

Christine Duncan's Heritage Academy Attendance Policy & Procedure

This policy was developed to comply with state laws while also meeting the needs of Christine Duncan's Heritage Academy (CDHA) students and their families. Students are expected to be in school every day. We understand, however, that there are circumstances under which a student cannot attend for health, personal, and/or religious reasons. It is in this spirit that our attendance policy values students being at school while at the same time respects their needs when appropriate.

For the purpose of this policy, the following circumstances constitute an excused absence:

1. Medical reasons: A doctor's signed note must state the date(s) and reason(s) for the absence. The signed note must be presented upon returning to school and will not be considered valid if presented at a later date. Be advised that the school randomly validates doctor's notes. Please note that regularly scheduled doctor and dentist appointments should be scheduled outside of regular school hours.
2. Death in a family: A signed parent/guardian note must state the date(s) and reason(s) for the absence.
3. Religious holiday: A note from the parent/guardian and advanced notice to the teacher. Religious holiday is a day observed by an official religious group or specific faith, or a native sovereign nation.

ALL OTHER ABSENCES WILL BE CLASSIFIED AS AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE!

The main office is open from 7:30am to 4:30pm daily. The school voicemail is available 24 hours a day. **Parents are responsible for calling in a student's absence!** We are concerned for the safety of our students.

Research clearly states that consistent school attendance is highly proportionate to academic success. The staff at CDHA considers school attendance and punctuality a necessity to reach student expected outcomes as well as instilling life skills for students. **It is extremely important your child be in school daily!**

Attendance will be taken and maintained in every class period every instructional day for each student.

Unexcused absences in excess of two or more hours and less than one-half day will be reported as one-half day absence. These students must have written documentation as for the reason they are coming to school late and/or leaving early or be subject to the same consequences as being tardy.

Unexcused absences in excess of more than 50 percent of the instructional day will be reported as one full-day absence.

Parent permission is required if a student leaves school during the day. Students must first report to the attendance office. Parents must pick up their child in the administration office. If someone other than the parent is picking up the child, they must be listed on the school registration card. CDHA will request a picture ID before you child is released. Anyone not listed on this card will not be allowed to remove the student from school.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTIONS

The school will call home to notify parent/guardians of absent student's everyday if the school has not already been informed of the absence by the parent/guardian.

When a student reaches three unexcused absences the student's teacher will be notified and a letter informing the parent/guardian will be sent home.

When a student reaches five unexcused absences the student's teacher will be notified and a letter informing the parent guardian will be sent home. The school will contact the parent/guardian and schedule a conference to discuss possible interventions. A meeting with the student's teacher, a school administrator, the student, and the parent/guardian will be held unless the parent/guardian has contacted the school to explain the absences and the excuse complies with the attendance policy. Participants in the meeting will identify the causes of the absences, identify actions to prevent further unexcused absences, identify school resources to support the family and develop a corrective action plan that will include clear follow-up procedures including having the teacher and the student review progress on the plan regularly and with parents during conferences. A referral to the social work department will also be made at this meeting.

The notification of the parent/guardian and the meeting will be respectful and in a language and in a manner that is understandable to student and parent.

When a student has attained 10 or more unexcused absences they will be considered habitually truant. The teacher will be notified and a letter informing the parent/guardian will be sent home. This notice shall include a date, time, and place for the parent to meet with CDHA staff. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss intervention strategies that will focus on keep the student in school. The meeting will be held between the student, the student's family, the teacher, a school administrator, and the school social worker.

If there is another unexcused absence after the delivery of written notice of habitual truancy, the student will be reported to the probation services office within seven days of the unexcused absence. The parent/guardians will be reported to children's protective services for educational neglect.

Once a student is identified as a habitual truant, the school will document all attempts to notify parent/guardian that the student had unexcused absences, all attempts to meet with the

parent/guardian to discuss and develop interventions, and intervention strategies that were implemented.

CDHA will consider the sovereignty of the native American tribes and take the lead from their governmental agencies.

The school is committed to using various interventions and consequences as a tool to address excessive unexcused absences and habitual truancy and is prohibited from using out-of-school suspension and expulsion as a punishment for this issue. The school will use withdrawal as provided in section 22-8-2 NMSA 1978 only after exhausting intervention efforts listed above.