

HUGHES ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Arriving Late (Tardy) to School

All students arriving in the building after 8:30 A.M. should report to the front office for a tardy pass. Acceptable excuses for being tardy include illness, doctor appointments (with doctor's note), and death in family. Oversleeping, missing the bus, and/or car trouble **are not** excusable reasons for being late. Once the **10th tardy** has been reached, an intervention conference with the student and the parent/guardian will be held with the grade level administrator.

If a student is late to advisory and does not have a pass from the front office then the teacher is responsible for providing the tardy and rock step.

Bus riders will receive an "Excused Late Bus" pass and will have a few minutes to sign in and eat the breakfast that is provided to them in the main lobby.

Attendance

In South Carolina, all children are required to attend a public or private school or kindergarten beginning at age five (5) and continuing until their 17th birthday. If a child is not six (6) years of age on or before the first day of September in a particular school year, parents/guardians may choose not to send their children to kindergarten; however, they must sign a waiver which may be obtained at the local school.

In accordance with the South Carolina Compulsory School Attendance Law, the School District of Greenville County has adopted uniform rules to ensure that students attend school regularly. Each day that students are not in school, they miss hours of valuable instruction and opportunities for learning that they will not have again. Students are counted present only when they are actually in school, on homebound instruction, or are present at an activity authorized by the school principal. A student is considered in attendance when present for at least three (3) hours of the school day.

Any student who misses school must present a written excuse, signed by his or her parent or legal guardian or a healthcare professional, for all absences within two (2) days of the student's return to school. The written excuse should include the reason for and the date of the absence. If a student fails to bring a valid written excuse to school, his or her absence will be recorded as unlawful. Schools will use the criteria below when deciding whether an absence is lawful or unlawful.

Lawful Absences

- A. Absences caused by a student's illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others. These absences must be verified by a physician statement within two (2) days of the student's return to school.
- B. Absences due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family verified by a statement from the parent within two (2) days of the student's return to school.
- C. Absences due to a recognized holiday of the student's faith when approved in advance. Such requests must be made to the principal in writing.
- D. Absences for students whose parents/guardians are experiencing a military deployment, specifically when the parent or legal guardian of a student is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be excused as long as such absences are reasonable in duration as deemed by the principal so that

the student can visit with his or her parent or guardian relative to such leave or deployment of the parent or legal guardian.

- E. Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal. This would include absences for extreme hardships. Such approval should be pre-arranged when possible.

Unlawful Absences

- A. Absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents.
- B. Absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents.

Approval of Absences in Excess of Ten (10) Days

The school year consists of 180 school days. Students are allowed ten (10) excused absences covered by a parent note each school year. After that point, the absences will only be excused provided that there is a medical excuse provided by a healthcare provider. If a medical excuse is not provided, the absence will be entered as an unexcused/unlawful absence. Please see the attached document pertaining to the SC Compulsory School Attendance Law where the amount of unexcused/unlawful absences is monitored and therefore a student/parents could face legal action.

Early Dismissals

The student who needs an early dismissal must bring a note written and signed by the parent or guardian to the main office before 1st period. The note must contain the following information: date, name of student to include first and last name, time of dismissal, reason for the dismissal, name of the person picking up the student, telephone number where the parent can be reached for verification and signature of the parent. The parent or guardian will be required to come into the office to sign the early dismissal sheet. Identification will be necessary before the student is permitted to leave. No early dismissals are allowed after 2:45 P.M.

Perfect Attendance Criteria

In order to qualify for 12-Year Perfect Attendance recognition from the South Carolina State Department of Education, a student must not have accumulated **any absences –Excused or Unexcused** since being enrolled in a public school as a first-grade student. A student cannot have had any type of absence including bereavement, medical, court order, etc., during the 12 years of public school attendance. The only exception to this would be a school sponsored Field Trip/College Visit, both of which would be coordinated through the school with prior approval from the Principal. The definition of an absence at a Greenville County Middle School is missing over half (51%) of a class period a student is enrolled in, or multiple class periods a student is enrolled in, during a school day. Absence in any part of the school day for a minimum of one class period, even if the student was present for other portions of that same school day, by definition excludes a student from being determined to have Perfect Attendance.

