

Title: Attendance Policy

Control Information

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Revision History

Revision	Date	Revision Description	Originator
A	9/15/2008	Initial Release	Jennifer Renee
B	5/8/2014	Revision and addition of sections	Leonne Bannister
C	9/11/2014	Number and format revision	Melissa Harris

1.1. Objective:

The objective of this policy is the following:

1. Define the philosophy of attendance at Muddy Creek Charter School.
2. Outline general guidelines for absences and tardiness.
3. Define expectations for children leaving at the end of the school day.

1.2. Philosophy of Attendance:

Consistent school attendance is critical to student success. Being present for classroom instructional time is essential to a student's academic and personal development. Chronic absenteeism has been linked to an increased likelihood of poor academic performance, disengagement from school and behavior problems. It is the intent of the Board to ensure that students are at school every day, on time.

Due to the project-based, place-based philosophy of Muddy Creek Charter School, regular attendance and participation are critical for consistent content exposure and reliable assessment. Furthermore, consistent and punctual attendance models important life skills, including responsibility, motivation, time management and work-ethic.

1.3. Guidelines for excused and unexcused absences:

1.3.1. Excused Absences

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Student illness or injury;
2. Medical, dental, or other health-related appointments*;
3. Attendance at funeral services;
4. Legal or court appointments;
5. Emergency situations that require the student's absence;
6. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion;

* Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

1.3.2. Method of Verification

Unexpected absences should be reported to the school office as close to the morning of the day of the absence, as possible. Planned absences should be reported to the school office as soon as is conveniently possible. Phone messages, emails, and note are all acceptable means of communication.

1.3.3. Excessive Absence Procedures

1. Excessive school absence is defined as more than eight unexcused one-half day absences, or the equivalent, in any four-week period. Notification of excessive absences will be mailed home and a parent meeting may be requested. The meeting may include student, parents, teacher, administrator and any other invested school staff member (bus driver, special education teacher, counselor, etc.). School staff will work with the family to resolve the attendance problem.
2. If excessive school absence continues after parents have received written notification, the school will then notify the Benton County Truancy Officer.
3. Absences greater than 10 consecutive school days will result in automatic disenrollment from school, per state law. The administrator may reserve the vacated position for 6 school days after disenrollment. Students who have been disenrolled must complete a new enrollment form and may need to enter a lottery pool. Former students do not have a preference in a lottery.

1.4. Guidelines for Tardiness:

To emphasize the importance of punctuality, Muddy Creek Charter School requires parents to agree to ensure students arrive on time at school in the Family Enrollment Contract. Tardiness is disruptive to classroom activities and can be disorienting to the student who is entering class late. Morning classroom routines are important for orienting students in the individual and collective learning process. If a student is habitually tardy, he or she is missing critical academic instructional time. Students should arrive at school on or before the start of the school day, ready to learn.

1.4.2. Excessive Tardiness Defined

Tardiness is generally unexcused. Some circumstances, such as dentist/doctor appointments, unexpected transportation problems, illness, etc. may result in occasional tardies. Habitual tardiness, however, is problematic. Incurring more than 4 tardies in any four week period is considered excessive tardiness.

1.4.1. Excessive Tardiness Procedures

If a student is excessively tardy, a letter of notification of excessive tardies will be mailed home and a meeting may be requested. School staff will work with the family to resolve the attendance problem. If the problem persists, the school will notify the Benton County Truancy Officer.

1.5. End of the school day pick-up:

1.5.1. School Pick-up

Parents are required to pick their children up from school on time at the end of the school day. If a student is regularly picked up beyond 10 minutes after the end of the school day, a letter will be sent home reminding parents of the importance of picking up on time after school. Continued failure of a parent or guardian to pick up their child from school on time will result in a charge of \$1 per child per minute.

1.5.2. Bus Stop Pick-up

If a child rides the bus, their parent is required be on time and present for pick-up at the designated stop. Children whose parents are not present at pick-up will be kept on the bus and returned to the school, per First Student policy. The school will charge \$1 per child per minute that the child remains at school.