



Forest Ranch Charter School

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Board Policy – Attendance

1. Purpose

- a. The governing board recognizes that habitual absence is one of the biggest single causes of poor academic performance. Attendance in public school is compulsory in California and there are legal consequences for multiple absences in addition to educational and fiscal ramifications. The purpose of this policy is to ensure a maximum attendance rate at the school for educational and fiscal reasons.

2. Responsibilities

- a. The Executive Director or designee shall develop and implement procedures in compliance with California State law, the Butte County Office of Education guidelines and the goals outlined in this policy to ensure maximum attendance by students.
- b. Parents/guardians shall be made aware of their parental and legal duties regarding attendance and promptness in the education of their children.
- c. Students shall be made aware of the importance of promptness and continuity of attendance in their education.

3. Definitions

- a. Absences can be excused or unexcused.
 - i. Excused absences are due to doctor, dentist, or optometrist appointments. Also excused are absences due to contagious or debilitating illness, the death or funeral of a close family member, or a court appointment.
 - ii. Any absence of which the school is not properly notified and provided documentation in the proper timeframe is considered unexcused.
 - iii. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive at school after the scheduled start time as indicated on the current year academic calendar. Tardies may be excused with a note regarding the reason for the late arrival. Excusable tardies are due to doctor, dentist, or optometrist appointments, the death or funeral of a close family member, or a court appointment.
- b. Tardiness shall also be addressed as an attendance issue due to their disruptive nature.

4. Goals

- a. At the beginning of each school year and/or upon initial enrollment parents and students shall be made aware of the school's expectations for promptness and attendance.
- b. At regular intervals, positive reinforcement and encouragement shall be given to students and classes having perfect and/or high rates of attendance.

- c. Tardiness rates for all students shall be reviewed weekly. When a pattern of chronic tardiness is observed the Executive Director shall schedule a conference with the parents/guardians and the student, if appropriate, to discuss the importance of promptness in the education of the school's students.
- d. Attendance rates for all students shall be reviewed weekly. When thresholds for excused and unexcused absences as detailed below are reached, family contact shall be made as follows:
 - i. Four unexcused absences will generate a mandated, legally compliant initial attendance letter detailing the school attendance policy and the legal ramifications of excessive unexcused absences.
 - ii. Five absences, excused or unexcused, will initiate an attendance conference held with the parents/guardians and the student, if appropriate. The purpose of this meeting is to communicate the attendance policies clearly to families to ensure maximum attendance for the remainder of the year.
 - iii. Seven unexcused absences will generate another attendance letter referencing truancy guidelines and the school's expulsion policy. The Butte County Office of Education will be notified of the potential for a truancy referral at this time.
 - iv. Ten unexcused absences will generate another attendance letter referencing truancy guidelines and requiring review under the school's expulsion policy for possible expulsion from the school for truancy. At this time the student will be referred to the Butte County Office of Education for truancy.
 - v. Eight excused absences will generate a letter requiring third-party proof for excusing any future absences. The intent is not to castigate or persecute families with frequently or seriously ill children. Discretion will be required by the Executive Director in determining the facts of these situations. The intent is to reveal fraudulent claims of illness to avoid truancy and expulsion.

5. Exhibits

- a. Exhibit A – Letter to be sent at four unexcused absences
- b. Exhibit B – Letter to be sent at seven unexcused absences
- c. Exhibit C – Letter to be sent at ten unexcused absences
- d. Exhibit D – Letter to be sent at eight excused absences

6. Adoption

- a. This board policy was initially adopted by the Forest Ranch Charter School governing board on February 10, 2011.
- b. This board policy was reviewed and approved by the Forest Ranch Charter School governing board on February 9, 2012.
- c. The next annual review will occur on or before February 10, 2013.