

SHAWNEE TRAIL & FISD ABSENCE/TARDY GUIDELINES

General Information:

A student's attendance record encompasses **all absences**: excused full days or parts of days as well as unexcused full days or parts of school days.

Under Texas Education Code 25.094, a student is in violation of the Compulsory Attendance law if the student accrues excessive unexcused absences for full days or parts of school days. Tardiness is considered part of the school day. Leaving school early is also considered part of the school day. It is the responsibility of the parent to monitor their child's attendance. Under Texas Education Code 25.093, a parent is subject to prosecution when his/her child fails to attend school regularly.

Under FISD policy and Texas Education Code 25.092, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the school year. If your child misses ten percent or more school days (18, excused and/or unexcused absences) a required attendance committee meeting may be held at the end of the school year **to determine whether your child will be promoted or retained**. ALL non-school related absences, except those exemptions allowed by law, are counted toward the 90% requirement and both excused and unexcused are taken into account.

Absence Procedures

Notification of Absences:

- When your child is sick or there is a family emergency and your child must miss school, please notify Jodi Timbs, data clerk, at timbsj@friscoisd.org and copy your child's teacher. You can also call the main number at 469-633-2500. This courtesy, however, **does not** take place of the **required written and signed parent note or email** upon your child's return.
- All notes, (parent, healthcare professional, etc.) must be returned within three (3) days of an absence and must include the following:
 - Child's name
 - Child's teacher
 - Parent contact number
 - Reason for absence.
 - **Notes submitted after the third day will not be accepted.**
- If after three days, a note is not submitted, the absence will be documented as an *unexcused* absence.
- **Please note: If a student establishes a questionable pattern of absences, the campus attendance committee may also require a physician's or clinic's statement of illness after a single day's absence. The campus attendance committee may make the decision to no longer accept parent notes if deemed appropriate.**

Tardy

- **Students will be considered tardy if they are not in the building when the bell rings at 7:45 AM (excluding health care visits with proper documentation). Tardies are unexcused and are part of a student's attendance record.** When a student is tardy, this is recorded as an unexcused absence for part of a school day.

Late Arrival due to Health Care Visit

- If your child arrives at school after 7:45 A.M. due to a visit to a health care professional, the visit must be supported by a document/note from the health care professional to prevent counting as tardy. It will be coded as a Medical (M) reason and though it will affect possible perfect attendance for your child, it will not be counted against your child's attendance for truancy purposes. This documentation of absence **must be submitted within 3 school days of absence** to the front office/data clerk.

Personal Illness

- When a student's absence **for personal illness exceeds four (4) successive days**, a **statement from a physician or health clinic** verifying the illness or other condition requiring the student's extended absence from school is required (note: the school nurse is available to verify an illness on the day of the absence).
- If you did not take your child to the doctor, a note from the doctor's office or clinic stating that you discussed symptoms with them and they advised you to stay home for a certain number of days would be sufficient.

Leaving School Early

- In order for a "leave early" to be considered excused, one of the following conditions must be present:
 - Student is checked out to go to a doctor's appointment (a doctor's note verifying the student's appointment must be received within 3 days upon return to school - *please note: a sibling's doctor appointment would not excuse the student*)
 - Student is sent home by the nurse due to illness
 - Checking a student out to attend a funeral (upon which an obituary or program would be required within 3 days upon return)

Absence due to a funeral: If a student is absent due to attending a funeral, FISD policy requires that a copy of the funeral program or obituary must be received upon return to school, in order for that absence to be considered excused. FISD policy allows up to 3 consecutive days to be excused due to a funeral (allowing 2 days for travel, if needed, and 1 day for the funeral). If a student is absent more than 3 consecutive days for a funeral, the 4th day and subsequent days will be coded unexcused.

Non-school related trips and vacations

- We understand there are extenuating family circumstances, such as illness or death in the family, requiring students to be away from school
- We strongly discourage students being absent for the purpose of vacations.
- Parents shall submit a written request, in advance, stating the dates and circumstances surrounding the vacation or trip. **These absences will be considered unexcused.**

- Only one such trip or vacation per family, per year, can be requested. Request may be granted; however, these absences will still be considered unexcused.
- No more than five (5) consecutive days of absences for trips and or vacations shall occur, except in extenuating circumstances as determined by the FSD Superintendent or designee.
- If a student is going to be absent more than 10 consecutive days, the student will be withdrawn on the 10th day. He or she may re-enroll upon return; however, class placement in the same class cannot be guaranteed.
- The student shall agree to have any pre-assigned work completed upon his/her first day back to school, although a teacher is not required to give the student make-up work prior to the absence.

Make-up work for Planned Absences (unexcused)

- Students are responsible for requesting make-up work the first day they return to class.
- Students will turn in work as follows: one day of absence = one day (next day) to make up the work; two days absence = two days to make up work; three days or more absent = three days to make up work.
- Full credit can be earned as long as the work is turned in within the allotted time.
- A teacher may also ask for a reading log, journaling or a writing activity to demonstrate learning that occurred on a trip.
- The student will not be entitled to additional tutoring either before or after the trip.

Make-up work for students who are absent 10 or more consecutive days and are withdrawn and reenroll

- The teacher may assign the student make-up work based on the instructional objectives and the needs of the individual student.
- It is the student's responsibility to obtain make-up work and the student will have three days to complete and turn in the work.

Notifying Parents of Unexcused Absences

In an effort to communicate a student's record of **all unexcused** absences (full days or parts of school days), FSD employs proactive measures such as phone calls and written notifications. Written notifications of unexcused absences are mailed at the following times:

- When a student has tardies, unexcused absences, and/or unexcused leave earlies that combined **total 3** the assistant principal will contact parent/guardian and a letter will be sent home.

- When a student has tardies, unexcused absences, and/or early release days that combined **total 7**, the assistant principal will contact parent/guardian and a letter will be sent home.
- When a student has tardies, unexcused absences, and/or early release days that when combined **total 10**, the assistant principal will contact parent/guardian, send a letter, and notify the district truancy specialist.

The purpose of contacting the parent or guardian that receives a letter, is to explain the letter and answer any questions they may have. The conversation is also documented and any extenuating circumstances are noted. This communication is shared with the truancy facilitator should absences continue and guides the decision to request truancy citations.

We hope to work as partners in teaching your child the important life skills of punctuality and attendance. If you have questions, please talk with your child's teacher or contact the school office at

469-633-2500. You may also view the district's attendance FAQs at

<http://www.friscoisd.org/about/resources-and-information/school-attendance>.

Thank you for your support of this important policy.