



BOARD POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

John Adams Academy-Roseville, John Adams Academy-El Dorado Hills, John Adams Academy-Lincoln, and any other John Adams Academy charter school (hereinafter, "School") values the active participation of its scholars. The School's Board of Directors adopts this Attendance Policy for in-person instruction in furtherance of its vision and mission to restore America's heritage by developing servant leaders. Chronic absenteeism inhibits our ability to achieve our vision and mission by inhibiting our ability to provide a high-quality education to all scholars. This policy does not apply to scholars enrolled in the John Adams Academy-Online program. Scholars in the John Adams Academy-Online program are subject to the School's Board Policy on Independent Study.

The Board desires to ensure that all scholars attend school and take full advantage of educational opportunities provided by the Academy. The Governing Board believes that excessive absenteeism, whether caused by excused or unexcused absences, may be an early warning sign of poor academic achievement and may put scholars at risk of dropping out of school.

The Academy shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all scholar attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish and maintain standards of scholar behavior and attendance in alignment with Academy Core Values, using appropriate methods that promote mutual respect and lead to a positive and productive school environment.

The Superintendent or designee shall create and adopt attendance procedures, that include scholar, parent and academy expectations, addressing Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy, for accomplishing this attendance policy and make the procedures publicly available in the Family/Scholar Handbook and on the Academy website.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a system to accurately track scholar attendance in order to comply with local, state, and federal requirements applicable to charter schools as well as to identify individual scholars who are chronic absentees and truants, as defined in law, and to identify patterns of absence throughout the Academy.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board with regular updates regarding data on school attendance, chronic absence, and truancy rates for all Academy schools.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies that focus on prevention of attendance problems, and incentives and rewards to recognize scholars who achieve excellent attendance or demonstrate significant improvement in attendance. The Superintendent or designee also shall develop strategies that enable early outreach to scholars as soon as they show signs of poor attendance.

The Superintendent or designee may collaborate with scholars, parents/guardians, staff, and community agencies, as appropriate, to identify factors contributing to chronic absence and truancy, and may also collaborate with county office of education School Accountability Review Boards (SARB), other government agencies, and/or care providers to ensure that support services are available for scholars and families experiencing circumstances leading to attendance issues and to intervene as necessary when scholars have serious attendance problems.

The Policy sets forth what absences may be considered excused or unexcused. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy and establish consequences of violating the policy, which may include disenrollment.

Excused Absences

The Principal 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 scholar miss school
- Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments which cannot be scheduled outside the school day
- Religious holidays
- Court-ordered absences
- Death in the scholar's immediate family
- To spend time with a member of the scholar'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 requested in advance and approved by the Principal or his/her designee

Completion of Work: Scholars 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 scholar is absent shall determine which tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the scholar missed during the absence.

Unexcused Absences/Truancy for Classroom-Based Attendance

Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to the following reasons:

- “Long weekends” and vacations
- Family reunions
- Staying home to care for animals
- Moving days (change of residence)
- Transportation problems
- Appointments for non-essential activities
- Forgetting it was a school day

Scholars absent for reasons deemed “unexcused” may be precluded from receiving credit for assignments and tests missed during the unexcused absence.

Families who are aware in advance of a possible excused or unexcused absence are encouraged to contact the school regarding participation in a short-term independent study agreement.

Consequences for Multiple Unexcused Absences

Upon the third unexcused absence (or upon the 15th unexcused period absence), in addition to sending written communication, the Academy will take preventative action and contact the family by telephone to determine the reasons and causes for the unexcused absences or other attendance problems.

Upon the sixth unexcused absence (or upon the 30th unexcused period absence), in addition to sending written communication, the Academy will call the family to schedule an in-person meeting with a parent to discuss the unexcused absences and notify the parents that if four more unexcused absences occur, for a total of ten unexcused absences, the scholar will lose his or her admissions preference as a continuing scholar for the Academy for the following school year and will be considered for disenrollment from the Academy.

Upon the eighth unexcused absence (or upon the 40th unexcused period absence), in addition to sending written communication, a second in-person parent conference will be scheduled and the parent will be notified that two more unexcused absences, for a total of ten unexcused absences, will result in the scholar no longer receiving preferential admission as a continuing scholar to the Academy for the next school year and will be considered for disenrollment from the Academy.

Upon the tenth unexcused absence (or upon the 50th unexcused period absence), the family will be provided with written notice of intent to disenroll the scholar at least 5 school days before the effective date of the action. The notice will inform the family of their right to request a hearing by a neutral School official. If the family does not request a hearing by the deadline, the scholar will be considered disenrolled from the Academy.

Consequences for Multiple Consecutive Unexcused Absences

In cases where a scholar has enrolled, but has demonstrated no positive attendance from the first day of school, upon the third day of consecutive unexcused absence, the scholar may be marked as a “no show” and considered for disenrollment.

For scholars that have demonstrated at least one positive day of attendance during the school year, upon the seventh consecutive unexcused absence, the scholar will be disciplined up to and including disenrollment from the Academy.

Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absentee means a scholar who is absent for any reason on 10 percent or more of the school days in the school year, when the total number of days the scholar is absent is divided by the total number of days the scholar is enrolled and school was actually taught. For example, if the school calendar includes 180 instructional days, a scholar will be considered chronically absent upon the 18th absence in the school year, regardless of whether the absences were excused or unexcused.

For purposes of this policy, chronic absentee includes a scholar who is absent for any reason from 10 percent or more of the periods in the school year. For example, if the school calendar includes 180 instructional days and a scholar is scheduled to attend classes for five periods per day, the scholar will be considered chronically absent upon the 90th period absence in the school year (180 days x 5 periods per day = 900 periods per year; 10% of 900 is 90 periods), regardless of whether the absences were excused or unexcused. Excessive absences may also result in a student failing a course, as set forth in the Family Scholar Handbook.

Limits to Length of Excused Absences: In the case of chronic absenteeism, the Principal 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 scholar could attend School. These limitations include, but are not limited, to:

Illness: Once designated as a chronic absentee, a parent, or scholar if the scholar has attained age 18, must provide a Doctor's Note for all illness-related absences. A Doctor's Note is documentation from a physician, dentist or other medical doctor indicating that the scholar must stay home from school. Only the front office is authorized to accept a Doctor's Note. If a Doctor's Note is not provided, the Principal or designee may consider each missed day an unexcused absence.

Other Absences Ordinarily Considered Excused: Once designated as a chronic absentee, a parent, or scholar if the scholar has attained age 18, must provide documentation to verify the validity of each absence that would ordinarily be considered "excused". If the documentation is not provided, the Principal or designee may consider each missed day an unexcused absence.

Consequences for Chronic Absenteeism

Unless a scholar has completed the chronic illness process or otherwise made prior arrangements with administrative leadership, privileges to participate in nonacademic activities including socials, dances, athletics, walking at graduation, eligibility to run for scholar government, etc. may be withheld for chronic absenteeism. Depending on the cause of the chronic absenteeism, consequences could include disenrollment of the scholar.

In the case of chronic absenteeism, scholars absent for reasons deemed "unexcused" may be precluded from receiving credit for assignments and tests missed during the unexcused absence, and/or may not receive credit for the course if tracked under period attendance.

The Principal retains discretion to apply the consequences in a manner to protect and support the scholar, as the Academy strives towards ensuring all scholars attend school.