



ROCKLIN ACADEMY FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

ATTENDANCE, CHRONIC ABSENCE AND TRUANCY POLICY

ATTENDANCE

Philosophy

At Rocklin Academy, we view each day as an essential learning opportunity. A significant part of each student's educational experience is derived from classroom participation, activities, discussion, and relationships. Regular attendance is crucial for students to attain the maximum benefit from the school experience. Therefore, we expect exemplary attendance of our students. Missing school regularly not only is detrimental to a child's learning, but also can create poor learning habits. Of course, if a child is sick or has a communicable illness, he or she should stay home to rest and recover.

When students are absent from school, it is important that their absences be cleared on that day or by their first day back to school. If the student does not have a note, it will be necessary to call the parent at home or at work in order to clear the absence. Any absence not cleared within three (3) days will be marked as unexcused.

Excused Absences

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law or Board policy.

Insofar as class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

It is the practice of the Rocklin Academy not to release students without parental consent except as provided for by law.

Students in grades TK through 6 shall not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency. Students in grades 7 through 12 shall not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency or confidential medical appointment.

At the beginning of each academic year, the Superintendent or designee shall send a notification to the parents/guardians of all students, and to all students inclusive of grades 7 through 12,

informing them that school authorities may excuse any student from school to obtain confidential medical services without consent of the student's parent/guardian.

Student absence for religious instruction or participation in religious exercises away from school property may be considered excused subject to law and administrative regulations.

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer
3. Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointment. Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule regular or recurring appointments outside regular school hours.
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family:
 - a. Excused absence in this instance shall be limited to one (1) day if the service is conducted in California or three (3) days if the service is conducted out of state
 - b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any Principal relative living in the student's immediate household
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law
6. The illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child to whom the student is the custodial parent
7. Upon advance written request by the parent/guardian and approval of the Principal or designee, justifiable personal reasons including, but not limited to:
 - a. Appearance in court
 - b. Attendance at a funeral service
 - c. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion
 - d. Attendance at religious retreats not to exceed four hours per semester
 - e. Attendance at an employment conference
 - f. Attendance at an education conference offered by a nonprofit organization on the legislative or judicial process
8. Service as a member of a precinct board for an election
9. To spend time with his/her immediate family member who is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for deployment to a combat zone or a combat support position or is on leave from or has immediately returned from such deployment.
10. Attendance at the pupil's naturalization ceremony to become a US citizen
 - a. Attendance at religious retreats not to exceed four hours per semester.

Method of Verification

When students who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. Absences shall be verified by the student's parent/guardian, other person having control of the minor, or the student if age 18 or older.

The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Written note, email or other message from parent/guardian, or parent representative.
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
 - a. Name of student
 - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative
 - c. Name of verifying employee
 - d. Date or dates of absence
 - e. Reason for absence
3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. The employee shall document the verification and include the information specified in item #2 above.
4. Physician's verification
 - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, school staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
 - b. When a student has had 14 absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed in #1 through #3 above, any further absences for illness must be verified by a physician.

Process for Upholding Attendance

First day of School

1. Students who are not in attendance on the first day of school will be contacted by phone to ensure their intent to enroll.
2. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll, but have not attended by the third day will receive a letter and phone call indicating the student will be disenrolled after the fifth day of school if the student has not attended school without a valid excuse.
3. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll, but have not attended by the fifth day will receive a phone call reiterating the content of the letter.

4. Students who have not attended by the sixth day, and do not have an excused absence as defined above for not being in attendance, will be disenrolled from the roster.
5. The school will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet.
6. The district of residence will be notified of the student's failure to attend school and the disenrollment.

Effect of Absence on Grades/Credits

If a student's absence is excused, he/she shall be allowed to complete any missed assignment or test that can be reasonably given, as determined by the teacher of that class. The student shall be given full credit for the assignment or test if he/she satisfactorily completes the assignment or test within a reasonable period of time.

A student's grades may be affected by excessive unexcused absences in accordance with Board policy.

CHRONIC ABSENCE

Excessive student absenteeism and tardiness, whether caused by excused or unexcused absences, may be an early warning sign of poor academic achievement and may put students at risk of dropping out of school. To encourage school attendance, the Principal or designee shall develop strategies that focus on prevention and early intervention of attendance problems. Preventive strategies may include efforts to provide a safe and positive school environment, relevant and engaging learning experiences, and school activities that help develop students' feelings of connectedness with schools.

The Principal or designee shall work with students and parents/guardians to identify factors contributing to chronic absence and truancy. Based on this needs assessment, he/she shall collaborate with community agencies, including, but not limited to, child welfare services, law enforcement, courts, and/or public health care agencies, to ensure that alternative educational programs and nutrition, health care, and other support services are available for students and families and to intervene as necessary when students are experiencing difficulty attending school on a regular basis.

TRUANCY

To improve student attendance, the Superintendent or designee shall implement positive steps to identify the reasons for a student's unexcused absences and to help resolve the problems caused by truancy. Such strategies shall focus on early intervention and may include, but not be limited to, communication with parents/guardians and the use of School Attendance Review Teams (SART).

In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall cooperate with other agencies within the community to meet the needs of students who have serious school attendance or behavior problems and to maintain a continuing inventory of community resources including alternative programs.

Habitually truant students may be referred to a School Attendance Review Board (SARB), a truancy mediation program operated by the county's district attorney or probation officer, and/or juvenile court in accordance with law.

