


CHESTER COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

Attendance Handbook

2020 - 2021



Chester Community Charter School

 Enrollment Office: 302 E. 5th Street, Chester, PA 19013

West Campus: 2730 Bethel Road, Chester, PA 19013

Upland Campus: 1100 Main Street, Upland, PA 19015

Aston Campus: 200 Commerce Drive, Aston, PA 19014

East Campus: 5th and Madison, Chester, PA 19013

 Phone: (610) 447-0400  Fax: (610) 490-4004

 www.facebook.com/chestercommunitycharter

www.chestercommunitycharter.org

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

The Board of Trustees (“Board”) requires that students enrolled at the Chester Community Charter School (“Charter School”) attend school daily and on time in accordance with the compulsory attendance laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Parents or guardians are required to ensure that their children attend school every day that school is in session through the procedures required by the Charter School.

The education program offered by the Charter School is based upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation.

The Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee shall have the responsibility to develop procedures following the guidelines developed by the Board to assure that students attend school regularly and that said procedures comply with all Federal, State and local laws.

A component of the procedures shall be an early intervention process to assure that assistance is given to students who are experiencing problems in attending school.

Attendance and punctuality procedures will be delineated in the Student Handbook and distributed to every student.

Said attendance and punctuality guidelines are subject to periodic review by the entire Board of Trustees.



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Attendance Guidelines

Students who attend CCCS as virtual learners will meet attendance requirements by logging into the (Schoology) learning portal each school day. Once in Schoology, students will have access to their classes and will be able to engage in live video lessons with their teachers and complete class assignments.

The Chester Community Charter School hours are 8:30 am – 3:30 pm. Any student who comes to school after 8:45 a.m. is considered late, including students who are learning virtually. At 10:30 a.m. the automatic dialing system will begin to notify parents that students are absent.

It is expected that parents will turn in excuse notes on the day a child returns to school following an absence. Three or more absences that are NOT followed with an excuse note from a parent will lead to truancy. For students receiving virtual instruction, parents must submit excuse notes via www.chestercommunitycharter.org through the “FAMILIES” portal drop down tab on our schools’ website and complete the ‘absent & tardy form’ for submission. Attendance department will respond to the inquiry within 24 hours.

Please Note: Excessive absences can result in retention in grade. Such decisions at the discretion of the CEO in consultation with teachers and administrators.

Excused absences include:

-] Failure of the bus to arrive at the bus stop
-] Personal illness
-] Medical and dental examination and/or treatment of the student when such appointments cannot be scheduled other than during school hours
-] Death in the family of the parent/guardian or close family member
-] Observation of a religious holiday
-] Emergency conditions in the student’s home (upon students return, documentation is necessary)

Ex: Major Utility Failure
Power Outage
Fire

Excused absences DO NOT include:

-] Uniform issues
-] Vacations
-] Anything that is not considered “excused” as noted above

Extended Medical Absences: For any student absent for medical reasons for 10 consecutive days, the parent/guardian must provide a written note/certification from a doctor’s office.

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY LAW

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has laws in place that compel children to attend school and impose potential sanctions upon parents who have truant children. The following list explains CCCS’ unexcused absence procedures.

1. All absences are unexcused unless a written excuse is received explaining the reason specific to the absence.
2. Upon returning to school, parents/guardians should submit (either in person or through their student) a written explanation of the absence.
3. If parents do not provide a written excuse within three days of the student returning to school, reasonable allowances may be made to accept a parent’s explanations for the absence without initiating any punitive response. Some notes may not be accepted, depending on the excuse and/or format. Examples include absent notes submitted by anybody outside of the parent/legal guardian and also submitting online absent forms where all required fields are not completed properly before submission.
4. If a third unexcused absence occurs, the school will notify the parents in writing within ten (10) days of the third unexcused absence sent as a “First Notice”.
5. After the ‘First Notice’ has been served, and if no improvement has occurred in student attendance, and after a 6th unexcused absence, a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) conference will be initiated. The school will initiate the SAIP conference and will contact the parent/guardian regarding the date and time of the meeting. The parent/guardian’s presence at this conference is strongly encouraged. However, if a parent is unable to attend, the conference will be held without the parent/guardian’s presence, and the outcomes mailed to them. The SAIP represents a collaborative effort between school officials and the parent/guardian to improve student attendance.

NOTE:

-] **3 unexcused absences** - a student is **TRUANT**.
-] **6 unexcused absences** - a student is **HABITUALLY TRUANT**. The student will be referred to either school or community-based attendance improvement programs or

Children and Youth Agency. CCCS may file a citation which would result in a proceeding before a magisterial district judge, provided a School Attendance Improvement Conference (“Conference”) has already been held and is not pending.

-] **10 unexcused absences** – *Students who miss ten school days without a valid excuse will be referred to the county Children and Youth Agency, and the Chester Community Charter School Social Worker will be contacted. CCCS will file a citation, which will result in a proceeding before a magisterial district judge.*

Online/Remote Learning Attendance Expectations

Attendance in our Distance Learning Program is defined as evidence of “engaging with the assigned material.”

