

Attendance and Independent Study

As we strive to provide the best education for our students, we would like to emphasize the importance of regular school attendance. Your child's consistent attendance is crucial for their academic success and overall well-being. Here are some key reasons why attendance matters:

1. **Academic Success**: Attending school regularly ensures that your child does not miss out on important lessons, discussions, and assignments. Consistent attendance leads to better grades and a deeper understanding of the material.
2. **Social and Emotional Development**: School is not just about academics; it's also a place where children learn social skills, build friendships, and develop emotionally. Regular attendance allows your child to participate in these important aspects of school life.
3. **Preparation for the Future**: By attending school regularly, your child learns the importance of responsibility and commitment, which are essential skills for success in the future, whether in further education or in the workforce.
4. **Legal Requirements**: In California, children between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school regularly. Failure to do so can result in legal consequences for both the child and the parent.

We understand that there may be times when your child cannot attend school due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances. However, if your child is frequently absent with or without a valid excuse, we may need to refer the matter to the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB).

The SARB is a group of professionals who work with families to address attendance issues and find solutions to improve attendance. Their goal is to support students in attending school regularly and to help families overcome any barriers to attendance.

Students who miss 10% of the school year are considered chronically absent. These absences include excused and unexcused absences. 10% of the school year would equate to 18 days missed in a school year.

The only way to “erase” a school absence is to apply for an **Independent Study Contract** prior to a pre-planned absence. Recently a change was made to the Independent Study Contract requiring families to request a contract at least 10 days **prior** to the first day of the absence. Steps to initiating and completing an Independent Study:

1. Stop by the school office and request an independent study contract
2. Fill out the contract with all the applicable dates
3. The school office will notify your child's teacher(s)
4. The day before your child's first day on independent study, the teacher will provide the student with the necessary assignments to complete while they are away.
5. While you are away, make sure your child completes the assigned work for each day of absence.

6. On the day your child returns to school, the child should bring back all completed assignments.
7. Teacher will grade the package and let the office know how many days of credit your child earned. Credit for the independent study is given based on work completed, not the grade the student earned on the work. Grades of the assignment will be awarded as if they were at school
8. The office staff will replace a student's "absence" in the attendance system to reflect the completion of an independent study. This virtually erases your child's absence.

Independent study days are limited to no more than 15 days a school year and no more than 10 days in a row. We do not provide Independent Study opportunities during the first two weeks of school **OR** at the end of the school if the child will not return before the last day of school.

We value your partnership in your child's education and appreciate your efforts to ensure they attend school regularly. If you have any questions or concerns about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us. Together, we can help your child succeed in school and beyond.