please let us know. We can work out a plan to help them stay on track.

A couple of pro- level parenting attendance hacks:

* **Picking up midday**…we offer curb side delivery service! At the high school level, if a student knows about the appointment, they are expected to navigate this with their teachers. Covid protocols don’t allow us to let parents into the school. At the beginning of class the student tells the teacher they are leaving early. Then they follow the direction of the teacher and leave when the time comes. They sign out in the main office and meet you at your car. Dry, warm you.
* One trick to use when **booking standing appointments** is to book it for the same time each Friday. Our Fridays rotate schedules. So if your son/daughter have the same time with a dr each Friday they will miss a different class each week thus maximizing their usage of absences and minimizing impact on their studies.
* Life happens. **Please make sure that the priority is dealing with the event** NOT the absence. If your student is sick, Keep them home. If you are finding a chronic problem developing let us know. We have a phenomenal support system in our school to help with a wide variety of issues.

*It takes a village to raise a child. This has never been more true than it is today. We are very happy to be an integral part of your student’s village.*