

Helpful Attendance Information for Parents

It is everyone's responsibility to do their part to promote an environment at school where a child can reach their full potential. A child with good attendance feels good about him or herself, makes better grades, learns to interact with other children and adults, and becomes more independent and able to be problem solver.

The following recommendations are provided to you the parent in collaboration with the school to help reverse persistent absenteeism that significantly increases other high risk behaviors leading to many other social problems.

IT IS THE PARENT'S LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THEIR CHILD ATTENDS SCHOOL REGULARLY AND IS ON TIME.

The State Compulsory Attendance Law requires that:

- children between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) must attend school, and
- children enrolled in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten are required to follow the state attendance law.

Children enrolled in school must attend all day, every day, for the entire period of instruction, for the entire school year.

Late Arrival to Class/Early Removal

- Being on time and attending all day are important habits to develop.
- Arriving late or leaving early disrupts and reduces valuable learning time for everyone.
- Being late to school or leaving early from school without the approval of the school principal is counted as a partial-day unexcused absence, which is considered a violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law.

Illnesses

- If your child complains of being ill, screen him/her for symptoms. Look for obvious signs of illness such as fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- When your child has minor symptoms or complains of being ill without apparent symptoms, make staying at home boring, not fun. Be tough and set rules such as no TV, no friends over after school, and no playing. Restrict the child to quiet activities such as reading or studying.
- Children should be encouraged to attend school unless they show visible signs of illness. Healthy children should not stay home just because another family member is ill.
- Parents should be watchful for the development of non-attendance patterns. It is a good idea to mark a calendar on the days your child is absent.
- For further guidance, you may call the school nurse, your family doctor, or a health clinic of your choice.

Important Parent Responsibilities

- Call the school attendance office each day the child misses school. This should be followed up with a **written excuse within three school days** after your child returns to school.
- If your child misses five or more school days for medical reasons, the parent may be required by the principal to present a doctor's note to the school or the absence may be regarded as unexcused.
- If you make a medical/dental appointment in advance that requires the child to leave school early or arrive to school late, a note should be submitted to the school by the parent three days in advance of the appointment.
- A child must be returned to school from a medical appointment unless the doctor recommends immediate home rest. The parent must provide a doctor's note upon the child's return to school or before the fifth absence.
- Be prepared for the opening of school so that your child is ready to start on the first day. Plan ahead to purchase necessary school supplies, clothing, and other items. Check with your child's school to find out what items you need to supply for school.
- Your child's immunizations should be kept current for his/her own well-being and the well-being of others. When you are notified that an immunization is needed, promptly make arrangements with your doctor or one of the clinics listed. Provide the school with the receipt showing proof of the immunization.
- If you have any further questions regarding immunization, please contact the school nurse. Parents should know that state law requires immunizations; failure to immunize your child in the time allotted by the school could result in court action due to unexcused absences.
- Parents need to keep informed of the school calendar, programs, and PTA meetings. You are encouraged to visit your child's school regularly and meet with your child's teacher as requested.
- Avoid a repetitive absence pattern, such as Friday – Monday, day before or after school holiday, or every Wednesday. Plan family outings and vacations during weekends or school holidays.
- Children should not be kept home to baby sit other children in the family. It is the parents' responsibility to make arrangements for childcare services.
- Encourage your child to be the best he/she can be.

Curbing the incidences of non-attendance greatly enhances the child's ability to be successful. Absenteeism is detrimental to students' achievement, promotion, graduation, and self-esteem. Together, we can correct the non-attendance issues so that your child receives the best education that Alief ISD provides.
