

# SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

The first step to academic achievement is establishing excellent school attendance habits. We want to work with you to ensure that your child is at school on time every day. Here are some suggestions to help you and your child establish positive attendance habits:

- Set a regular bedtime and establish a morning routine with your child to get in the habit of a regular schedule.
- Build relationships with family, friends, and neighbors to help each other in a time of need or emergency (to drop off or pick up a child from school, babysit, etc).
- Schedule doctor appointments on school holidays, minimum days, or after school hours whenever possible.

• Don't let children stay home unless they are truly sick or have a contagious illness. Schools in the state of California have implemented an attendance policy. When absences become excessive the School Attendance Review Team (SART) first initiates a warning letter. After continued unexcused/or excessive absences, a SART meeting is held with parents, principal, and the attendance accountant *to* discuss strategies to improve your child's attendance. If absences without a doctor's note are exceeded, the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) will take the matter further and a court date will be assigned to further investigate the attendance problem. Parents can be fined at this time or assigned jailtime up to 1 year. Absences must be verified, or the absence becomes an unexcused absence/truancy. Verifying absences can be done by a phone call to the office or by sending in a note with your child.

3 unexcused days and/or 8 excused = First SART warning letter

5 unexcused days and/or 10 excused days = Second SART warning letter/Contract

After SART contract, only 2 absences without a doctor's note are permitted. Then it goes to the School Attendance Review Board.

## Acceptable reasons for excused absences:

1. Personal illness (student.)
2. Quarantine under the direction of a health officer.
3. Personal (student) medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointment.
4. Funeral services for a member of the immediate family.
5. Personal court appearance (of student.)
6. Observance of a religious holiday or religious retreat.
7. Prior Principal approval for reason which may not be included elsewhere.

## Independent Study:

Students who have planned absences for 5 to 10 consecutive days due to family emergencies, by doctors' orders, etc. can apply for short term Independent Study. Independent Study provides learning opportunities for students while not physically being at school. All assigned work must be completed and turned in on the day of return in order to receive school attendance credit. A contract must be picked up and filled out by the parent at least 1 week

prior to seeking approval from the teacher and principal. We look forward to working with you to help your child succeed in school!