

Absences

Regular attendance is expected of all Priority Charter Schools students due to the rigor of our curriculum. Consistent school attendance is an essential component of each student's education. Official attendance is taken each day and recorded each instructional period. Tardies and early checkouts are also recorded each day.

Absence from school will affect a student's ability to succeed in class; therefore, students and parents should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Additionally, state law mandates compulsory school attendance for children of a certain age, and Priority Charter Schools' policy deals with attendance for course credit and a student's final grade. These items/laws are discussed below.

Texas Compulsory Attendance Law

The state compulsory attendance law requires that a student between the ages of six and 19 must attend school and school-required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. Priority Charter Schools' staff must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission from any class, from required special programs, or from required tutorials will be considered "truant" and subject to disciplinary action.

A student who voluntarily attends our Pre-Kindergarten program or enrolls after his or her 19th birthday is required to attend each school day. If a Pre-Kindergarten student or a student 19 years of age or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, Priority Charter Schools may revoke the student's enrollment, except that Priority Charter Schools may not revoke the enrollment on a day on which the student is physically present at school. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. Prior to revoking the student's enrollment, Priority Charter Schools shall issue a warning letter to the student after the third unexcused absence stating that the student's enrollment may be revoked for the remainder of the school year if the student has more than five unexcused absences in a semester. As an alternative to

revoking enrollment, Priority Charter Schools may impose a behavior improvement plan.

Attendance for Credit or Final Grade

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend at least 90% of the days the class is offered. These days include both excused and unexcused absences. A student who attends fewer than 90% of the days the class is offered may be referred to the Attendance Review Committee to determine whether the absences were due to extenuating circumstances and how the student may regain credit or earn a final grade.

Absence and Tardiness

When a student must be absent from school, parents are asked to call the School each day the student will be absent. Upon returning to school, the student must bring a note, signed by the parent, or a medical excuse signed and dated by a provider that describes the reason for the absence. Notes should be submitted to the school registrar, and may be scanned and emailed, submitted through the Priority Charter Schools website, or faxed to the School. If a note is not received within 5 school days of the absence, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Because excessive absences are considered truancy under state law, Priority Charter Schools reserves the right to take extreme absence cases to court.

The school recognizes two kinds of absences: excused and unexcused. Students and parents should read this section carefully to understand the School's expectations. Students and parents should also be aware of the School's policy regarding homework, quizzes, and tests following an absence.

Excused Absences

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days.
- Required court appearances.

- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship.
- Service as an election clerk.
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. If a student returns to school the same day or attends part of the day prior to a doctor's appointment and then presents a doctor's note verifying the appointment, the absence is excused and the student is counted present. Students should be picked up and signed out for early dismissal in the office. We cannot call your student from the classroom until you are in the front office signing them out.
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state.
- Mental health or therapy appointments.
- Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

A junior or senior student may also be absent for up to two days per school year for purposes of visiting a college or university, so long as the student obtains permission for the visit from the Principal, follows the School's procedures to verify the visit, and makes up any work missed due to the absence.

A student may also be absent for up to two days in a school year for service as an early voting clerk or election clerk, provided the student receives approval from the school principal prior to the absence and informs his or teachers of the absence.

Absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments.

For religious holy days, required court appearances, activities related to obtaining citizenship, and services an election clerk, one day of travel to the site and one day of travel from the site shall also be excused by the School.

The only additional excused absences are for personal illness, death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, or member of the immediate household), a school-related absence or an absence approved in advance by the camps principal due to extenuating circumstances.

An absence will also be considered an exemption if a student 17 years of age or older is pursuing enlistment in a branch of the U.S. armed services or Texas National Guard, provided the absence does not exceed four days during the period the student is enrolled in high school and the student provides verification to the district of these activities.

Unexcused Absences

Any absence not listed above or approved in advance by the school principal due to extenuating circumstances will be considered an unexcused absence.

Tardiness and Late Arrival

Students who arrive late must sign in at the school office. Late arrivals are documented. Any student arriving after the official attendance time of 10:05 a.m. will be marked absent for average daily attendance purposes.