

Fort Mill School District Attendance Policy:

The Fort Mill School Board believes that attendance is a key factor in student achievement, and any absence from school represents an educational loss to the student. However, the board also recognizes that some absences from school are unavoidable and has established an attendance policy which allows for absences in inevitable circumstances.

The complete Fort Mill School District Attendance Policy can be viewed online at:

<http://www.fortmillschools.org> under "For Parents"/Student Attendance Guidelines. Please be aware of the following:

- 1.) Please provide a Written Excuse, signed by a parent/guardian, or the medical professional who treated the child and the absence will be considered **LAWFUL**.
- 2.) The maximum number of days that will be recorded as **LAWFUL** absences with **Parent Notes** is **FIVE** per school year.
- 3.) The maximum number of days that a child is allowed to miss in one school year is a total of **TEN**, *regardless of type*.
- 4.) Students are coded as **TRUANT** with the State of SC when the 5th unlawful absence is recorded. At that time, an Attendance Conference is required.
- 5.) Family Vacations or other travel NOT due to a Serious Illness or Death in the Immediate Family are NOT Excused.

Truancy: Minutes Matter!

Because of the new State initiative to combat Chronic Absenteeism, we are now required to report the number of minutes a student attends each day. If your student arrives late, leaves for an appointment and returns, or dismisses early, this impacts the total number of minutes accrued for the day. For students who arrive on time and leave at dismissal, this is not an issue. Elementary School hours are 7:40 AM-2:25 PM.

Whether your student is absent due to illness, family travel or other reasons, please remember that: **5 Unexcused Absences = Truancy per SC State Law**

What you can do to avoid Truancy :

- ✓ **Schedule Family Vacations while school is not in session.**
- ✓ **Email/Phone or Write Parent Notes to Excuse your child when he/she is ill. You are allowed 5 Excused Days with a Parent Note per school year.**
- ✓ **Send in Medical Excuses if your child sees a Doctor.**
- ✓ **Respond to Attendance reminders from the Powerschool Liaison.**

We miss our students when they are not with us! Please let us know when they will not be at school.

FMES Tardy Policy:

FMES Policy allows for a maximum of 10 Unexcused Tardies per school year. Tardies are excused if a Medical Note is provided. While we understand that emergencies do occur, excessive tardiness interferes with instruction and is considered an absence from school according to the *South Carolina Compulsory School Attendance Act*. **Once a student has reached 10 Tardies, a request to schedule an Attendance Conference will be sent home to the Parent/Guardian to discuss how we may work together to ensure on-time arrival.**

Fort Mill Elementary School strives to maintain an orderly educational environment. A morning routine helps students get organized and prepare for a successful day of education. Please be sure your student arrives to school on time! **Our school hours are 7:40 a.m.to 2:25 p.m.** **A Parent/Guardian Sign in in the FRONT OFFICE is Required for all Students checked in after 7:40.**

Should you have **questions about child's attendance record**, please contact our Registrar, **Donna Jackley**, at (803)547-7546 or JackleyD@FortMillSchools.org.

For students who arrive TARDY, attendance is updated as follows:

- 1.) **UTRD – Unexcused Tardy** – No medical excuse provided to show student was absent for an appointment. The student is LATE and it is Unexcused. Minutes are deducted from the overall total for the day based on when the student is Checked In.
- 2.) **ETRD – Excused Tardy** – A Medical Excuse was provided to show the student was late/absent due to an appointment. This student is Late and it is Excused. When a parent checks in through the Front Office computer, the only option is Unexcused Tardy. For these absences, the Powerschool Liaison changes the code from Unexcused Tardy to Excused Tardy.
- 3.) For students who leave for an appointment AFTER school starts, and then come back, the PowerSchool Liaison tracks the time they checked out and returned in Powerschool based upon the Check In/Out times and this time is Excused as long as a Medical note is provided.

For students who DISMISS EARLY:

- 1.) Regardless of the time a student dismisses, the Powerschool Liaison will update attendance to reflect the time the student checks out.
- 2.) When a student is signed out for Early Dismissal, Powerschool automatically updates the student to Dismissal. Parents will see an Absence for the day until the Powerschool Liaison updates the dismissal time.
- 3.) If a student dismisses before the required number of minutes are accrued, the student will have an Unexcused Absence for the day unless a Medical Excuse is provided.

If you have concerns about whether or not an Early Dismissal will result in an Unexcused Absence from school, please contact Donna Jackley, at (803)547-7546 or JackleyD@FortMillSchools.org