

The Hernando De Soto School

PUBLIC SCHOOL 130 MANHATTAN

Excellence in Education – Enrichment for All Children

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Attendance Policy School Year 2018 – 2019

Expectations

Attendance every day is required for students' academic success. **Perfect attendance is the goal.** Having 90% attendance means a student is missing 18+ days over a school year—a month of instruction. With regular attendance, students learn the skills and habits to succeed in their academic and social lives. NY State regulations require schools to maintain records that verify student attendance. Attendance must be recorded daily. Late arrivals and early departures must also be recorded. If a student has excessive absences or lateness, letters will be sent home to request a conference with school administration, so we can address the concern.

Absences

A student who is not in school at least one instructional period is marked absent for the day. Absences may be excused (but not eliminated) for reasons listed below. Excused absences will not be counted when attendance is calculated for school attendance recognition or other school activities. However, the attendance team will follow up with families about recurring attendance issues, including recurring absences that may be considered excused.

Excused Absences

Illness/injury: When a student is unable to attend school due to illness or injury, a document or notification (call or note from the family or doctor) is required to indicate it as excused.

- If an accommodation is required to return to school (cast or medication) families must contact the school nurse about 504 plans or Medication Administration Forms. If families fail to seek the necessary accommodation plans, any continuing absences due to illness or injury, including asthma-related absences, may be considered unexcused. The school follows the DOE policy on Head Lice.
- **Religious observation:** When a student is unable to attend school due to religious observation, the family's request in writing is required to indicate an excused absence. Please refer to Chancellor's Regulation A-630.
- **Family emergency:** When a student is unable to attend school due to a death or an emergency, notification and documentation by the family is required to indicate an excused absence.
- If a student requires supports to return to school (transportation, counseling, supplies), the family must contact the school to discuss their needs.
- Absences to attend funerals outside the country will not be excused.
- **Pre-arranged appointments:** When a student is unable to attend school due to appointments with the court, social services, or other city agencies, notification and documentation by the family is required to indicate an excused absence.
- Up to three full-day absences for school visits related to the middle school or high school application process or college visits will be considered excused with appropriate documentation of the activities.
- Whenever possible, families are expected to schedule appointments, including school visits and doctors' visits, outside of regular school hours, or to schedule appointments so the student does not miss an entire day of school.

Unexcused Absences

- **Unexplained absence:** Families are expected to notify the school whenever a student is unable to attend school, either in advance of the absence (preferred) or following the absence. Without explanation of a reason, the absence(s) are considered unexcused.
- **Immunization exclusion:** When a student is unable to attend school due to lack of appropriate immunizations the absence(s) are considered unexcused. Please refer to Chancellor's Regulation A-701.
- **Family vacations or travel:** Families should plan vacations and trips when school is not in session. If students do miss school, families must work with the school to develop plans for take-home and make-up work.

When a student has to miss school

It is the family's responsibility to call the main office at (212) 226-8072 before 8:15am a.m. to inform us of the reason for any absence. When a student returns from a full-day absence, he/she must submit a note or documentation.

For any absence, students must make up any exams, quizzes, interim assessments, or other tests. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate make-up work with the teachers.

If a student will be out of school for two weeks or more, families are asked to attend a conference and complete a transition plan that will include a schedule for missed classwork upon return. Current contact information will be reviewed and updated to prepare for any contingency that delays the student's return to school.

Getting to school on time

Students are marked late if they are not in their classrooms by **8:20 a.m.** If a student arrives at school at **8:20 a.m. or later**, he/she must be issued a late pass before going to his/her classroom.

- Lateness may be considered excused for the same reasons provided above for absence (Illness/injury, religious observation, family emergency, pre-arranged appointments) or school bus delays or documented MTA delays.
- Lateness due to routine delays in public transportation are not considered excused. Students and families need to allow ample time for travel and monitor MTA reports. There are no exceptions for inclement weather, and families are advised to leave extra time.
- The attendance team will follow up with families about recurring lateness issues, including recurring lateness that may be considered excused.

