



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Public charter schools in South Carolina are considered public schools of choice. Student participation in these schools is by parental choice and is not mandatory. Students who violate the district's attendance policy will be withdrawn from the charter school and referred back to the resident district for adjudication.

Brick and mortar school students will be considered in violation of the **ten consecutive days compulsory attendance policy** (State Board of Education Regulation 43-274) when they do not attend school for **at least 5 hours a day** during a 10 consecutive school day period. The ten consecutive days attendance policy refers to unexcused absences.

Students who violate the district's attendance policy will be referred to both DSS and the residential school district through the South Carolina Public Charter School District truancy referral form. They will be withdrawn from the charter school.

Parents, we want your children in school every day!

- **Students may begin arriving at school** no earlier than 6:30 a.m.
- **The instructional day begins at 7:05 a.m.** and ends at 4:30 p.m. **However, students may be dropped off as early as 6:30 a.m. Our classroom instruction will begin promptly at 7:05 a.m.** Classroom teachers are responsible for taking and recording attendance using the computerized system PowerTeacher.
- **Our school dismisses at 4:30 p.m. M-Th. All children should be picked up** no later than 5:30 p.m. On Fridays **all children should be picked up** no later than 1:00 p.m.
- It will be assumed that children on campus M-Th after 5:30 p.m. are participating in after-school programs (\$20/week), and parents will be charged accordingly. On Fridays, it will be assumed that children on campus after 1:00 p.m. are participating in the YMCA after-school program. The After-School Program Form and fee should be turned in to the Director of Special Programs.

Tardy

Instruction begins when students enter the building. Students arriving **after 7:10 a.m.** are considered **tardy**. **If your child is tardy, you must escort him or her to the attendance office to receive a tardy slip.**

Tardy students who arrive in their class first rather than the front office will be sent to the office for this procedure. Tardiness is excused for essentially the same reasons as absences. Tardies will accumulate into an absence (**5 tardies = 1 absence**); excessive tardies (**more than 5**) will result in required Saturday Day School for **2 Saturdays**. A note is also necessary for your child to be excused for being late to school.



Parents must come into the office to sign in a tardy student. The first time a parent does not come in to sign a student in, the parent will receive a written warning. **The second time a parent does not come in to sign in a child when tardy, the tardy will be unexcused and the child will not be sent to class.** Parent(s) will be called to return to school to sign the child in for the day.

What you can do:

- Make sure your child is at school and on time every day.
- Prepare for school the night before.
- When your child must be absent, or is late, please provide a written reason for the absence or tardiness. This note should be dated and signed by the parent or guardian only.

Early Checkouts

Students who are signed out prior to 1:00 p.m. will be marked absent.

Early checkouts will be excused for the same reasons that absences are excused. All others will be unexcused. Parents are asked **not** to go to classrooms since teachers will have to redirect you to the office for this procedure. *For the safety of your child, we will not permit early checkouts after 4:00 p.m. each day M-Th and 12:00 p.m. on Friday. Since students will miss a significant amount of instruction, signing students out early should be avoided whenever possible. In addition, older siblings will not be allowed to sign students out early without a picture I.D. and a signed note from the student's legal parent or guardian.*

If at all possible, please refer to the school calendar for student holidays as a reference when making appointments for your child.

What you can do:

- Make sure your child attends school **every day!**
- Drop off your child daily between 6:30 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- Pick up your child promptly at 4:30 p.m.
- If you must pick your child up early, make sure you pick him or her up after 1:00 p.m. and before 4:00 p.m. M-Th and 12:00 p.m. on Friday.
- Inform your child's teacher and the front office (in writing) of any transportation changes, well in advance. **For your child's safety, phone calls will not be accepted in lieu of a signed note of transportation changes, as we are unable to identify a caller.**



Early checkouts will be excused for the same reasons that absences are excused. All others will be unexcused. We understand that emergencies do occur that require you to pick your child up early, but this should be infrequent. Tardiness is excused for essentially the same reasons as absences. Excessive early checkouts will accumulate into an absence (**5 early checkouts = 1 absence; every early checkout thereafter = 1 required Saturday School attendance**). A note is also required for your child to be excused for early checkout.

A doctor's note will be requested when a student is absent from school for **5 consecutive school days** or after a student has been absent for **10 cumulative school days**. When a child has accumulated **8 absences** due to illness (or earlier if requested by the Executive Director), the school nurse will contact the parent to determine if a medical condition is the cause of frequent absences. The nurse will develop a plan to document the chronic medical condition and its effect on attendance. Written information from the child's physician must be on file at the school to document the existence of a chronic medical condition.

A form for parents who wish to request excused absences for educational leave/family trips is available in the front office and on our website. Parents should complete the request form and submit it to the Executive Director **10 days prior** to the absence. A written work product will be required discussing the educational experience as determined by the Executive Director. All class work missed must be made up **within 3 days** and required Saturday School attendance may be necessary based on the length of absence and the need of the student to make up work.

Parent Contact:

Initial notification of student absence will be made through an automated calling system. The automated message will remind parents that a written note is required when the child returns to school following any absence.