

Policy on Unexcused Absences

Purpose

To ensure compliance with Pennsylvania's compulsory school attendance laws and to support student success by addressing unexcused tardies and absences effectively.

Definition

An unexcused absence is any absence that is not justified by a valid written excuse note as defined by the school's attendance policy. A student is considered truant after three unexcused absences in a school year and habitually truant after six unexcused absences.

Policy

1. Notification Requirements
 - Parents/guardians must submit a written excuse note within two days of the student's return to school. The note must include the student's name, dates of absence, and a valid reason for the absence.
 - If the note is not submitted within the required timeframe, the absence will be marked as unexcused.
 - Make-up work will be given only when the absence is excused.
2. Valid Excuses
 - Valid reasons for absences include illness, family emergencies, medical or dental appointments, authorized school activities, and educational travel with prior approval.
 - For absences of three or more consecutive days due to illness, a note from a licensed healthcare provider is required.
3. Monitoring and Reporting
 - Lititz Christian School will monitor attendance and notify parents/guardians via email/text of each unexcused absence or tardy.
 - If a student reaches three unexcused absences, the school will notify the parents/guardians and arrange a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) to address barriers to attendance and develop an improvement plan.
4. Consequences of Habitual Truancy
 - If a student accumulates six or more unexcused absences, they are considered habitually truant. The school must refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program.
 - Continued unexcused absences after the improvement plan may result in legal action, including fines and other court-imposed sanctions for the parents/guardians.
5. Supports and Interventions
 - Lititz Christian School will offer supports and interventions to address the root causes of absenteeism, including counseling and academic support.

- For students with disabilities, Lititz Christian will convene the Action Plan team to determine if additional support or modifications to the Action Plan are necessary.
6. Additional Information
- Excuse cards are available under Parent Resources on our website.
 - Appointments should be made outside of school hours when possible.
 - Submission of an excuse does not guarantee the absence will be excused.
 - Excused and unexcused absences can be checked on FACTS/Parent Portal.
 - It is the student's responsibility to make up missed school work in a timely manner. If the student is absent for 3 days, for example, he/she will have three school days to make up the missed work. This pertains to excused absences only. Please ensure your child's absence is excused in a timely manner.
 - If it is a pre-planned absence, the student needs to communicate the absence to the teachers in advance. The Future Absence Request form can be found under Parent Resources on our website.

Policy on Unexcused Tardies

Purpose

To promote punctuality and responsibility among students and to ensure minimal disruption to the learning environment caused by tardiness.

Definition

A tardy is defined as arriving late to school or class after the scheduled start time without a valid excuse. Students are considered tardy if they are not in homeroom at 7:55 am.

Policy

1. Notification Requirements

- Students are expected to be in their designated classrooms when the school day begins at 7:55 am.
- A student arriving after the start of the school day must report to the front desk to obtain a tardy pass before proceeding to class.

2. Valid Excuses for Tardiness:

- Valid reasons for tardiness include documented medical appointments, illness (with a note from a parent/guardian), late arrival buses or urgent circumstances as approved by the school administration.
- Traffic, oversleeping, or personal convenience are not considered valid excuses.
- Excuses are due to the front desk when the student arrives at school or by the next morning at the latest. The parent will sign the student in and present the excuse. If the student drives to school, he or she should present an excuse upon arrival.

3. Procedure for Unexcused Tardies:

- For the first and second unexcused tardy, a notification will be sent to the parents/guardians via text message.
 - On the third unexcused tardy, the student may be assigned detention or another consequence as deemed appropriate by the school administration.
4. **Continued Tardiness:**
- Students who accumulate more than three unexcused tardies within a grading period will be required to meet with the school counselor or administrator to develop an improvement plan.
 - Continued tardiness may result in further disciplinary actions, including in-school suspension or loss of certain school privileges.
5. **Support and Interventions:**
- The school will provide support to students who demonstrate habitual tardiness by identifying underlying issues and offering appropriate interventions.
 - Parents/guardians will be encouraged to participate in resolving issues related to their child's tardiness.

General Information

All absences and tardies are reported by the front desk.

The following steps will take place for students who are absent (excused or unexcused) in excess of 20 days. A student may request an exemption from this rule by presenting a statement from a physician to verify the necessity of the excessive absences.

- After 10 total absences: An attendance notice (email) will be sent home from the front desk, notifying parents of the accumulating number of absences.
- After 12 total absences: A meeting will be requested by administration to discuss the accumulating absences and create a plan for attendance.
- After 20 total absences: Your child's truancy will be reported to the local school district.

A half-day absence will be counted for students who come to school before 11:00 am (per PIAA athletic policy- student-athletes who arrive after 11:00 will not be permitted to play in any scheduled games on that day).

- If a student arrives at 11:00 am or later it will be considered a full-day absence.
- If a student leaves school before 11:00 am and does not return to school that day, it will be considered a full-day absence.

For security purposes, if a student is to be picked up early, the parent must send a note to the front office stating the time the parent will be picking up their child that day. The parent then must come to the school administrative assistant to sign their child out at the designated time. The school administrative assistant will call the student from the classroom.

- If a student is to be picked up by someone other than the parent/guardian, a note/email must be sent to the office granting permission for the student to leave with that designated person.

By adhering to this policy, we aim to foster a culture of punctuality and responsibility among students, thereby enhancing their educational experience and success.

Student name: _____

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature (9th grade and older)

Date