When a student has to leave school early

Leaving school early must be arranged in advance. A student can be dismissed from school early to the family or a person who has been identified on the Blue Card. Anyone picking up a student must come to the office and provide a photo ID.

- Early departures may be indicated by a reason code on the student's attendance record.
- The attendance team will follow up with families about recurring incidents of leaving school early.

When a student attends a Middle School Tour

If students go on middle school tours for part of the day, they will be initially marked absent for the day, as a student cannot be marked as present if he/she is not in the building. Upon return, the student must show proof of attending a tour, and then a special code will be entered into the system to indicate that the child was out for part of the day (i.e., will be indicated as Present upon return with a special code). If a student misses the entire day of school for a Middle School Tour, upon submission of proof/evidence of attending for the entire day, the student's absence will be changed to an excused absence, but will still reflect an absence on his/her permanent record.

Notification of absences

Phone calls will be made to parents/guardians of a student who is not in school, if the school does not receive prior notification that the student will be absent.

It is very important to keep all contact information updated. Please alert the main office of any changes to address or phone numbers.

- Families can check student attendance online with a **NYC School Account**.

- At the end of each marking period the family should review the record of attendance that appears on the report card. If an error has been made, notify school personnel. Errors in the attendance or lateness record cannot be corrected after mid-July.
- After the current school year, inaccurate attendance and lateness records may be amended, per Chancellor's Regulation A-820 as a letter to the student's file.
- If families have any questions or concerns about getting students to school every day, please contact the school.

Attendance and grades

No number of absences can prevent promotion to the next grade or graduation. However, it is more likely that a student who misses school will have lower grades, test scores and may not meet the academic standards for promotion or graduation.

- Lateness to subject class may result in a lower class average due to the loss of instructional time in activities such as: classroom participation, examinations, dialogues, group work, etc.
- Students are not required to make up the exact hours of missed instructional time. If students master course content and satisfactorily meet expectations outlined in the syllabus, they must receive credit for the course.
- It is the student and family's responsibility to arrange for make-up work.

When students are frequently absent or late:

- The school ensures that appropriate outreach and guidance interventions are provided for students who exhibit attendance problems, including arriving late or leaving early. Guidance counselors, teachers, social workers, or other school staff can all be involved in facilitating attendance resolutions.
- Whenever students miss ten days in a row, outreach to the family **is required** to understand and try to resolve the reasons for the absences. Such outreach is also required when the students miss 20 days within three months.

School calendar

The school calendar is posted on the school's website, www.ps130m.org. The NYCDOE calendar can be found at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Calendar/default.htm#2018-19%20calendars>

Attendance is a required, legal record.

A student who is not in school for at least one class period must be marked absent, even if the absence is "excused." Please check attendance on report cards, ask the school for attendance records, or follow attendance on your NYC Schools account.

Every absence counts. Excused absences are still absences.

Schools can excused absences when a student must miss school for religious, medical or emergency reasons, but the excused absences is a legal part of the student's record. Excused absences may not count against a student for school awards or participation in school activities.

Every school must contact the student's family after every absence.

Parents must provide a reason for absences. Schools will reach out to learn more about why a student misses school and how to help. Please make sure your phone numbers on your NYC Schools account and on Blue Cards are correct.

Being on time matters.

Being at school on time is important, but it is always better to come to school late than to miss the whole day. Schools may keep students who are late --or who leave early-- out of school activities or communal lunchtime, but a late student cannot be kept out of class.

Follow your child's attendance online.

Register for a NYC Schools account to see when your child is marked absent or late. Attendance records in the electronic system cannot be changed after the middle of July but attendance records may be amended in the form of a letter to the student's file. Check your child's attendance on report cards or track attendance on your NYC Schools account and contact the school if you disagree.

For more information from the NYCDOE, please go to

<http://schools.nyc.gov/StudentSupport/StudentAttendance/default.htm>

Further Questions? Call us or stop into the main office any school day.