

# Appomattox County Public Schools Attendance Guidelines

Appomattox County Public Schools (ACPS) believes that school attendance is directly related to academic achievement and to the development of good habits that are important in the work world. Optimum student attendance is a cooperative effort, and ACPS expects parents and students to take active roles in accepting that responsibility.

Each principal shall ensure that teachers are accountable for checking and documenting attendance daily/by block; communicating and documenting contact with a student's parents, school counselor, and administrator if poor attendance is affecting the student's performance; and accurately verifying regular attendance reports. Reasonable efforts to notify a parent or guardian should be made when a student has an unexcused absence.

Compulsory school attendance is required by the Code of Virginia § 22.1-254. The Code states that every parent or guardian having control or charge of any student five to 18 years old shall be responsible for such student's regular punctual attendance at school. School attendance is the responsibility of the students and their parent(s) or guardian. At the elementary level, attendance shall be documented daily, and in the secondary schools attendance shall be documented each class block.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY:

- Student attendance is a cooperative effort; schools shall involve parents and students in accepting responsibility for regular attendance.
- Each parent or guardian of a child within the compulsory school attendance age shall be responsible for the child's regular and punctual attendance at a school as required by law.
- Students shall attend school on a regular and punctual basis unless otherwise excused in accordance with school board regulation.
- Students leaving school early for any reason must check out of the main office.

## Appomattox County Public Schools Attendance Guidelines

Recognizing that regular attendance is critical to a student's achievement in school, the school division has developed the following guidelines for attendance.

1. Parents are to notify the school by 9:00 a.m. on any day their student is absent from school.
2. Students returning from an absence are required to have a written note from the parent.
3. Definition of terms regarding attendance
  - a. **Administrator** - Refers to the building principal or assistant principal.
  - b. **Excused absence** - Students must present proof and a reason for an absence in writing by a statement from the parent or guardian, health care provider, or court official. This documentation is expected on the day the student returns to school. Students shall make-up class and homework for an excused absence. An absence may be excused due to the conditions noted below. The school reserves the right to require additional documentation of absences before designating an absence as excused. Parents should send a note for all absences in order that the school may exercise the option to excuse the absence.
    - i. Personal illness or appointment verified by written documentation from a physician, dentist, or mental health professional.
    - ii. Religious holidays.
    - iii. Subpoenaed court appearance or legal appointment.
    - iv. Extenuating circumstances - The administrator reserves the right to approve as excused special circumstances that require a child to be withheld from attending. The parent should notify the school immediately of such circumstances. The administrator will take the student's overall attendance into consideration when making a determination of excused or unexcused.
  - c. **Pre-arranged absence** - A pre-arranged absence is one that is known in advance by the parent and is not one of the types noted above under "excused absence." The administrator will designate absences known in advance as excused or unexcused. A parent requesting a pre-arranged absence, shall, prior to the absence, notify the school administrator of the circumstances requiring absence from school.
  - d. **Unexcused absence** - An absence that is designated unexcused by the building administrator.
  - e. When evaluating a student's record for compliance with the compulsory attendance law each 3 unexcused tardies or unexcused early dismissals, or any combination of the two, will result in one absence being assessed to the record.
4. Make-up work-
  - a. Students shall make up work due to an absence and are responsible for returning the assignments to the teacher for grading. Makeup work for an unexcused absence may be discounted a letter grade.
  - b. Refer to the individual school handbook for details and time lines by which make-up work must be returned to the teacher. (Teachers are reminded to be mindful that the student has several teachers to work with and current work to be maintained during this time.)
5. **Follow-up with parents for attendance and truancy issues-**
  - a. All parents will be notified when their student has been absent from school (excused and unexcused) for a total of 10 days during the school year.
  - b. After 5 unexcused absences, a conference will be held with school officials to create a school attendance plan.
  - c. Referrals will be made to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court as required by law for students violating school attendance plans.
  - d. Students are expected to be in school during the school hours noted.

## School Hours

Appomattox Primary – 8:25-3:00 Appomattox Elementary School – 8:25 -3:00 Appomattox Middle School – 8:20 – 3:05 Appomattox County High School – 8:15-3:15