

San Carlos Charter Learning Center

Attendance Policy

The San Carlos Charter Learning Center (“School”) values the active participation of its learners. The School’s Board of Directors adopts this Attendance Policy in furtherance of its mission to foster an inclusive, learner-centric environment that draws from the whole community to support all of our children as learners and people. When a learner misses school, a learner’s educational progress is disrupted and missed work can become a burden to complete while staying caught up on current assignments. Regular attendance helps to ensure each learner can reach his/her full educational potential and shows a commitment by the family to the School and to the learner’s education.

The School depends on learner attendance for funding. When a learner is absent, school funding is reduced, regardless of the reason for the absence. This can harm our education program as a whole and the educational experience for other learners.

The Policy sets forth what absences may be considered excused or unexcused and the consequences of violating the policy, which may include disenrollment.

Excused Absences

The Executive Director or his/her designee is responsible for determining whether an absence is excused or unexcused. Absence from school may be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies, and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law.

The following are examples of excused absences:

- Illness or situations when a physician recommends a learner miss School
- Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments which cannot be scheduled outside the school day
- Religious Holiday
- Court-ordered absences
- Death in the learner’s immediate family
- To spend time with a member of the learner’s immediate family, who is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position
- Attending naturalization ceremony
- Other unusual circumstances when approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee and requested in advance

The Executive Director or his/her designee shall limit the length of an excused absence to the stated justification to ensure they do not extend over days the learner could attend School.

Learners absent for the reasons deemed “excused” shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence that can be reasonably provided and, upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time, shall be given full credit therefor. The educator of the class from which a learner is absent shall determine which tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the learner missed during the absence.

Submitting Request for Excused Absences

When learners who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide a justification for an absence. If the School receives no information about an absence, it is presumed the absence is unexcused. The following methods may be used to verify learner absences:

1. Written note from parent/guardian or parent representative;
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the learner's parent/guardian or parent representative.
3. Physician's verification
 - a. When excusing learners 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 learner has had 14 absences in the learner's year for illness verified by methods listed in #1-#3 above, any further absences for illness must be verified by a physician.

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

Unexcused Absences/Truancy for Classroom-Based Attendance

Absences for the following reasons will be considered unexcused:

- "Long weekends" and vacations
- Moving days (change of residence)
- Transportation problems
- Appointments for non-essential activities such as haircuts

Procedure for Excessive Unexcused Absences

The Executive Director or his/her designee shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy. The following procedure will be followed to manage Unexcused Absences:

- Third Unexcused Absence – A staff or faculty member will call home to verify the learner's attendance record, review this policy and discuss how the school can help to resolve the problem.
- Fifth Unexcused Absence – A staff or faculty member will call the family to verify the learner's absence and a notice of excessive unexcused absences will be sent home and placed within the learner's cumulative record. The Executive Director or designee will notify the parent that if five (5) more unexcused absences occur, the learner will be disenrolled for violating this policy.

- Eighth Unexcused Absence - Upon reaching eight (8) unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will receive a notification letter and will be required to meet with the Executive Director or designee. It is the School's intent to identify and remove all barriers to the learner's success and will explore every possible option to address learner attendance issues with the family. The Executive Director or designee will discuss the absence problem with the parent/guardian to work on solutions, develop strategies, discuss appropriate support services for the learner and his/her family, and establish a plan to resolve the attendance issue.
- Tenth Unexcused Absence – The Executive Director shall issue a letter informing the parent/guardian of the School's intent to disenroll the learner. This letter shall be sent at least five schooldays before the effective date of disenrollment set forth in the letter. ("Five Day Letter"). The Five Day Letter will explain the parent's/learner's due process rights to request a hearing on the Executive Director's decision to disenroll the learner for failure to comply with this policy. If the parent/learner does not respond to the Five Day Letter or otherwise does not elect to request a hearing, the learner shall be disenrolled and notification will be sent to the district of residence. After disenrollment, the learner can apply to School the following school year. If the School does not have any enrollment capacity, the learner can participate in the admissions lottery like other applicants desiring to attend the school.

Procedure for Excessive Consecutive Unexcused Absences

The School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet to reach out to families if learners are absent for consecutive days without a valid excuse. If learner is absent seven (7) or more consecutive school days without a valid excuse, the Executive Director or designee shall issue a Five Day Letter informing the parent/guardian of the School's intent to disenroll the learner.

This letter shall be sent at least five schooldays before the effective date of disenrollment set forth in the letter. The letter will explain the parent's/learner's due process rights to request a hearing on the Executive Director's decision to disenroll the learner for failure to comply with this policy. If the parent/learner does not respond to the Five Day Letter or otherwise does not elect to request a hearing, the learner shall be disenrolled and notification will be sent to the district of residence. After disenrollment, the learner can apply to the School the following school year. If the School does not have any enrollment capacity, the learner can participate in the admissions lottery like other applicants desiring to attend the school.

Adopted: September 11, 2019

Amended: