1. **What should I do if my child is absent from school?**

   For all absences, parents are required to write an excuse note giving the child’s name, classroom, date(s) absent and reasons for absence. Schools must receive the excuse note within three days following your child’s absence. All absences of three or more days in a row also require a doctor’s note.

2. **Why do I have to explain my child’s absence?**

   The Pennsylvania School Compulsory Law requires students between the ages of 8 to 17 to attend school on a daily basis. The School District of Philadelphia, as a designated first-class district, requires students between the ages of 6 and 17 to attend school on a daily basis.

3. **What should I do if my child’s attendance records are incorrect?**

   If you feel there is an error/discrepancy on your child’s attendance record, you have the right to address it with the school. Be ready to present proper documentation about the change you’re requesting. Once all required information is provided to your school, either the principal or designee can approve the change for the current school year.

   Any changes to a prior year’s records must be completed by the Office of Attendance and Truancy. All such requests can be forwarded to attendanceandtruancy@philasd.org or mailed to:

   The Office of Attendance and Truancy
   School District of Philadelphia
   440 North Broad Street,
   Philadelphia, PA 19131

4. **What is the difference between an excused absence and an unexcused absence?**

   **Excused:** The following conditions are considered excusable: illness, quarantine, recovery from accident, required court appearance, death in the family and authorized school activities.

   **Unexcused:** Absences are unexcused if (1) they do not meet any of the above-listed conditions and (2) if the school does not receive a signed excuse note from a parent. Ten unexcused absences within a school year will lead to a truancy referral.

   Family vacations on school days are considered unexcused absences. Please use our District calendar to plan family vacations as well as doctor visits around school days: philasd.org/calendar.

5. **What is the policy regarding funeral leave for students?**

   There are specific guidelines used by principals in authorizing the number of days to excuse student absences due to death in the family.

   **Five (5) days, including day of funeral:** parent/step-parent, child.

   **Three (3) days, including day of funeral:** sibling, grandparent/step-grandparent, resident of same house.

   **Day of funeral:** aunt, uncle, first cousin, niece, nephew.

6. **Does being late or leaving early impact student attendance and hurt school performance?**

   Yes, when your child is tardy or leaves early, they are missing out on instructional time and classroom activities. Any K-8 student coming to school two hours after the start or leaving two hours before the end of the school day will be marked as absent one half-day.

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We're here to help. Let your school know if you are moving or have a change of address or phone number.