

## **Attendance Policy**

All students are expected to attend school all days of the established school calendar as approved annually by the Exploris Board of Directors and in compliance with the North Carolina school attendance laws. The entire process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study in order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each individual child. It is particularly true in a project-based environment that regular attendance is vital to achieving high academic outcomes given the rich educational discussions, fieldwork, and visiting experts that are a part of the day-to-day experience. Since many classroom activities are collaborative experiences, when one student is absent, the whole group is affected. Students who are frequently absent find it difficult to keep up. Missing a day of school means missing a crew activity that cannot be replicated at home.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

The following are considered reasons for lawful absence:

1. Illness or Injury
2. Quarantine
3. Death in the Immediate Family
4. Religious Observances
5. Medical or Dental Appointments (with a note from the doctor)

If a student is absent from school, parents should call the office and leave a voice-mail stating the reason the child is absent and presumed return date to school or send a note stating the reason for the absence on the student's return. All absences from school are considered unexcused until a written excuse is received from the parent/guardian.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Absences due to any reason other than those listed above are "unexcused" with no exceptions. In accordance with North Carolina's compulsory attendance law, G.S. 115C-378 parents will be notified after a student has accumulated 3 unexcused absences. Parents will be notified in writing when a student has accumulated 6 unexcused absences.

### **EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM**

After 10 unexcused absences, state law requires that the Director review the situation and determine if the child is truant. Truancy reporting is to be decided based on circumstances of the absences and history of school attendance. If a student accumulates 10 unexcused absences, parents will be called to attend Truancy Hearing. A committee will consider the reasons for absences and the history of attendance and make a recommendation to address the problem that they believe to be in the best interest of the child(ren) which may include:

- A carpool or other transportation solution
- Logical home or school consequences for students who do not take responsibility for punctuality. This may include loss of privilege of participating in after-school enrichments/clubs/sports teams.
- Support services for the child or family
- Required summer school attendance
- Transfer to a district school that has bus service

- Referral to Division of Social Services for neglect

If it is determined that the child is truant, the Director is legally obligated to make a report to Juvenile Justice.

## **PROLONGED ABSENCES**

Any student absent more than 10 days in a row without contacting the school will be automatically withdrawn from Exploris Middle School in accordance with school attendance laws. A conference with the school Director will be required to determine if the student may return to school.

## **APPEALS**

Appeals of the school decisions, with regard to attendance, will follow normal procedures outlined in the student grievance process

## **TARDINESS**

Tardiness can disrupt the learning process, for both the tardy student and his/her classmates. Parents are encouraged to drop their students off at school prior to 8:15 to avoid a loss of instructional time.

**Please Note: Three (3) unexcused tardies will count as an unexcused absence. Students arriving after the start time must sign in at the school office.**

The following are examples of excused tardies:

1. Medical Appointment
2. Dental Appointment

## **ILLNESS**

Regular school attendance is expected. However, if the student is ill, he or she should not be permitted to attend school\*. Please do not send your child to school in the morning if:

1. a fever of 100 degrees or higher is present
2. vomiting or diarrhea is present
3. there is evidence of a severe head cold, persistent cough or sore throat
4. there is evidence of a suspicious skin rash or other contagious condition (i.e. pink-eye)

\*Students must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

The school should be notified if your child has a contagious disease including, but not limited to, chickenpox, pink-eye, impetigo, or pediculosis (head lice\*\*).

\*\*Lice – If live lice are discovered on a student, the child's parent/legal guardian will be notified that day by telephone. The family is asked to pick up their child as soon as possible, treat the child for lice, and remove as many nits (eggs) as possible. After treatment, the child may return to school the following day. An Exploris staff member will assist families by rechecking a child's head after proper treatment.

Exploris does not have a "no nit" policy. The American Academy of Pediatrics states that no-nit policies in schools are detrimental, causing lost time in the classroom, inappropriate allocation of the health services team's time for lice screening, and a response to infestations that is out of

proportion to the medical significance. Children should not be allowed to miss valuable school time because of head lice.

Head lice should never be associated with poor hygiene, dirty hair, or lack of parental care. Washing hair does not kill head lice, as they can survive under water for several hours. Anyone, whether their hair is long or short, clean or dirty, can get head lice. Removing the nits and live lice with a special metal fine-tooth comb, though time consuming, is the most effective way to get rid of them. You can remove any remaining lice and nits manually with your fingernails. They do not wash out.

### **HOMEBOUND SERVICES**

Homebound services of The Exploris School are a privilege. Homebound services provide students the opportunity to receive continuous short-term instruction from temporary physical medical conditions. There is no legal requirement for providing homebound services. Homebound services will only start after a student is absent from school 30 consecutive school days. Homebound service delivery options will be at the sole discretion of the school's Director.

### **Policy History**

Adopted on: 9/17/13

Revised on: 7/28/17

Revised on 11/18/19

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