

**SOUTH PASADENA HIGH SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

*Attendance Office Hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Ruth Carlson, Attendance Office Clerk
(626)441-5820 Ext. 2909*

SPUSD affirms the following Attendance Levels:

	<u>Total Absences in a School Year</u>	
Outstanding	0 - 4 absences	98% - 100%
Meeting expectations	5 - 9 absences	95% - 97%
At Risk	10 - 17 absences	91% - 94%
Chronic	18 or more absences	90% or below

Attendance to class every day is vital. Students who do not meet SPHS attendance expectations will be subject to interventions, including, but not limited to, after-school detention, Saturday School, Student Attendance Review Team (SART) and/or School Attendance Review Board (SARB).

All absences must be verified with a note that is written and signed by a parent or guardian or an email directly to the attendance clerk from the email address on record. **This must be done within three days of the absence.** The school may require verification from medical doctors, dentists, etc. Documentation must be presented to the office immediately upon return.

If a student has reason to believe that his/her attendance record (based on reporting of any absence through auto-dialer or a letter sent home, etc.) is in error, he/she should request a print-out from the attendance office during brunch, lunch or outside of school hours and return the printout with a signature from the teacher for correction. Corrections must be done immediately after the error has been processed.

Each student is responsible for obtaining missed classwork. Under special circumstances (extended illness, hospitalization, etc.), a homework request can be made and be collected by the main office staff upon parent notification of such circumstances. Any medical absence of five or more days requires a medical documentation.

TYPES OF ABSENCES

The following are the types of absences as defined by the State of California Education Code:

1. **Excused**-a full-day or part-day absence verified for one of the following reasons: illness, quarantine, professional medical appointment relating to physical needs, attendance at a funeral for a member of the immediate family, jury duty, failing to meet immunization requirements, court appointment, employment, the observance of a religious holiday or religious ceremony, or for the purpose of attending the pupil's naturalization ceremony to become a U.S. citizen.
2. **Unexcused**-an absence not qualified as above for such reasons as car trouble or waking up late, but the absence has the permission of the parent AND the approval of the principal or his/her designee.
3. **Truancy**-absence without the mutual consent of the parent and school authorities. **No make-up work will be permitted.**
4. **Suspension**-administratively denied school/class attendance.

PUNCTUALITY

Students should be in class before the bell rings, signalling the beginning of the period. Consequences will be given for excessive lates or tardies.

- **LATE** = 30 minutes or less late to class (Late < 30 minutes)
- **TARDY** = 31 minutes or more late to class without a valid excuse. (Tardy > 30 minutes)

READMITTANCE TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ABSENCE

If a student has been absent, upon returning to school the student must immediately present an absence excuse note, with the student ID # on it, written and signed by the parent/guardian WHOSE SIGNATURE APPEARS ON THE PERSONAL INFORMATION CARD. The parent or guardian may also send an email to the attendance clerk using their email address on record. The attendance office will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 daily. **Students have three days to verify an absence.** All full day and period absences must be verified or the absence will turn into a truancy. Failure to do so may result in Saturday School. Each student is responsible for obtaining make up work.

Makeup work due to absences:

- **Excused Absences:** Teachers may give equivalent work, not necessarily identical assignments. Some work is not able to be made up and may result in diminished academic attainment.
- **Truancies:** No makeup work will be permitted.
- **Suspensions:** Students MAY be allowed to do makeup work within three days of the suspension. It is not an automatic right to have makeup work.

READMITS TO CLASS

If the student anticipates being late to a class due to a teacher or office engagement, the student is to acquire a pass to the next class to avoid the late designation. Passes are required at the time of the possible late and are not renegotiated at later dates.

TARDY/TRUANCY REPORT

Monthly reports will be run. Saturday school will be assigned for every five late marks and/or truanancies per month that a student receives. Students will be notified by mail as well as by auto-dialer when they fall into this category. Students can check the Student Services office window to see if they have been assigned Saturday School for that week.

OBTAINING GROUNDS PERMIT TO LEAVE CAMPUS EARLY

SPHS is a closed campus, meaning no student can leave during the school day without prior authorization. Aside from senior privilege cards (to be explained later), a student who needs to leave during the day must bring a note from his/her parent/guardian stating the time of day student must leave; reason for leaving; and expected time of return. Office personnel may phone home to confirm notes before "grounds permits" are issued for personal reasons. These requests to leave should be submitted to the attendance office before 8 a.m. Upon re-entering school, the student presents the signed off-campus permit with the time to the attendance window to receive an admit form. This includes partial period or lunch absences. Students may not leave campus without receiving an off-campus permit. **No absences related to failure to check out properly will be cleared;** a truancy will be assigned. Failure to check out will result in consequences such as Saturday School Detention.

STUDENT ABSENCE FROM CLASS DUE TO FIELD TRIP OR ATHLETICS

Students who are absent on approved field trips and athletic events are not considered absent from school, only absent from class. Students must have prior permission for these absences in the form of a pink slip, which is to be signed by all teachers involved before the absence, or by a bulletin given to the teachers before the absence, indicating the date and reason for the absence. The pink slip must be returned to the teacher who is sponsoring the field trip or athletic event. A form will be turned in to the Attendance Office for field trip credit. Failure to do so will result in a truancy.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Doctors' and dentists' appointments SHOULD BE MADE AFTER SCHOOL HOURS. If the appointment must be scheduled during the school day, the student must present an absence excuse from a parent/guardian to the attendance office to receive a grounds permit, as explained above. **The grounds permit must be returned to the attendance office with the doctor's stamp.**

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students who will be gone for five or more days, due to an unavoidable event occurring during the school year, may discuss this program with their counselor or administrator to determine if it is an appropriate option. This must be done at least 2 weeks prior to the absence. Independent study is a contract between the student and teachers whereby the student will be able to continue the school work in each class while absent. Upon return to school, the teachers will evaluate the student's work and return the completed form with graded work to the attendance clerk for full credit. Independent study benefits students and the school in that the school continues to receive funding for the student.

THE AUTO-DIALER

It is the firm belief of the faculty and administration of South Pasadena High School that consistent school attendance is important for academic progress and success. Additionally, we believe that good communication with the home about student attendance is necessary. The school will use the auto-dialer to call parents regarding student absences. The calls/emails will contain a prerecorded message. The auto-dialer will also be used for telephone calls regarding future school events, particularly when it is necessary to get information to parents quickly. SPHS keeps a record of all calls made through the auto-dialer. Please contact the attendance clerk if you are not receiving these messages.