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## Common Questions Parents Ask About ATTENDANCE

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### **Can a student leave for lunch?**

Juniors and Seniors have open campus and can leave during lunch. Freshmen and sophomores must remain on campus during lunch.

### **As a parent, don't I have the right to keep my child home any time I think it is reasonable?**

No. The school provides ten absences for the year that a parent can excuse a student for any reason. We refer to these as "one of ten" absences. The policy states that these absences are to be requested in writing prior to the absence. Parents use these excused absences for a variety of reasons including family vacations, hunting, going out to lunch together, etc. It is important to note that the ten excuses apply to ten different dates—part of a day qualifies as one excuse. Ten days of going out to lunch will use up the ten excuses. Once the ten are used, additional absences will be entered as unexcused and will count toward truancy.

### **What am I expected to do when my child must miss school?**

Parents (guardians) are expected to notify the school as soon as it becomes apparent that their child will need to miss school. They are to give whatever information is available at the time and then submit a written excuse when the student returns to school following the absence.

### **Can the school require a doctor's excuse if my child has "excessive absences"?**

Yes. If a student has excessive absences for illness, the school can request a doctor's statement that a student is under the treatment of a physician. If the student cannot produce such a statement, further absences will be considered unexcused.

### **My child was marked absent but insists he was present?**

Occasionally, we have mistakes in attendance. Please help us keep the attendance record accurate. Any information a student can supply about an attendance mistake is welcomed. Keep in mind that we have approximately 400 students to track for 7 attendance periods every day. That's approximately 2,800 times about 35 different people have an opportunity to make a mistake each day with attendance. When we look at the overall picture, we do an outstanding job of attendance each day, but that doesn't matter to the student who has a mistake in his attendance record! So, please let us know if we make a mistake.

### **What happens when my child is considered truant (after 5 unexcused absences)?**

A parent or guardian is notified by certified letter to attend a truancy meeting with the attendance officer. The purpose of the meeting is to determine the reason for the truant behavior and attempt to find a solution. The truancy policy is explained in detail and the consequences for continued truant behavior are outlined. Under the law, parents are held responsible for their children's attendance, but the courts usually hold the student who is over 16 responsible by suspending the driver's license for 60 days. Students under 16 are referred to the Department of Human Services and a social worker is assigned to investigate what is causing the truancy.

### **How come my child can just walk out of the school and leave? Doesn't anyone monitor the door?**

We do not have people monitoring doors all day. It is a simple problem of logistics and personnel. We have 17 exits from the school. We cannot control all those doors all day long; it is simply impossible without directing an inordinate amount of resources to monitoring doors.

We expect students to be responsible for obeying rules. We have students constantly coming and going for many good reasons. We have students tutoring at Woodland each period, students leaving for appointments, attending classes in Rice Lake, leaving for senior release, etc. Students must take responsibility for their own schedule and be where they are supposed to be when they are scheduled to be there. For the most part, students accept their responsibility and obey the school rules.

**My child says that a teacher would not give her the makeup work from when she was absent—why?**

Unexcused absence: The attendance policy says that the student will not be able to make up daily work missed as a result of an unexcused absence from class. An exam will be made up on the day the student returns to class, but it does not have to be the same exam (it must, however, cover the same concepts and knowledge).

Excused absence: For an excused absence, students are allowed one day for each excused day missed plus one additional day to make up assignments. Students should arrange with the teacher a time to make up missed exams. Work not completed within the prescribed time shall receive a failing grade. It is important for students to understand that missed work is the student's responsibility and should make contact with the teacher on the first day back to find out what is expected.

**What time does my student need to be at school?**

The warning bell rings at 8:06 a.m., and students are expected to be in their classrooms at 8:10 a.m. Students who arrive after 8:10 a.m. will be considered tardy. Late arrivals disrupt the class. Obviously, there are occasional valid reasons for students to be late. Those tardies are considered excused.