

## **Attendance Policies and Procedures**

Southeastern Academy Charter School recognizes that regular attendance is one of the most significant factors in school success and educational achievement. Therefore, the Board encourages and strongly supports every effort made to have students at school and present for all classes in order that they might benefit from a quality education. Student, parents/guardians, and all school personnel are encouraged to recognize and fulfill their individual responsibilities in keeping with laws, regulations, and school policies governing the attendance of students in school. Regular Attendance by every student is Mandatory by NC General Statute 115C-378 whereby “every parent, guardian or other person in this state having charge or control of a child between the ages of seven and sixteen (who is enrolled in a public school or charter school in grades K-12) shall cause the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school the child is assigned shall be in session.”

**Definition of Attendance:** All children are expected to be in school attendance each day unless they are ill or there is an emergency. To be considered “in attendance” a student must be present in school for at least one-half of the school day or a place other than the school with the approval of school officials to attend an authorized school activity. One-half of the school day is defined as:

1. Present until 11:30 a.m.
2. Present from 11:30 a.m. until the end of the school day

State of North Carolina and Charter School Board of Trustees Attendance Policy states that any student with more than fifteen (15) absences (excused or unexcused) may be retained the following year. Parents may appeal the decision if a medical condition exists which may have prevented normal attendance.

**Definition of an Absence from School and Procedure to Follow when Returning from an Absence:** An absence is defined as missing half of the school day as defined above or more. In compliance with North Carolina Compulsory attendance law GS 115C-378, all absences require parent documentation explaining the child’s absence. The documentation from parents should state the student’s name, date(s) of absence, and parent/guardian signature. The notes are to be given to the student’s homeroom teacher on the morning the student(s) return from an absence(s). Students may also have their parent/guardian send an e-mail to the homeroom teacher for their absence to be considered excused. Failure to provide a note within three (3) days of returning from an absence will result in the absence being coded unexcused. It will be the responsibility of the administration to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.

**Excused Absences:** In accordance with state policy, absences from school will be excused for the following reasons:

1. Illness/injury
2. Quarantine
3. Death of an immediate family member
4. Medical or dental appointments (a note from doctor/dentist office is required to verify appointment)
5. Educational trips (preapproved –at least ten (10) day notice)
6. Court proceedings
7. Religious observance
8. Inclement weather

**Excessive Excused Absences:**

After ten (10) excused absences – Parent/guardian will be contacted by the administration or his/her designee by telephone or parental conference regarding attendance. If contact is unsuccessful, a letter will be sent by the administration. The school has discretion to confer with Department of Social Services to determine whether any action should be taken to address the absences.

**Excessive Unexcused Absences:**

Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) unexcused absence: - Notification letter sent to parent/guardian

Fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence: - Parent/guardian will be contacted by the administration or his/her designee by telephone or parental conference regarding attendance. If contact is unsuccessful, a letter will be sent by the administration.

Ten (10<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence: Third notification letter sent to parent/guardian. The school has discretion to confer with Department of Social Services to determine whether any action should be taken to address the absences.

**More than ten unexcused absences will cause a review by the administration as to whether the student continues to attend Southeastern Academy Charter School.**

**Waiver Procedures:** A parent/guardian or student may apply to the principal for a waiver of absences (excluding suspensions) due to extenuating circumstances. This request must be submitted in writing. The parent/guardian and the student shall be notified in writing of the decision of the principal on whether or not to grant the waiver. The parent/guardian or student shall have ten (10) school days from the date of receipt of such notification to appeal the principal's decision to the Board of Trustees pursuant to the Southeastern Academy appeal policy.

**Make-Up Work from School Absence:** Students are responsible for and they are permitted to make up work missed during an absences. All work must be made up within FIVE (5) school days following the student's return to school unless the teacher or administrator determines that extenuating circumstances might support an extension of the time. THE STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING OUT WHICH ASSIGNMENTS, QUIZZES AND EXAMS WERE MISSED AND COMPLETING WITHIN THE SPECIFIC TIME PERIOD. Students who are absent due to suspension from school will be provided an opportunity to take any examinations missed. The Southeastern Academy Administration can determine what, if any, other make-up work the student will be permitted to complete during the suspension.

**Tardy to School:** If a student arrives 8:00 a.m., a parent and the student will need to go to the administration office to sign the student in and get a tardy note. Additionally, students must be in the classroom at the designated time, not just on campus or in the hallway. Remember that our students depend on an adult to bring them to school and that your actions do influence your child's education.

**Tardy to School Excused:** Administration may excuse others on an individual basis.

1. Inclement weather
2. Documented transportation problems
3. Compliance with court order
4. Doctor appointment with a note

**Habitual Tardiness to School:**

Fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) unexcused tardy to school - Referral to administration and note sent home or email to parent/guardian.

Ten (10<sup>th</sup>) unexcused tardy - Equals 1 unexcused absence. Note will be sent home or email to parent/guardian.

1. More than fifteen (15) unexcused tardies will cause a review by the administration as to whether the student continues to attend Southeastern Academy.
2. In grades 6-8, student attendance will be maintained not only by the school day but also by period. If a student is habitually tardy to school and missing more than one half of first period, the student could eventually have too many absences in that class period and fail the subject area.

**Early Dismissal:** The school cannot prohibit parents from taking their children out of school early; however, if a student is checked out of school for reasons not approved for absences, they will not be allowed to make up missed work. In the middle school, grades 6-8, attendance will be maintained by periods. Early dismissal could cause a student to be over the maximum number of absences allowed (same number as maximum number of absences for school attendance) and receive a failing grade. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE RELEASED FROM SCHOOL THE LAST ONE HALF HOUR OF SCHOOL PRIOR TO THE REGULAR DISMISSAL TIME.** Please remember, teachers are still instructing in the classrooms until the end of the school and early dismissals interrupt instruction.