

Attendance

Absence is one of the major causes of poor work and failure in school. Students are expected to attend school each day. We recognize that sometimes students must miss school due to illness or other circumstances. A note signed by the parent or legal guardian explaining the nature of the absence is required within 3 days of the student returning in order for the absence to be counted as excused. Missing 30 minutes or more of a class period constitutes an absence.

House Bill 1190

House Bill 1190, (section 10 – Minimum Number of Unexcused Absences – 20-2-690.1) adds responsibilities for parents and guardians of school-age children who have 5 or more days of unexcused absences in a school year. As required by HB1190, a letter from CHS administration will be sent to parents of students who have more than 5 unexcused absences explaining the consequences of the law. This letter must be signed by the parent and student and returned to Cambridge High School. If a student continues to accrue excessive unexcused absences after parent notification, the case will be referred to the school social worker and a case may be pursued through the Fulton County Juvenile Court. If found in violation of the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law, parents could be subjected to one or more of the following penalties at the discretion of the court: a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, or community service. Each additional unexcused absence from school after the school system notifies the parent is considered an additional violation of the state mandatory attendance policy and is reported as a separate offense.

Attendance Procedure

Any student who has been absent from school shall present a written excuse before school begins to the attendance clerk within 3 days of returning to school. The excuse must state the reason for the absence, include a telephone number where the parent can be reached, and be signed by the student's parent or guardian. Students who have missed 10 days or more of school in a school year will be required to provide additional verification including doctors' statements.

Excused Absences

A student's absence from school or class will be considered excused when it is due to any of the following circumstances:

1. Personal illness of the student
2. Attendance at school would be detrimental to the health of the student or others
3. Death or serious illness in the student's immediate family necessitating absence from school
4. Compliance with a court order or an order issued by a governmental agency, including an order for a pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school
5. Observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school
6. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to the student's health or safety
7. Serving as a page in the Georgia General Assembly
8. Absences not exceeding a cumulative total of 6 days per year for the following reasons, but only if the absence has been pre-approved by the principal or designee:
 - a. Scholarship interviews/college visitations
 - b. Graduation or wedding of a close family member
 - c. Specialized educational experience
 - d. Other circumstances that are mutually agreeable to the parent and principal

9. Up to 10 instructional days (60 instructional hours) per year for school-sponsored non-instructional activities (defined as functions during the school day that are under the auspices or sponsorship of a school or the school system) that are specifically approved in advance by the principal or designee. The principal shall ensure that an accurate record of all such absences is maintained.
10. OSS is an excused absence.

Students are allowed to make up all work missed for excused absences.

Pre-approved Absences

At all grade levels, preapproved absences are granted as excused absences. Approved absences will be limited to 6 days for an entire school year per Board policy. Arrangements should be made with the grade level administrator 3 school days in advance of the planned absence. However, preapproved absences will not be granted during the final 3 weeks of each semester. The final decision for approving the absence rests with the grade level administrator. The grade level administrator has the discretion to approve up to 6 absences per year for other circumstances that are mutually agreeable to the parent and administrator. Should the preapproved absence exceed 6 days, the grade level administrator can approve the additional absences as unexcused, and allow any missed work at full credit even though the absence is counted as unexcused. A preapproved absence does count as an absence for attendance records. Parents' notes requesting prearranged absences should be given to the attendance office. If the absence is approved by the administrator, the student will be given a form for each teacher to sign prior to the absence. Prior to the absence, students may request work to be missed during the absence.

College Visitations

Seniors and juniors who are planning to attend college may take up to 6 college visitation days prior to May 1. No college visitation days will be granted during the final 3 weeks of each semester. The preapproved absence policy applies to college visits. Parent notes requesting pre-approved college visits should be given to the attendance office and need to be submitted for approval 3 school days prior to the college visit.

Unexcused Absences

All other absences not mentioned previously are considered unexcused. Class work and tests missed due to unexcused absences are subject to a 10 percent reduction. Since every school day is important, "skip days" are not recognized or condoned by the school administration and are considered unexcused.

Makeup Work due to an Absence

Upon returning to school following an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher (s) to request makeup work. The contact should be made on the day the student returns to school unless the teacher allows a longer time. Makeup work must be completed by the student within the time specified by the teacher. Work missed during the last week of the first semester must be made up by the 10th school day of the next semester.

In the event of an extended absence, student work may be requested by calling the counseling secretary when a student is absent 3 or more consecutive days. The parent will be able to pick up the missed work at the end of the day following the request.

Illness at School

Students who do not attend class due to illness at school must report to the clinic immediately. Failure to do so constitutes a class cut.

Checking Out

To arrange a checkout, the student must take a written request, signed by the parent/guardian, to the attendance office before school. The request should include the reason for the checkout, parent/guardian signature, and a telephone number for parental verification. The request will be verified, and the attendance clerk will issue a checkout pass to the student. When it is time for the student to leave, the student will show the teacher the checkout pass after 8:00 a.m. The student must check in and out through the attendance office prior to leaving campus. Failure to check in and out through the attendance office may result in disciplinary action. There will be no walk in checkouts after 3:15 p.m.

5th Checkout Rule

After the 5th check-out or check-in within a semester, students will be referred to an administrator. After the 5th check-in/check-out, the parent must be present, unless a doctor's note is presented, for an excused absence to be considered. Exceptions for serious medical problems will be handled on an individual basis. Checkouts during final exams will be only with parent pickup. Once on campus, students may not leave without checking out through the attendance office. (If students are not in school for the full day and come on campus for any reason, they must check in and out of school.) Students arriving on campus after 8:25 a.m. are required to check in at the attendance window.

Vocational Program Dismissal

Students on vocational programs must leave the campus upon dismissal from classes. Students who fail to abide by this rule will be given one warning. On the second offense, they may be assigned to a study period and will forfeit their early release.

Tardy to Class/Tardy to School

Students late to class are required to sign the teacher's tardy book. Students late to school must report to the attendance office first. The following disciplinary consequences will result for tardies to class and unexcused check-ins to school:

- 1 to 3 tardies - Teacher warning/parent contact
- 4 to 5 tardies - Public detention/lunch detention
- 6 to 9 tardies - Friday Night Extension
- 10 or more - Out-of-School Suspension (O.S.S.)

Truancy and Class Cuts

Students are expected to attend all classes every day unless an absence is approved or excused through the attendance office. Leaving campus without permission is considered a major violation.

School Activity Check-Outs

In order to participate in a field trip, school activity, or athletic event, students must have a record of regular school attendance. Students with excessive absences or tardies (i.e. 5 or more absences/5 or more tardies per semester) or who are at risk of failing a class may forfeit the opportunity to participate.