

ARGYLE MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws, one dealing with compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit, are of special interest to students and parents.

Compulsory Attendance

The state compulsory attendance law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school and District-required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused.

School employees 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.

Truancy may also result in assessment of penalties by a court of law against both the student and his or her parents. A complaint against the parent may be filed in the appropriate court if the student:

Is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six month period in the same school year, or

Is absent on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period. **This includes being late to first period or picked up early from last period.**

Attendance for Credit

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit.

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

All absences shall be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If make-up work is completed, absences for religious holy days and health care appointments shall be considered days of attendance for this purpose.

A transfer or migrant student incurs absences only after his or her enrollment in the District. For a student transferring into the District after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.

In reaching consensus about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that its decision is in the best interest of the student.

The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.

The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.

The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.

The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the District's Board of Trustees by filing a written request with the Superintendent in accordance with policy FNG.

Excused/Unexcused Absences:

State law and school guidelines governing attendance require that excused absences pertain to illnesses, medical appointments, funerals of immediate family members, and school sponsored trips. Students who are absent from school for any reason are required to provide a written note signed by the parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence. Notes verifying student absences may be given to Mrs. McCue in the counselors' office.

Notes regarding student absences must be turned in to the school within 3 days of returning to school or the absence will be unexcused. A PHONE CALL IS NOT SUFFICIENT DOCUMENTATION OF STUDENT ABSENCES. For student safety reasons, we still request that you call or e-mail Mrs. McCue (wmccue@argyleisd.com) to inform us of absences, but you must follow up with a written note. After the student has missed 5 days for planned absences that are not due to illness, medical appointments, funerals of immediate family members or school sponsored trips, no further excused planned absences will be granted. Unexcused absences will result in a maximum grade of 70 for assignments missed due to unexcused absences.

Pre-planned Absences:

No classwork will be given prior to extended absences. In order to request permission to have make-up class work when they return as a result of an absence caused by an obligation other than those listed above, a student must have the AISD Special / Preplanned Absence Request form completed and approved prior to the absence. Please submit this form to the principal 5 days prior to the planned absence in order to allow time for review. The process of approving this special request absence will include the consideration of attendance in class, grades, and other extenuating circumstances. Absences will not be granted during state mandated assessments. Each student may only be granted 5 days per school year. A student must be in attendance 90% of the school year. A planned absence causing a student to be in attendance less than 90% of the school year would be cause to deny this request. The AISD Special / Pre- planned Absence Request Form can be obtained from the school office or on the Argyle Intermediate campus web site.

Health Care Appointments:

A student whose absence is excused for an appointment with a health care professional shall not be penalized for the absence, if the student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment and brings a note from the health care professional verifying the appointment.

Religious Holy Days:

If a student is absent due to the observance of religious holy days, the student shall not be penalized for the absence. Excused days include days of travel to or from a site where the student will observe the holy days.

Excused days for travel shall be limited to not more than one day for travel to and one day for travel from the site of the observance.

Personal Illness:

When a student's absence for personal illness exceeds three consecutive days, the principal or attendance committee may require that the student present a statement from a physician or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school as a condition of classifying the absence as one for which there are extenuating circumstances. A valid medical excuse should give the date and time of the medical appointment and provide exact dates that the student must be absent from school. For students returning to school with medical restrictions, the note should contain a beginning and ending date for the restrictions and give specific orders regarding restricted activities. If a student has established a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require that a student present a physician's or clinic's statement of illness after a single day's absence as a condition of classifying the absence as one for which there are extenuating circumstances. A medical excuse may be obtained by bringing the student to the nurse's office at Argyle Intermediate for examination when a doctor's visit is not possible. Students must be in attendance 90% of the days that school is offered to be eligible for promotion to the next grade. Parents may request classwork for students that are absent due to illness.

Tardies: Excessive tardiness is considered missing part of a school day under Texas law. A student's parent or guardian will be given written notice when a student has five tardies. If tardiness continues, parents will be given notice a second time by the principal. If tardiness continues, an attendance committee meeting will be scheduled to assist in solving the problem. When tardiness becomes a serious problem then the attendance committee and/or principal can require the student to make up lost time during summer school.