

Student Attendance Policy

Frequent absences and/or late arrival of students from the day-to-day experiences disrupt the educational process. The benefits, once lost, cannot be entirely regained. The process of education requires a

continuity of instruction, participation, learning experience, and study. Therefore, Gateway Preparatory Academy will make 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 and school programs regularly.

Guidelines

- A. Parents/guardians have primary responsibility for regular student attendance at school. School staff and students also share in that responsibility.
 1. Students are expected to be in attendance every school day and participate in their education in order to receive maximum benefit from their education experiences. If a student is legitimately absent from class or school programs, it is the student or parent's responsibility to contact the teacher regarding additional work. If a student is tardy for class, it is the student or parent's responsibility to contact the school office so an unexcused absence is not assessed. It is also a student or parent's responsibility to follow classroom and office procedures when the student must leave during the school day.
 2. Parents/guardians are expected to ensure that their children attend school and school programs regularly and arrive on time. It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to notify school officials of legitimate absences. The parent/guardian should contact the office or designated school employee to confirm a checkout prior to the student's leaving during the school day.
 3. A student's assigned teacher and/or designated employee is required to record and verify daily student attendance and participation.
 4. Administrators shall work cooperatively with students, parents/guardians, and teachers to improve student attendance. Administrators shall use earnest and persistent effort, including parent notification, to deter excessive and unexcused student absences.
 5. A student is "truant" if that student is absent for at least half the school day or is at least 30 minutes late for a class or the school day for a total of five separate times per semester. (A student may not be considered truant more than one time during a school day.) A student will be considered "habitually truant" if

that student is in grade 7 or above and has missed school at least ten (10) times without a valid excuse.

- B. The school administration and individual teachers shall develop attendance plans and procedures that comply with state and board policies. The plan and procedures shall include:
1. Responsibilities for students, parents, classroom teachers, and school administrators,
 2. Procedures for managing attendance issues, i.e., illness, check in/out, school activity absences, etc.,
 3. An acceptable range of school and teacher consequences for unexcused absences and tardiness, and Guidelines for additional work.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is required by law and is a major key to student success. Activities, discussions, simulations, and presentations take place every day and cannot be duplicated even by afterschool instruction or make-up work. Educational achievement comes through participation.

Parent Responsibilities for Attendance

Notify the school office of legitimate absences through a written notice or by phone so that the absence is not designated as “unexcused” (absences due to illness and emergency are an exception). An “unexcused absence” is a student's absence from school for reasons other than a reason acceptable to the student’s parent or guardian and that meets the definition of “excused” in this policy submitted to the school in writing.

Legitimate absences include: illnesses, medical appointments, bereavement, court appearances, emergencies, preapproved educational leave, school activities and special family or religious events. 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, deaths, and similar family events. A "Valid excuse" does not include a parent acknowledgment of an absence for a reason other than a reason described in UCA 53G-6-201 (8)(a)(i) through (v), unless specifically permitted by this policy. Medical excuses that exceed 3 days MUST be accompanied by written documentation from a doctor’s office.

Student Responsibilities for Attendance

Be in your assigned classroom when class begins unless you are legitimately excused. For distance students, login to education programs and participate daily.

Teacher Responsibilities for Attendance

- Verify and record daily attendance in each class and correct attendance when necessary.
- Notify the office if attendance is irregular or if there are excessive (more than two consecutive or more than five total) unexcused absences

Administration Responsibilities for Attendance

Notify parent/guardian and students of 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.

School administrative response to attendance issues:

We recognize that at our level attendance is primarily a parental responsibility and very seldom a truancy issue. Truancy (where a child is not in school without parental permission or awareness) will be dealt with on an individual basis as a discipline issue and may include consequences up to and including suspension from school. Absence and tardy will be monitored and dealt with by the school in the following ways:

1. Teachers will report attendance before 9:00 am each day or in the first 5 minutes of class in the middle school environment. If a parent has contacted the school the absence will be marked excused and the reason noted.
2. The teacher should discuss attendance with parents at every parent-Teacher conference and any time a concern arises.
3. An attendance report will be submitted to the Director/Principal at the end of each term.
4. The administrator will do the following:

Days/Classes Tardy

- Excessive days or classes tardy (multiple occurrences per week for more than one week) will result in school action that will include

communication with parents and may include a parent meeting, detention or in school suspension to minimize distraction and complete work.

Non-consecutive Days

- Contact parents when students miss more than 5 days. Absences that exceed 5 days, whether excused or not will result in school action that may include a parent meeting, detention or in school suspension to minimize distraction and complete work.

Consecutive Days:

- Ensure the contact of parents or guardians of any student missing more than three consecutive days (10%) reminding the parent of the importance of school attendance (usually a phone call by the administrator, teacher or secretary).
- Make a personal contact (including home visits) with parents of any child missing more than 7 consecutive but not more than 10 consecutive days (20%) discussing the importance of attendance and offering school resources to help the student and parent improve attendance. In addition, possible consequences will be discussed, including student's removal from enrollment if attendance does not improve.
- As per Utah state law, any student who misses 10 unexcused consecutive days will be immediately dropped from enrollment. Director will drop student at 10 consecutive days and inform parents through certified mail.

Exceptions

It is the policy of the School that it provide at least 990 instructional hours over the course of each school year, to full-time students, as required by Utah Administrative Rule R277-419-4. The School recognizes that pursuant to Utah Administrative Rule R277-419-4, the School is not subject to the requirement that students attend 180 school days each year and therefore does not require students to "attend" school for a certain number of days each year. However, in the event of an "emergency" as defined in R277-419-4 the School recognizes the need for students to work regularly and consistently in order to complete their courses and the required hours of instruction, so students are to log-in regularly and at a minimum of once a week. Accordingly, the School's Director will work with a committee to develop procedures to ensure that students obtain the required instructional hours while preserving the flexibility that the School's student population values.



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