- Virtual Classroom (VC) - Live Session Attendance in **assigned** live virtual classrooms is mandatory for any student enrolled in virtual learning. Failure to attend an assigned virtual class session in any given subject area may result in an unexcused absence for the individual course session **unless a valid excuse is provided within three (3) calendar days to:**
 1. The homeroom teacher
 2. The attendance department

- No Internet Access, Power Outage, or Technology Failure Internet access - Computer access is essential for all virtual learners. In the event of internet failure, power outage, or computer failure, and there are no feasible options available, **notification to the following must be made within 24 hours:**
 1. The homeroom teacher
 2. The students’ assigned building
 3. The attendance Department

- Evidence of attendance will be measured in multiple ways: (including, but not limited to):
 1. **Logging into Schoology by 8:30 am and attending all remote learning sessions**
 2. Interaction with a teacher/instructor on an instructional day
 3. Google Check-in forms
 4. Assignments submitted that were due on that day
 5. Questions to answer on Google Classroom
 6. Participation in an online discussion
 7. Google Form requesting receipt of assignment or instructions
 8. Class participation during the scheduled class time
 9. Student participation during scheduled related services

- It is expected that parent/guardians shall, to the maximum extent possible, ensure that their child participates in the distance learning program. If a student will not be able to participate in any learning activities that day, a parent can email or use all appropriate contact methods to the student's homeroom teacher and the student's assigned building.

Note: If a student does not participate in the majority of the learning activities for the day or has not checked in with their assigned teacher and has failed to login by the deadline, that student will be marked absent for the day.

CCCS Virtual Learning Attendance Protocols

The CCCS virtual learning plan includes requirements related to school attendance, including how the school will document participation in learning opportunities. CCCS will be *reporting* attendance within the learning sessions and platforms utilized by teachers and students. Attendance tracking will comprise several approaches to account for the differences between *in-school activities*, *teacher-led virtual learning*, and *self-directed virtual learning*.

1. **Teacher-led virtual learning:** Active participation in virtual classroom activities and discussions in all assigned live or recorded sessions are mandatory for any student enrolled in virtual learning. Failure to attend assigned virtual class sessions in any given subject area may result in an unexcused absence for the individual course session or the entire school day unless a valid excuse is provided within three (3) calendar days to the homeroom teacher and the Attendance Department.
2. **Self-directed virtual learning:** Evidence of participation in assignments and schoolwork outside the live virtual classrooms may include, but is not be limited to:
 - Daily login to the (Schoology) learning portal each school day.
 - Daily interactions with the teacher(s)
 - Examples of daily interactions between teachers and students could include, but are not limited to, messages, emails, telephone calls, video chats or other formats that enable teachers to engage with students.

Tracking Absences:

1. **Excused absences:** Any circumstances for which an excuse note is received, regardless of whether the particular time frame covered by the excuse is part of an in-school experience or a virtual experience, should be recorded based on past practice and policy.
2. **No evidence of exposure, engagement or participation:** If there is no evidence that the student participated or engaged in any way in virtual learning, then the student will be marked absent.

Online/Remote Learning Attendance Expectations

It is expected that parents/guardians shall, to the maximum extent possible, ensure that their child participates in the virtual learning program. If a student will not be able to participate in any learning activities that day, a parent can email or use all appropriate contact methods to communicate with the student's homeroom teacher and/or the student's assigned building.

Students who attend CCCS as Virtual learners will meet attendance requirements by logging into the (Schoology) learning portal each school by 8:30 am and attending all remote learning sessions.

Elementary Buildings K-5:

Monday through Thursday

1. Daily morning attendance will be taken between 8:30 am and 9:30 am and reported by teachers in eschool by 10:15 am. Attendance will then be monitored by teachers throughout the school day.
2. Afternoon “check-in” attendance is re-taken between 1:30 pm and 3:00 pm. If a student was marked “present” in the morning and then was not present throughout the day, the teacher is expected to go back into eschool and correct the attendance record to “absent” before 5:00 pm that day. Likewise, if a student misses the morning check-in, but then attends the majority of classroom sessions across the day, the teacher is expected to go back into eschool before 5:00 pm and correct the originally entered “*absence*” to “*present.*”

Flipped Friday

3. Every Friday, a “Touch-Base Meeting” will be scheduled between 8:30am and 9:00am to review the remote work for the day with their homeroom teacher. It will be an opportunity to briefly review the day’s assignments, work due by the end of the day, and to ensure all students understand the assignments.
 - This “Touch-Base Meeting” will be used to enter attendance in e-school.
 - Before 5:00pm, teachers should have corrected any attendance issues in e-school cases where they have evidence that students who were not present at the morning “Touch Base Meeting” have completed the daily assignments.

Middle School 6-8

Monday through Thursday

1. Daily morning attendance will be taken between 8:30 am and 9:30 am and reported by homeroom teachers in eschool by 10:15 am. Attendance should be recorded **by period** throughout the school day.

Flipped Friday

2. Every Friday, a homeroom “Touch-Base Meeting” with students will be scheduled between 8:30 am and 9:00 am (*the responsibility of the homeroom teacher*) to review the remote work for the day. It will be an opportunity to briefly review the day’s assignments, work due by the end of the day, ensure all students understand the assignments, etc.

Homeroom teachers will need to coordinate with their students' subject-specific teachers during the afternoon before or morning before the "Touch-Base Meeting" to ensure that students are given all relevant information regarding the day's assignments in each of the courses.

- Based on attendance during this "Touch-Base Meeting," attendance should be recorded in e-school
- Before 5:00 pm, teachers should correct attendance in e-school in cases where they have evidence that students who were not present at the morning session completed the daily assignments. They will need to communicate with students' subject-specific teachers to make this determination