A student subject to compulsory full-time education who is absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than a 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof, shall be classified as a truant and shall be reported to the Superintendent or designee.

The parent/guardian of a student classified as a truant shall be notified of the following:

1. The student is a truant.
2. The parent/guardian is obligated to compel the student to attend school.
3. The parent/guardian who fails this obligation may be guilty of an infraction of the law and subject to prosecution.
4. The parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the student's truancy.

Any pupil subject to compulsory full-time education who is absent from school without a valid excuse for ten percent or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date, is deemed a chronic truant.

An attendance supervisor or designee, peace officer, or school administrator or designee may arrest or assume temporary custody, during school hours, of any minor student found away from his/her home who is absent from school without a valid excuse. Any person so arresting or assuming temporary custody shall deliver the student and make reports in accordance with Education Code 48265 and 48266.

Upon receiving a complaint from any person that a parent/guardian has violated the state compulsory education laws, the Superintendent or designee, shall make a full and impartial investigation of all charges. If it appears upon investigation that the parent/guardian has violated these laws, the Superintendent or designee shall refer such parent/guardian to the School Attendance Review Board.

Truancy Procedures

1. Each of the first two (2) unexcused absences will result in a call home to the parent/guardian.
2. Upon reaching three (3) unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will receive the first Truancy Notification letter from the school. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school.
3. Upon reaching five (5) unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will receive a second Truancy Notification letter and will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal and classroom teacher to consider a plan for correcting the problem.
4. Upon reaching ten (10) or more unexcused absences or unexcused tardies over 30 minutes, the student will be referred to a Student Success Team (SST) and the School Attendance Review Team (SART). In addition, the parent/guardian will receive a third Truancy Notification letter.
5. The SART team may include a Principal, Board member, classroom teacher, and support staff such as psychologist and/or counselor.
6. The SART team shall direct the parent/guardian that no further unexcused absences or tardies can be tolerated.
7. The parent/guardian shall be required to sign a contract formalizing the agreement by the parent/guardian to improve the child's attendance or face additional administrative action.
8. The SART team may discuss other school placement options.
9. Notice of action recommended by the SART team will be provided in writing to the parent/guardian.
10. If the conditions of the SART contract are not met, the student may incur additional administrative action up to and including disenrollment from the school and notification of the disenrollment sent to the student's district of residence.
11. For all communications set forth in this process, the school will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to update the school with any new contact information.
12. If student is absent ten (10) or more consecutive school days without a valid excuse and the parent/guardian cannot be reached at the number or address provided in the registration packet and does not otherwise respond to the school's communication attempts, as set forth above, the student will be in violation of the SART contract. The SART team will recommend that the student be deemed to have voluntarily disenrolled and notification of the disenrollment be sent to the student's district of residence.

Removal from Charter School

If, after the above procedures have been followed, the student continues to have unexcused absences or tardies, the parent/guardian may receive notice that the student is in violation of the SART contract. The student will then be required to appear before the SART team again to discuss the unexcused absences or tardies. After such meeting, or after reasonable attempts by the SART team to schedule the meeting if the parent/guardian is nonresponsive, the SART team may recommend that the student be deemed to have voluntarily disenrolled from RAFOS. The parent will receive written notice of the SART team's recommendation.

The SART team shall then forward its recommendation to the Board of Directors for review of the matter and final decision. The parent/guardian will receive written notice of the intent to remove the student, the date and time of the Board review, and the student's rights at the Board review. Such notice shall be sent at least five (5) days prior to the Board review and shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian. The Board's decision shall be final as to that recommendation.

If there is a Board decision to disenroll, notice will be sent to the student's district of residence within thirty (30) days.

Chronic Truancy

Any pupil subject to compulsory full-time education who is absent from school without a valid excuse for ten percent or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date, is deemed a chronic truant.

Upon receiving a complaint from any person that a parent/guardian has violated the state compulsory education laws, the Superintendent or designee, shall make a full and impartial investigation of all charges. If it appears upon investigation that the parent/guardian has violated these laws, the Superintendent or designee shall refer such parent/guardian to the School Attendance Review Board and may be subject to the consequences described in this policy, up to and including disenrollment from the Charter School.

County Office of Education, School Attendance Review Board

It is expected that when the school staff, parents/guardians and student work together, the identified attendance problems will be corrected. In the rare circumstance that the student continues to have unexcused absences of seven (7) or more, the Principal may refer the students to the County School Attendance Review Board.

School Attendance Review Boards (SARBs) are composed of school and community members who meet regularly to diagnose and resolve persistent student attendance or behavior. California compulsory education law requires everyone between the ages of six and eighteen years of age to attend school, except sixteen and seventeen year-olds who have graduated from high school or

passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) and obtained parental permission to leave. Some students, however, violate compulsory education laws and have a pattern of unexcused absences. Although truancy and excessive absenteeism are not new problems, they cause costly, long-term problems for the students, school, and the community.

Placer County Office of Education School Attendance Review Board

The Placer County Office of Education School Attendance Review Board (SARB) is composed of representatives from various youth-serving agencies including:

- Placer County
- Office of Education
- Student Support Practitioners
- Community Bilingual Liaison
- Placer County Children's System of Care
- Placer County Probation Department
- Whole Person Learning
- Placer County Courts
- Placer County District Attorney's Office

SARB helps truant or recalcitrant students and their parents/guardians solve school attendance and behavior problems through the use of available school and community resources. County SARBs are convened by the County Superintendent at the beginning of each school year. The Placer County Office of Education SARB provides consultant services to school districts in Placer County.