

305 – Attendance Policy



Consistent attendance is the first necessary requirement for academic achievement and personal development. This is especially true in the academically rigorous environment of George Washington Academy (GWA). Frequent absences from the day-to-day classroom experience disrupt the instructional process. The benefits of instruction, once lost, cannot be entirely regained. The entire process of education requires continuity of instruction, class participation, learning experience, and study.

GWA highly encourages families to make it their goal to have 100% attendance. The intent of GWA's Attendance Policy is to insure that parents know how important it is for them to plan well in advance so that trips, vacations and other activities occur during those days when school is not in session. While we recognize and support the need for families to have time to play together and know that synchronizing parent work demands and requirements of the school schedule usually requires conscientious planning-ahead, the summer, winter and spring breaks, along with multiple long weekends should provide adequate time for coordination. GWA's expectation is that parents will plan family trips during days when school is not in session.

GWA is charged with the responsibility of enforcing the Utah Compulsory Education Requirements for the students who are enrolled in the school and GWA also has the responsibility of ensuring that the school meets the attendance component of Annual Yearly Progress, which is 93% school-wide average attendance.

As directed by Utah Administrative Rule:

The Attendance Procedures of GWA are developed with the intention of encouraging regular and punctual attendance and are consistent with Utah Rule and Codes.

The Board of Directors shall annually review attendance data and consider revisions to the Attendance Policy and Procedures to encourage student attendance.

The Attendance Policy and Procedures shall be included in the Parent/Student Handbook and the Parent/Student Handbook will be posted on the GWA website.

The Executive Director or his/her designee shall establish programs and incentives which promote regular, punctual student attendance.

The Attendance Procedures shall include provisions for:

- a) Notifying parents of the Attendance Policy and Procedures.
- b) Notifying parents as discipline or consequences progress.
- c) An opportunity to appeals disciplinary measures.
- d) school-age minors age 12 years or older or their parents to contest Notices of Truancy.

Utah Administrative Rule directs parents and guardians of school-age minors to cooperate with their Charter School Board to secure regular attendance at school.

The definitions of terms used in GWA's Attendance Policy and Procedures are consistent with the definitions found in the Utah Administrative Rule and Utah Code.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

The Executive Director or his or her designee will establish programs and incentives which promote regular, punctual student attendance.

When a student is absent, the parent or guardian needs to notify the school office before 8:15 AM on any day the child is absent. The parent is expected to inform the Attendance Secretary of the reason for the student's absence. If a parent does not call, GWA should attempt to contact the parent to notify the parent that the child is absent. If a parent does not communicate with the Attendance Secretary, the absence will be unexcused.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

In accordance with Utah Code, GWA has approved the following reasons for EXCUSED ABSENCES:

- Illness (For illnesses lasting more than four days, a physician's note is required.)
- Family Death or Emergency (parents need to notify both the teacher and the office as soon as the parents know an absence will be necessary.)
- Medical and Dental Appointments (It is highly encouraged to schedule appointments outside of school hours.)
- School Sponsored Activity
- Absences Permitted by a Student's IEP
- A scheduled family event

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Unexcused absence is defined as any absence that cannot be defined as an excused absence.

In accordance with Utah Administrative Code, GWA students who are absent for more than 10 consecutive days, without parent contact, will be removed from the class roles but maintain enrollment in GWA as per Utah State Law. Upon return, the student will return to the same class placement.

MAKE-UP WORK DUE TO ABSENCES

In general, school work resulting from absences may be collected from the teacher AFTER the child returns to school (the teacher will gather the school work as assignments are given). At their discretion, teachers may provide routine assignments for students before they leave if convenient, however assignments requiring a lot of prep or explanation must wait until the student returns. Students are responsible for requesting and collecting missed work from their teacher. See GWA's Late Work Policy for deadlines.

MONITORING ABSENCES

Parents will be contacted about their student's absences through email and/or phone according to procedure.

LATE ARRIVALS

It is important that students arrive on-time for school. Having a few extra minutes prior to the late bell helps them unwind, relax, and prepare for the day. Late arrival, on the other hand, is disruptive to the class and the teacher, and puts the late arriving student at a disadvantage.

The Late Bell rings at 8:15 AM. Anyone arriving at their classroom after 8:15 AM may be marked tardy. A tardy is excused for the following reasons: medical or dental appointments, traffic delays that affect several school families traveling the same route, or family emergencies. Tardy students must check-in at the office for a tardy slip before reporting to class. If the student is more than five (5) minutes late, the parent needs to accompany the student to the office.

The Executive Director may also authorize the GWA teachers to implement incentives in their classrooms for being on-time.

MONITORING TARDIES

Parents will be contacted about their student's tardies through email and/or phone according to procedure.

EARLY PICK-UPS - While it is understood that there may be rare occasions when a student must be excused early for a doctor appointment or another important reason. A pattern of early checkouts will be reported to administration with the understanding that interrupting the classroom to pull out students at the end of the day is disruptive to student learning and distracting to the teachers.

LATE PICK-UPS - Students must be picked up from GWA no later than 3:15PM. GWA does not have the ability to supervise and care for students left here beyond that time.